

DAUGHTERS OF HEREDITARY SOCIETIES:
THE ROLE OF THE AMATEUR IN PROFESSIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION

By

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Daughters of Hereditary Societies: The Role of the Amateur in Professional Historic

Hereditary societies are membership organizations dedicated to the preservation of the memory of particular people or events. This research explored the contribution of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), as an amateur entity, to preservation. A small group of scholars approached the early history of the DAR and similar organizations, and criticized its historic role as a gatekeeper of American history. This research addressed the historic role of the DAR previously explored by other scholars, but further expanded the literature by shedding light on its positive evolution to an organization that supports diverse approaches to genealogy, provides scholarships, engages in educational outreach, and supports historic sites. Hereditary societies are privately formed organizations with a vested interest in historic preservation, and should be used as allies in the advocacy and development of future historic preservation endeavors.

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To my Grandmother, whose love for history inspired a multigenerational interest in the history of
our family and this country.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Hereditary societies are organizations formed around descent from a common ancestor, period in history, or group of people. Typically, there is an application for membership where an applicant proves their descendancy from a qualifying ancestor. Sometimes, these societies are open to all and other times they are invite-only. Once accepted, members pay annual dues to their organizations, which fund both the organization's running and its designed projects. Members also have access to archives, social events, lectures and other history-based programming. Hereditary organizations were founded to remember particular people and/or time periods in history, and dedicate parts of their budget to historic preservation and research grants, so that this history can be better preserved and remembered.

These organizations bridge the gap between the professional field involved in history and amateurs with an interest in preservation, history, and related fields. While hereditary societies received criticism for their historic roles as gatekeepers of certain histories, people, groups, properties, and even propaganda, they are now becoming more equitable and inclusive.¹ They are agents of education in history, architecture, and preservation for not only their members but also the larger communities they serve. This work explored the dynamic of the relationship between the amateurs who are members of these hereditary societies and the professionals of the preservation and academic fields.

The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) served as the case study for this project due to their large membership base, access to records, length of institutional history, and my personal involvement. I am a member of the Paradise Valley Chapter of the DAR, after many

¹ Rosa Cartagena, "Yes, There Are Women of Color in the DAR," *Washingtonian*, April 7, 2021, <https://www.washingtonian.com/2021/04/07/yes-there-are-women-of-color-in-the-dar/>.

years of membership in the Children of the American Revolution (CAR), the DAR's children's organization. It is my close association as a member that began my interest in history. Hereditary societies shaped my sense of identity and enhanced my love for history, and it is their influence in my life that drove me to understand the relationship between my chosen field and the broader hereditary society community.

Founded in 1890 as a way for women to honor their ancestors who participated in the American War of Independence, the women of DAR exercised their power and influence in a time when they could not even vote. Their founding came on the heels of the women's club movement and, most notably in historic preservation, the success of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association (MVLA) in purchasing and preserving George Washington's Mount Vernon estate, showing that women in these organizations were at the forefront of American preservation.² They were also part of a larger trend when several hereditary societies were formed in the decades following the Civil War, in the hope that these organizations would be a source of community for both Northerners and Southerners.³

² Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel, and Ilene R. Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), 8.

³ Carolyn Strange, "Sisterhood of Blood: The Will to Descend and the Formation of the Daughters of the American Revolution," *Journal of Women's History* 26, no. 3, 2014), 106.



Figure 1. Fifteen vice-regents of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association photographed outside Mount Vernon in 1884. Courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

Today, the DAR is one of the most accessible hereditary groups, as they are open to all who can prove an ancestor that aided the patriot cause. Their commitment to a wide base of membership contributed to an organization-wide culture that invests significant time, volunteers, and money in preservation. Furthermore, the DAR grew so considerably in their membership and resources that they have expanded their scope of preservation to include honoring the veterans of all American wars. Their membership includes 190,000 women across all fifty states and several countries.⁴ Members volunteer hundreds of thousands of hours and the National Society gives significant sums in scholarships, grants, and direct educational funding, in addition to its preservation work. The DAR also maintains one of the most impressive genealogical libraries, a museum, and several historical buildings at their headquarters in Washington D.C.

⁴ "Who We Are," Daughters of the American Revolution, July 3, 2022, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/about-dar/who-we-are/who-we-are>.



Figure 2. Panoramic photo of the DAR's campus comprises three buildings, which are (L to R) Constitution Hall, NSDAR Museum Gallery and Americana Room, and Memorial Continental Hall. Courtesy of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

This work explores the current role of hereditary organizations in historic preservation. Hereditary organizations benefit professionals by engaging large, assembled groups of amateurs that actively participate in genealogy, research, education, stewardship, and fostering a culture that prioritizes preservation work. This project aims to bridge the present gap in the relationship between historic preservation professionals and hereditary organizations and bring the literature up to date, as most preservation texts neglect the preeminent role of hereditary organizations beyond their early years and fail to recognize their contributions since that time. This gap is bridged by an exploration of the public's perception of hereditary societies' versus their boots-on-the-ground work. This work demonstrated the eager and dedicated allies that hereditary groups are in advocating for, supporting, or stewarding preservation projects. Unearthing the active role of hereditary organizations reveals a history of continued involvement, which has been neglected in most preservation history texts. Additionally, this study may start a conversation around sustainable membership growth and active engagement with professionals among hereditary societies.

In the chapters that follow, I outline the design of my research and the methods that inform my literature review and data collection via interviews. I then review the literature, which

discusses hereditary societies, genealogy, and the history of preservation, and discuss that literature thematically. In particular, the literature on hereditary societies is out of date, and the literature that significantly explores their contributions to preservation is lacking. The findings from 10 interviews are recapped and analyzed in their own chapter. Finally, I bring together the literature review with my findings, discuss their relationship, and explain the value of these results to the professional field of preservation before making recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The DAR served as the main case study in this project, with other organizations flanking it with examples, as necessary. I debated the selection of multiple case studies to compare and contrast the relationship of several organizations with professional preservation. I considered the Colonial Dames of America (CDA), the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and the Germanna Foundation as potential case studies to explore, but ultimately decided against this for reasons of personal or professional conflicts of interest, and, more pressingly, too many sets of data for the established length of this project. Furthermore, the DAR is one of the largest hereditary societies in the United States. With its impressive size at 190,000 current members and 1,000,000 members since its founding, the organization has a publicly accessible institutional history, broad membership base, and sizable historic preservation site database.⁵ Additionally, the DAR Library is one of the most impressive genealogical libraries in the country.⁶ While the DAR does not represent the average size of hereditary organizations, it is a leader in membership growth, preservation fundraising, and family history research in the United States.

This project utilized interpretive historical research to contextualize the role of the Daughters in professional preservation, and then oral history to explain the present understanding of hereditary organizations' preservation efforts. A phenomenological approach organized and shaped the research on these organizations and their members, as a function of relationships and lived experiences. A second, more minor ethnographic approach broke down the types of people in membership, non membership, and/or professional categories. These combined multiple data

⁵ "Dar Surpasses One Million Members since Its Founding," Daughters of the American Revolution, October 9, 2019, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/media-center/news-releases/dar-surpasses-one-million-members-its-founding>.

⁶ "About the Library," Daughters of the American Revolution, November 2, 2016, <https://www.dar.org/library/about-library>.

sources with different philosophical approaches ultimately all fall under the category of qualitative methods to understand and then illustrate a broad community, such as hereditary societies. Such qualitative methods aim to get to the heart of specific phenomena that occur in everyday life and the meaning it evokes in people's lives.⁷ Qualitative research typically encourages prolonged contact through fieldwork, so that a researcher can be immersed in the culture of whichever particular phenomenon they are investigating. As a longtime member and, more recently, a professional engaged with hereditary societies, I had the unique privilege of understanding the culture from an insider perspective.⁸

In this study, the main actors were the professionals and the amateurs. Professionals, for the purpose of this study, were those that professionally worked in the fields of academia, architectural history, museums, and similarly related fields for pay. Amateurs were nonprofessional people engaged with history in a recreational or amateur fashion. Though not employed in an official capacity, amateurs are differentiated from the paid professional in order to distinguish between the different roles of those engaged with history, not to undermine the amateur's role or diminish their contributions to the hereditary organizations or the larger field of preservation.

Methods

Interpretive historical research investigated “social-physical phenomena within complex contexts with a view toward explaining those phenomena in a narrative form and in a holistic fashion.”⁹ It was necessary to use interpretive historical research to understand the impact of hereditary societies on the movement of preservation before its codification as a formal practice.

⁷ David Wang and Linda N. Groat, *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2013), 218.

⁸ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 223.

⁹ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 136.

The use of interpretive historical research was a deliberate choice that sought to separate my project from past preservation literature, which relegated hereditary societies to a few introductory paragraphs, and then completely disconnected these societies from today's preservation field.

This study primarily used a phenomenological approach to understand both the view of people within and outside of hereditary societies. Phenomenology examines “the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it.”¹⁰ The study of the lived experience of members, non-members, staff of hereditary societies and other professionals helped to uncover the relationship of a particular group of people to these organizations, and more specifically their relationship to the contributions of organizations to historic preservation. In phenomenology, the assumption is that consciousness is “directed toward an ‘object.’”¹¹ In phenomenology, consciousness included what constituted consciousness, such as emotions, assumptions, and judgment.

In this project, the DAR served as the “object” to study in relation to the broader hereditary society community’s consciousness regarding historic preservation, research, and community.¹² While hereditary organizations may have seemed like an odd case study within the preservation field, they represented a large constituency with historic preservation interest and experience within the practical realm of preservation. Beyond their interest and support, some have the financial resources or create the opportunities to serve as custodians of preserved sites, objects, and family history archives, when larger museums or academic institutions either will not or cannot serve as custodians. It was curious that membership- and application-based, occasionally invite-only organizations, would be custodians of such swathes of public history.

¹⁰ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 228.

¹¹ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 228.

¹² Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 228.

Unraveling why this is the case helped shed light on the degree of success hereditary societies achieve in preservation and builds a bridge of allyship between academics and amateurs.

In the case of members within these societies, it was necessary to understand the perceived benefits and issues of the societies from people who participate in them, whether in a large or small role, and how membership informed their view of the world and their view of the field of historic preservation. Literature reviews, interviews, and the DAR's online presence informed this understanding. In the case of people who did not belong to these societies, but still knew of them, their perceptions of these societies, the people who belong to them, the purpose of these societies, and the perceived degree to which these organizations were successful in accomplishing their goals was also important to grasp. In particular, interviews with professional historians and museum professionals were useful in gauging the opinion of professionals toward these particular amateur entities.

An ethnographic approach explored the people that belong to these societies, as these societies require a few components – a family tree with accurate research, a connection to a relevant ancestor, access to money to pay yearly dues, and an interest in hereditary societies. Genealogical research can be a challenge based on age, access to technology or archives, socioeconomic status, location, relationship with biological family, and race. For example, the DAR is headquartered in Washington D.C., so their archives may have been inaccessible, up until the point where they were digitized.¹³ Genealogy books are often very expensive, and even when one can afford them, they can be difficult to find because they do not always have multiple runs. However, there is a sizable digitized archive DAR so it is more accessible. Furthermore, websites like Ancestry.com somewhat democratized the process of uncovering and documenting

¹³ Amanda Vasquez, "Dar Department of Archives and History Online Resources," Today's DAR, November 25, 2019, <https://blog.dar.org/dar-department-archives-and-history-online-resources>.

one's genealogy, for a fee.¹⁴ Additionally, some organizations are invite-only, so one might also need sufficient connections, in addition to the prescribed lineage, to join an organization. DAR is not one of those organizations, which is one of their strengths when examining how to build a broad sustainable membership base.

Design

Oral history was an inextricable part of using a phenomenological approach in this research, as it was one of the most profound and direct ways in which lived experience was shared and documented. The different types of people who have, or might have, professional or personal affiliation with hereditary organizations were an important part of building an ethnographic approach. This work used interactive tactics, such as interviews, to gain information and perspective, in addition to uncovering biases from different groups of people – members with access to and knowledge of the societies' historic preservation efforts, members without such knowledge, staff of hereditary organizations or their preservation projects, and non-members with professional associations in history or preservation.¹⁵

A total of ten people were interviewed for this project. Interviewees were selected based on personal and professional connections, recommendations from other interviewees, recommendations from committee member Marc Wheat, and authors from my literature review. While I reached out to several other people, some of whom I did not know through these avenues, not everyone could give the time necessary to participate. All oral history was gathered in an interview setting via Zoom over a two week period, and recorded with the permission of each interviewee. I produced two different sets of questions for the two different groups

¹⁴ Francesca Morgan, *A Nation of Descendants: Politics and the Practice of Genealogy in U.S. History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 14.

¹⁵ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 244.

interviewed - member and professional. Interviewees were not provided with either set of questions ahead of time; though they knew what my research was regarding, as it was briefly mentioned in my email requests for their interview. For those who fit into both categories as a member and professional, I asked both sets of questions.

For members of hereditary societies, I first asked which organization they were specifically associated with. Then, I gauged their first impressions, how those impressions evolved, and their goals for membership. I inquired about the application process, because some of these organizations are known to be invite-only or perceived as exclusionary. We also talked about their experiences as a member, whether they experience judgment about the membership from non-members, their leadership experience within the organization, and the impact of membership on their life. Next, I moved onto questions regarding their organization's relationship with historic preservation, what members bring to the table that academics may lack, and vice versa, the relationship of their organization with professionals, and the benefits of weaving the professional and amateur entities together in historic preservation. Finally, I asked how they envisioned their organization growing in the future.

For professionals, I also asked about their first impression about hereditary organizations, and the evolution of that impression based on their experience, employment, or research. For those employed by hereditary organizations, I inquired about the application process and whether it differed from the process of applying to similar positions in the field. Similarly, I asked those employed by hereditary societies if the difficulties they face in their work were similar to the difficulties of a similar job in the field, or if they are unique to the hereditary society or non-profits in general. I also inquired about how their non-member friends, family, or field colleagues interpreted or perceived their job. Finally, we discussed how they viewed or

experienced the integration of the amateur in the professional preservation field, their interpretation of what skills amateurs have, and if and how professionals and amateurs can work together moving forward.

The data collection is prefaced with my personal experience as a longtime member of multiple hereditary organizations and an intern and academic fellow at two organizations. This is known as an interactive observation as a participant, where the researcher role is known.¹⁶ My personal experience as a member and employee was a form of data collection. These experiences still followed interactive observation, although it was retroactive observation. Though I was not known as a researcher on the topic of the individual hereditary organizations at the time of my initial joining as a member or intern/fellow, the individual organizations welcomed me through the years in different capacities. In particular, it was known during my internship and fellowship that I was a degree-seeking graduate student with a keen interest in these organizations.

This study used interactive interviews by Zoom, scholarly literature, and published opinion pieces to inform this part of the project. Though open-ended response formats might have been helpful in building a larger set of data, and fully accepted within the school of phenomenology, I preferred to keep all my interviews in the same format for organization and simplicity.

Additionally, to work within the time constraints determined by a fast approaching commencement and regular graduate thesis schedule, it was important to keep a manageable set of data with a conservative but healthy amount of interviews.¹⁷

In regard to my personal and professional affiliation with hereditary societies, I realize that I straddle this line of both being a member and hired professional, which sometimes work in great symbiosis, and other times can conflict. It is my hope that in embracing my unique

¹⁶ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 244.

¹⁷ Wang and Groat, *Architectural Research Methods*, 244.

experience that I can be a more effective bridge between these two passionate sides of preservation. In embracing this personal passion for history, I cannot reject personal perspective in my writing for this project. While some historians still question the effectiveness of writing in a self-referential fashion, anthropology, cultural studies, and literary criticism have accepted it.¹⁸ Since this particular study uses interdisciplinary studies to effectively answer the proposed research question, I will also embrace the injection of the personal into the academic.

Limitations

Though I have done my best to build and deliver interesting, well designed research, I recognize the limitations of my design and how my final product may be affected. Time is always one of the greatest limitations in any significant undertaking. The time constraints of completing a thesis on a reasonable schedule required limiting my scope to one case study and no more than ten interview subjects. Similarly, I limited my number of interviews to ten to not work with unmanageable data. I budgeted an hour for each interview, though some were as short as 20 minutes, and others as long as 1 hour and 30 minutes, which totaled about 8 hours worth of recorded interviews to comb through.

A significant event that reflects the culture of hereditary organizations is Hereditary Fortnight in Washington, D.C., which is a multi week gathering of dozens of hereditary societies for annual meetings and joint parties. It is a stellar way to understand the culture of hereditary societies, given how many people and organizations participate. It is traditionally held in April, so with constraints of class enrollment, a 30 hour a week job at the time, and budget constraints,

¹⁸Michele Gillespie and Catherine Clinton, *Taking off the White Gloves: Southern Women and Women Historians* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1998), 140.

Hereditary Week was not feasible to research and include in this project, but could provide an interesting avenue for future research to explore.

By relying on my personal and professional connections, as well as the recommendations of my committee and interview subjects, my sample is small and biased toward those who have significant interaction with hereditary societies, whether personal or professional. I make no claims of representativeness, statistically significant results, or the revelation of universal truths because of the nature of qualitative research, my sample size, and bias.

Summary

In this chapter about the methods and design for this project, I outlined my justifications for the use of interpretive historical research combined with phenomenological and ethnographic approaches. I further explained my design for data collection in interviews, while also recognizing the limitations of my methodology and design. Nevertheless, these limitations kept the project appropriate to scope and length, while still answering questions about the importance of hereditary societies to the overall goals and success of historic preservation.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly articles that tackled the Daughters, and similar organizations, beyond the capacities mentioned, focused on their previous political involvement, especially around the mid-20th century, and their role in the domestic battle against communism. Particularly, Carolyn Strange's article, "Sisterhood of Blood: The Will to Descend and the Formation of the Daughters of the American Revolution" took a critical lens to the formation of the DAR and its early history by analyzing the way the board and members used lineage to shape national political culture. She tied in the growing popularity of eugenics, pushback against immigration, and dissemination of nationalist propaganda.¹⁹ However, no author, to my knowledge, has unpacked the hereditary societies' more recent role as active advocates and allies for preservation.

Preservation and Education

Rachel A. Snell's article, "'God, Home, and Country': Women, Historical Memory, and National Identity in English Canada and the United States," focused on the late nineteenth and early twentieth century creation of a national women's identity in both the United States and Canada. For the purposes of this project, the Canadian portion of her article was not necessary. One of the ways women asserted and defined their national identity and memory of national history was through hereditary organization, namely through the creation of the DAR.²⁰ Specifically, Snell noted the early DAR's focus on preserving the men in history, a common product of that era's historiography. Conversely, DAR primarily preserved house museums, a

¹⁹ Strange, "Sisterhood of Blood," 109/

²⁰Rachel A. Snell, "'God, Home, and Country': Women, Historical Memory, and National Identity in English Canada and the United States," (*The American Review of Canadian Studies* 48, no. 2, 2018), 250.

symbol of the female domain in contemporary Victorian consciousness, and allowed descendancy from a female patriot as an avenue for membership from its inception.²¹ Beyond Snell's covered time period, it is necessary to note that the DAR is now dedicating significant resources to researching women's and minority history.²²

Val D. Greenwood's *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, published in 1990, accomplished what the earlier handbook, *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy*, failed to provide - a comprehensive and at-home, step-by-step guide to genealogy. Greenwood also tackled the reality that American genealogy required a different tool set, while earlier authors only mentioned it in passing. His work attempted to bring genealogy into a respectable science, though noted that the topic was inextricably linked with religious, economic, social, and political history. His project argued for the scientific nature of genealogy and asserted that genealogy would not be taken seriously as a field of study until researchers "adopt sound scientific principles"²³, a process criticized by some hobby genealogists with "romantic temperament[s]."²⁴ *The Researcher's Guide* unpacked nearly every step of the genealogical process, making the process more accessible to someone who does not know their family history beyond their grandparents. A century before this guide's publication, the tools for genealogical research were not as broad nor accessible as they are now. Additionally, what tools were available were not widely advertised, with the intention of keeping success in genealogical research to a select few.

Martha Strayer, an established journalist in the 1950s who often covered the DAR, wrote *The Informal History of DAR*. Despite her close working relationship with the organization in the

²¹ Snell, "God, Home, and Country," 252.

²² "Specialty Research," Daughters of the American Revolution, October 26, 2022, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy/specialty-research>.

²³ Val D. Greenwood, *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Pub. Co., 2000), 8.

²⁴ Greenwood, *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 133.

mid century, she received no official cooperation from the organization, and her request for records was denied.²⁵ Strayer positively portrayed the DAR regarding their preservation of sites related to Revolutionary and women's history, which was frankly one of the very few pieces of literature to mention their preservation work in detail. She also explicitly stated that the DAR was, at the time of its publication in 1958, one of only two organizations "required by charter granted by Congress to make annual reports to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington."²⁶ Such a requirement proved the rigorous nature of the DAR's preservation efforts, and how seriously its work was, and continues to be, taken. In addition to the DAR's achievements in preservation, Strayer noted the success of the organization in its membership, which started from birth in the CAR to the rest of adulthood in the DAR. Strayer's publication, though self-described as informal, was a thorough recount of the DAR's institutional history and recognition of its professional preservation work, unlike any other literature reviewed for this project.

Written a decade after Strayer's informal history, Margaret Gibbs' *The DAR* was another history of the DAR, though she wrote with more wit and hilarious anecdotes than can be said of Strayer. Gibbs' book described the makeup of membership as one of variety, but, for the most part, "exceedingly chic."²⁷ She addressed the makeup of membership to discredit the perpetuating notion that Daughters were old, bored women looking for amusing projects. Then, she dove into the more recent history that the DAR participated in, such as sending delegates to the drafting of the UN Charter and playing a significant role in several national exhibitions.²⁸ Finally, rather than individually naming the DAR's extensive achievements in preservation,

²⁵ Martha Strayer, *The D.A.R.: An Informal History* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1958), vi.

²⁶ Strayer, *The D.A.R.: An Informal History*, 35.

²⁷ Margaret Gibbs, *The DAR*, 1st ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), 8.

²⁸ Gibbs, *The DAR*, 71.

Gibbs highlighted the DAR's achievements as an institution that promoted research first and foremost, with a library so impressive that only the Library of Congress and National Archives were comparable at the time.

“Constructing Territory, Constructing Citizenship: The Daughters of the American Revolution and ‘Americanisation’ in the 1920s” by Carol Medlicott explored a narrow period from about the turn of the century to the mid-century. Medlicott especially looked at how the DAR defined American and non-American. The end of that period would have been the period in which Gibbs and Strayer wrote, and, as such, would have been too difficult to critically analyze and separate from the context of the Red Scare and McCarthyism. She honed in on one controversial project, the DAR's *Manual of the United States: For the Information of Immigrants and Foreigners*.²⁹ This pamphlet was available at major ports of entry like Ellis Island to educate immigrants on being an American, as the DAR defined what it meant to be American. This article lent its focus to the scope of women's groups, and, more specifically, the DAR's evolution from their early history as a preservation focused group to also a politically motivated group in the mid century.

Forging Community

Since its inception, the DAR has been continuously involved in preservation and education. For better or worse, that historically included preserving the history of certain people and encouraging a nationalist children's education. Today, political motivations are a thing of the past, and the DAR focuses on encouraging the broader research and dissemination of American history by qualified professionals, with the DAR as advocates, allies, and funders of such

²⁹ Carol Medlicott, “Constructing Territory, Constructing Citizenship: The Daughters of the American Revolution and ‘Americanisation’ in the 1920s,” (*Geopolitics* 10, no. 1, 2005), 109.

research and preservation. Additionally, it is essential to highlight that the DAR, as well as other hereditary organizations, dedicates significant resources to researching women's and minority history, recognizing that this has been overlooked in American historiography.³⁰

Wallace Evan Davies' *Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans' Organizations and Hereditary Organizations in America* was perhaps the Bible of early literature on hereditary societies. It remains one of the most comprehensive pieces of literature on the subject to date. Davies had the unique lens of being an insider to these types of organizations, like myself. Furthermore, Davies analyzed both hereditary organizations and veterans' organizations. This is a comparison not seen in many other academic treatments of hereditary organizations, but is necessary as both types of organizations stem from the first of these organizations - the Society of the Cincinnati. The Cincinnati began as a veterans fraternal organization of men who served in the Continental Army above a certain rank. It transformed into a hereditary society as members died, and the organization adopted a policy of primogeniture for continued membership of the descendants of original members.³¹

Similar to preservation texts and entirely dissimilar to literature focusing on hereditary societies, Davies remarked on the importance of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association in preserving places of historical significance. He expanded this and further remarked on the importance of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association in furthering the progress of women's emancipation.³² Similar to Francesca Morgan's more recent work, he explained that the growth of immigration to the US increased the value of distinctly American patriotic societies.³³ Davies paid particular attention to the DAR, stating that the DAR created a united society by

³⁰ "Specialty Research," Daughters of the American Revolution.

³¹ Wallace Evan Davies, *Patriotism on Parade; the Story of Veterans' and Hereditary Organizations in America, 1783-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 5.

³² Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 26.

³³ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 48.

“subordinating” the local chapters to a larger national organization and providing attractive components of membership, namely grand receptions and social aspects.³⁴ While other books and articles have focused on the elitism and prestige associated with these organizations, Davies found that these organizations filled a gap in the culture of American society, for which there was no natural or perfect solution. The US has no national church, royal family, or “cohesive traditions and symbols” and these organizations artificially built a “secular religion” complete with anniversaries to celebrate our “saints” and their deeds.³⁵ Patriotism became the United States’ religion and the DAR became its clergy. The DAR took a special interest in education, from educating young children and sponsoring essay contests to supporting libraries for adult education. They had a special interest in actively marking the graves of soldiers and leading “patriotic instruction.”³⁶

The DAR is perhaps one of the most well known hereditary societies and it operates in a unique way because it is not as exclusive as other societies which limit membership.³⁷ It is interesting that Davies remarked that the DAR and similar women’s societies should be viewed as part of the women’s club movement, as no other authors made this comparison, but it seemed natural given the DAR’s involvement in education and shaping the nation’s relationship with the past.³⁸ Davies’ book was this project’s textbook for understanding the conditions that laid the foundation for organizations like the DAR to be successful. It also wove in topics such as suffrage, women’s activities, and the early years of preservation being an amateur women’s pastime that eventually was incorporated into the hereditary organizations’ mission.

³⁴ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 133.

³⁵ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 216.

³⁶ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 241.

³⁷ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 354.

³⁸ Davies, *Patriotism on Parade*, 353.

Connection to and Memory of the Past

Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being by Tom Mayes presented several reasons why historic places matter to people. Each reason was given its own essay-like chapter. In my first preservation class in graduate school, a professor asked us to each pick a chapter and respond to it for our first writing assignment. “Ancestors” stuck, as the study of my family history sparked my love for learning and preservation. Mayes cited that one of the reasons why historic places are important is the connection they can give people to their ancestors.³⁹ Genealogy was another form of storytelling, because it broke down the history of one’s family, with a family tree acting as a continuous narrative filled with some living people and many, many ancestors. As a discipline, history can be difficult to grasp for the nonacademic because it seems disconnected from modern realities. Yet, when explored outside of more sterile, academic assessments and framed through a storytelling lens, whether that exploration be film, academia, or literature, people can connect with and relate to the stories, a trend supported in academia.⁴⁰ Due to genealogy’s more problematic roots as a tool of exclusion, Mayes explained that some preservationists have been unsure of “fostering the connections between family history and the preservation of old places.”⁴¹ However, Mayes acknowledged that genealogy is now a more accessible interest, with websites like Ancestry.com making the research more user-friendly, just as history has expanded beyond top-down, great man narratives in both the academic discipline and film industry.⁴² This accessibility and renewed interest in history translated to more stories being told and more people connecting with old places. My research

³⁹ Thompson M. Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 90.

⁴⁰ Laurence Veysey, “The ‘New’ Social History in the Context of American Historical Writing,” (*Reviews in American History* 7, no. 1, 1979), 2.

⁴¹ Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 88.

⁴² Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 85.

extended from this short chapter to further advocate the necessity of fostering a connection between historic preservation and hereditary organizations.

Historic Preservation: Caring for Our Expanding Legacy by Michael A. Tomlan, is a foundational preservation text that explored the historical, social, and architectural connections of the preservation movement in the United States from its early conception to a codified field. Similar to Mayes, there were multiple references to the historic role of hereditary organizations in the early movement of historic preservation.⁴³ This text explained how the field interprets the origins of these organizations and their historic role as advocates for saving places they deemed meaningful. It also named numerous other organizations that, though they are beyond the scope of this project, were helpful in illustrating the expansiveness of hereditary organizations. However, like most historic preservation texts, it neglected the active role many hereditary organizations play in being advocates and/or stewards for historic places.

Hereditary societies usually require a proven lineage to a particular type of ancestor to join their organization. Genealogy may be the conduit to which one achieves membership, but it is by no means the only goal of the organization. That is to say, people do not use genealogy as a measure of superiority or social currency when in contact with other members. Rather, hereditary societies focus on their selected era or persons of history, and how they can continue to remember the era or people.

Edited by the then Executive Director of the Institute of American Genealogy in the 1930s, Frederick Adams Virkus, *The Handbook of American Genealogy* introduced the institute behind the handbook's publication, some basic first steps in genealogical research, and regional and state organizations dedicated to or interested in genealogy. *The Handbook* further recognized

⁴³ Michael A. Tomlan, *Historic Preservation: Caring for Our Expanding Legacy* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2015), 30.

that those descended from Colonial families have perhaps the easiest access to records, which are archived by hereditary societies.⁴⁴ In addition to hereditary societies, the handbook stated that there were, at the time of this publication, 521 family genealogical associations dedicated to the study and preservation of a particular family, which were essential sources of information for those researching at the time. The largest portion of this book was reserved for the literal “Who’s Who in Genealogy,” with the second largest dedicated to heraldic arms, and is rather ironic considering the United States’ lack of peerage and hereditary titles. Though ironic, the attention to heraldic arms reflected Americans’ fascination with royalty, nobles, and the general peerage of Europe. *The Handbook of American Genealogy* came across as a phonebook for those new to the study of “family genealogy,” which was defined as a comprehensive text of one family’s genealogy and their descendants.⁴⁵

A more recent article, “Lineage as Capital: Genealogy in Antebellum New England,” by Francesca Morgan, explored the history of American genealogy and assessed the transformation of genealogy from a private endeavor featuring a who’s who to a democratized hobby codified by hereditary organizations. Morgan specifically analyzed John Farmer, Eliza Susan Quincy, Electa Jones, Amos Lawrence, and Lemuel Shattuck and their relationship to the study of their family trees, whether it be an embrasive or aversive relationship. This source deconstructed the early history of genealogy in the United States and disproved the sweeping generalization that the hobby was confined to normative elites, but rather included the unmarried spinster and a man with a physical disability. Morgan’s article also concluded that many people tended to research the lines that best suited their ideas of propriety or social capital, and obscured lines that could reveal inappropriate information. She deduced that genealogy either proved or created one’s

⁴⁴ Frederick Adams Virkus, *The Handbook of American Genealogy* (Chicago, IL: Inst. of American Genealogy, 1932), 11.

⁴⁵ Virkus, *The Handbook of American Genealogy*, 11.

social capital and class by linking descendants to an important person of the past.⁴⁶ This deliberate obscuration of certain ancestors and celebration of others contributed to the slippery slope of glorifying the past.

Written in 1995, G. Kurt Piehler's *Remembering War the American Way* forged an honest and critical path of how Americans remember wars, from the American Revolution to the controversial Vietnam War, and found that the federal government had not been successful in creating a "widely accepted national memorialization of this country's wars."⁴⁷ Part of creating a patriotic national memorialization of wars undoubtedly included the formidable DAR. The Daughters not only had a membership totaling 190,000 members of women with proven revolutionary ancestry, but were also instrumental in the preservation and honoring of veterans of all American wars. Piehler recognized the contributions of women's organizations, like the DAR, to the preservation of sites of national significance. The DAR had the foresight and strength in their beliefs to be leaders in an era where they did not have certain legal rights to leadership roles. Furthermore, Piehler asserted the DAR's unique position among hereditary organizations as one that democratized the memory of their qualifying event, the American Revolution, but still made themselves custodians of the Revolution's memory by giving primacy to material objects.⁴⁸

Genealogy is the puzzle that never gets finished, no matter how much one works at it. Nearly as thick as the Christian Bible, as one might expect for the undertaking of genealogical research, *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy*, published in 1925 and authored by Frederick Virkus, served as an encyclopedia for early American genealogy, i.e. White

⁴⁶ Francesca Morgan, "Lineage as Capital: Genealogy in Antebellum New England," (*The New England quarterly* 83, no. 2, 2010), 268.

⁴⁷ G. Kurt Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), ix.

⁴⁸ Piehler, *Remembering War the American Way*, 78.

Anglo-Saxon Protestant genealogy. Of course, these first families refer to the United States' first colonial families. It was a shortened version of a seven volume publication of America's "first" families and what one might expect in earlier 20th century genealogy. The Abridged Compendium began with the early history of American genealogy, namely the Stebbins family's work, and then branched out to encompass the hereditary society craze of the latter half of the 19th century.⁴⁹ Though it appeared to be one of many encyclopedic genealogies, it mentioned that American genealogical methodology must be unique from English methods, as those were "designed mainly for descent from royalty, nobility or gentry," which departed from other contemporary literature.⁵⁰ While it was not inclusive of "other" types of family history, like its contemporary counterparts, it demonstrated a unique awareness for genealogists in 1925 that genealogical methods are not one-size-fits-all, and that an easy experience with genealogical research is a privilege not all enjoy.

The majority of the compendium listed the "first families" and some variation of their descendants in a mostly organized fashion. Some final words followed this section on why the hereditary organizations, referred to here as "patriotic" organizations, were vital to fighting those who would wish to overthrow the "principles of Americanism"⁵¹ While the bulk of this book covered the descent of individual families, the introduction and index of hereditary organizations in the back of the book highlighted the evolution of genealogy as an intimate endeavor to its use as a conduit into social, political, and philanthropic hereditary societies. The production of this book signified both the popularity of genealogy and hereditary organizations, the necessity of an

⁴⁹ Frederick Adams Virkus and Albert Nelson Marquis, *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy; First Families of America; a Genealogical Encyclopedia of the United States*, Edited by Frederick Adams Virkus (Chicago: A.N. Marquis & Company, 1925), 3.

⁵⁰ Virkus and Marquis, *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy*, 9.

⁵¹ Virkus and Marquis, *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy*, 999.

encyclopedia for the topic where one did not exist, and served as a time capsule for what sort of genealogy was revered and what was entirely neglected.

Carolyn Strange's far more recent article, "Sisterhood of Blood: The Will to Descend and the Formation of the Daughters of the American Revolution," took a heavily critical lens to the formation of the DAR and its mission by analyzing the way the Board and members used lineage to shape national political culture. The article briefly explained the boom of hereditary societies in the 1890s as a response to the disunity caused by the Civil War. Some hoped that hereditary societies would unite people by blood, kinship ties, and a common story. Though, of course, this excluded people of color. The DAR was founded by mostly middle class white women in the 1890s, many of whom were single and working in "respectable" clerk positions in Washington D.C. This also tied in with the growing popularity of eugenics books and studies of the late nineteenth century, though the author bounced back and forth about blood purity claims and the public mission of the DAR. Ultimately, Strange concluded that the public goal that was and continues to be accomplished is the dissemination of education around the Revolutionary War and broader American history.

Francesca Morgan's book, *A Nation of Descendants: Politics and the Practice of Genealogy in US History*, explored the practice of genealogy in American history and its purpose in creating kinship or identifying one's rights or sense of belonging. She comprehensively covered roughly three centuries of genealogy's history and multiple racial and ethnic groups that have participated in genealogy. Morgan also touched on the relatively new avenue to genealogy that has become popular in pop culture - DNA tests with websites like Ancestry.com - and how that created a new wave of interest in genealogy and further democratization of the practice. While Virkus only scratched the surface of the inequity of genealogy, Strange and Morgan

specifically pointed out how minorities may struggle to document their family histories due to enslavement, different modes of record keeping, or relying on oral histories, which were not always accepted. Morgan and Strange firmly worked with the historical framework DAR, and do not contend with its more recent history, role in historic preservation, and the current guides to genealogy provided by the DAR, which recognize the difficulty many people may have in documenting their genealogy.

Conclusion

From the Society of the Cincinnati, founded in 1783, and National Order of the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe, founded in 1716, hereditary societies have a long history in the United States. While some organizations have an institutional history as long as the United States has been an independent nation, about 50 organizations were founded between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the century, one of which was the DAR.⁵² Hereditary societies were relegated to a few introductory paragraphs of the history of preservation literature or examples in genealogical literature as to why people conduct that particular type of research. As shown by this literature review, no author has explicitly unpacked the hereditary societies' more recent role as active advocates and allies for preservation.

⁵² "Chronological: The Hereditary Society Community," Chronological | The Hereditary Society Community, <https://www.hereditary.us/directory-cronological>.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In addition to an extensive literature review, interviews recounted the boots-on-the-ground experience of members of hereditary societies and associated professionals, as well as to gather evidence to answer the research question of this project, which is; what are the benefits of knitting hereditary organizations together with the professional field of historic preservation? As previously described in Chapter II, ten people were interviewed and recorded via Zoom over a two week period. Members and professionals were asked a separate list of questions because of their different experiences. For example, members spoke about their involvement in the organization and emotional ties to their organization, while professionals provided their view of the amateur and unique challenges they face due to work with or adjacent to these organizations. Ultimately, the questioning of the place of amateurs in preservation was posed to and answered by all.

The goal of this chapter is twofold - to present the findings from eight hours of interviews with ten interview subjects, and then analyze the implication of the findings. The findings are presented thematically in the three overarching themes extrapolated from the literature review - Preservation and Education, Forging Community, and Connection to and Memory of the Past. A separate discussion section summarizes the key thematic findings, and then analyzes their meaning and implications.

Interviews

Historic Preservation is now a professional field of study and practice and has its grassroots in amateur public history. The word “professional” often implies an air of authority

and sophistication. Rightly so, professionals have spent valuable time, money, and energy on their credentials, which have earned them the title of professional. On the other side of the spectrum is the “amateur,” which, as Morgan put it, is in no way a put down. In fact, she noted that public history has always sought to “challenge” authority, whether academic or institutional, and that a more “sophisticated approach [to history] will take into account the amateur's history and consider the amateur a resource.” Though she realized the difficulties of amateur involvement, she viewed hereditary groups, in particular, as community historians can access parts of history, family oral history, and legend that may otherwise have been unavailable or unknowable to the removed professional. It was this connection with the community that made hereditary societies part of the “broader picture of the continuing importance of the amateur.” Dr. Linda Brett, a member of the DAR and chapter president of the CDA, further explained that “amateur” should not necessarily mean an unpracticed participant in the field:

There's artists who have been trained formally and artists who haven't. Those artists who haven't are called “outside artists” and they have a very interesting view on the world that a trained artist doesn't have...and they can visualize [the world] in a different way. I would think that your trained professional versus your amateur - their knowledge base may be similar even but that amateur is going to come about the information from a different point of view and it gives more credence to both sides.

Lack of professionalization did not indicate less valuable skills or knowledge, but rather demonstrated a broader view of the world.⁵³ Brett's mother and fellow Daughter member, Susan Kreckler, also remarked that because of the amateur's approach, there was excitement in professional's work.

Other interviewees felt their amateur passion for history and preservation was encouraged by a preservation-oriented culture. Tanzosh, a member of the DAR in Arizona, recalled her childhood and early adulthood in the Northeast, where Revolutionary historic sites were

⁵³ Catherine W. Bishir, “Yuppies, Bubbas, and the Politics of Culture,” (*Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 3, 1989), 11.

accessible and inextricably linked to the identity of the area, especially during her years in Philadelphia. She tried to transfer this interest in preservation to active involvement in the DAR, which supports historic preservation projects with grants, a fact supported by DAR member Jessie Wicks. Further down south in Virginia, Marc Wheat, a member of this thesis committee and Society of the Cincinnati, remarked that the “deep historical consciousness” of Virginia enabled the state to support the livelihood of professionals on an impressive level with many projects in museums, archaeology, and architectural preservation. This deep historical consciousness manifested in impressive preservation projects ranging from famous Colonial Williamsburg to the more remote Germanna archaeology site in the Piedmont region.

Despite these positive assessments of the amateur by both professionals and members of hereditary societies themselves, amateurs still face some criticism, as Wheat explained that even with good working relations between amateurs and professionals, “You’re always going to find professionals who talk down to amateurs.” Museum director of the CDA-run Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden (MVHM&G), Nancy Hinkel, recognized how hard hereditary societies must work to prove the legitimacy of their endeavors to both the public and professionals. House museums like the MVHM&G, especially in the Southern and Northeastern United States, are fairly common historic sites, with an estimated 15,000 house museums in the country, and they are labeled as “charming places” with “kooky volunteers,” as Hinkel puts it.⁵⁴ In her time at the MVHM&G, Hinkel hoped to elevate the profile of this CDA-run museum, so that people cannot write it off as such. Past CDA President General Brantley Knowles also felt the MVHM&G was an incredibly professional endeavor. She remarked how impressive it was to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums as a house museum with a small staff, when only 8% of house

⁵⁴ Susan R. Orr, *Historic House Museum Sustainability in the 21st Century: Paths to Preservation* (South Orange, NJ: Seton Hall University, 2010), 7.

museums achieve this accreditation.⁵⁵ Both Knowles and Hinkel explained the high standard to which volunteers must be held at the house museum. Knowles stated that, “We need to show [the public] that we’re not dilettante ladies that want to have their hands in some amusing project,” a notion which women in these organizations have fought at least since Gibb’s publication in the 1950s.

The “kooky” volunteers that give their time to the projects of hereditary societies are often the backbone of the institution. Hinkel is currently the sole staff member after the museum battled COVID layoffs in Manhattan. She remarked that the size of the institution and hired staff are some of the biggest challenges in running the museum according to best practices, and that volunteers will be integral in rebuilding post-COVID engagement. Wheat clarified that many of these institutions “cannot afford to hire the way they need to” and what money they do have is used to seek out professionals, who are then supported by volunteers. In addition to providing time and money, volunteers offer, as Hinkel said, a “never-ending source of wide-eyed enthusiasm” that regenerates staff who might forget to stop and smell the roses, a sentiment echoed by several other interviewees. She stated that, while professionals lend their formal credentials to the authority of their place of employment, they may start to take “these incredible places for granted.”

Shelby Carr, member of several hereditary societies and the Membership and Office Coordinator for the Sons of the American Revolution in New York City (SAR), explained that while the museum and lineage staff were separate at the SAR, the staff had a lot of cross promotion, with most of their events being for and open to the public. Over with the Daughters in a New York Chapter, Junior Member Katherine Johnson spoke of her chapter’s commitment to

⁵⁵ “Accreditation by the Numbers,” American Alliance of Museums, July 1, 2022, <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/accreditation-excellence-programs/accreditation-by-the-numbers/>.

preservation walks and historic house tours, as well as the talks and presentations given by docents at chapter meetings.

At MVHM&G, Hinkel works closely with the CDA, whom she says is committed to their “ancestry and philanthropic goals,” but her role is firmly focused on the philanthropic side, which is the museum. Nevertheless, the sides are linked and invigorated by each other’s achievements. The museum, like other house museums, depends on constant interaction with both the public and scholars to avoid turning into a “time capsule,” which it cultivates through regular programming and two annual William Randolph Hearst Fellows who conduct original research projects. The American Revolution Institute, a museum for the public by the Society of the Cincinnati, is similarly tied to the Society of the Cincinnati in terms of its governance and support, but it is still its own endeavor created for the public. Another institution closely associated with the Society of the Cincinnati is Anderson House in Washington D.C. Wheat exclaimed Anderson House has a new \$900,000 endowment in honor of their now-retired librarian, Ellen McAllister Clarke. She was not associated with the society genealogically but was so devoted to its library. Her skills as a librarian, mixed with the passion infused by members, led to a world class collection on 18th century war literature.

In what could be considered a niche field within history and historic preservation, Morgan and Hinkel shared their experiences in researching and working for these organizations. Morgan was personally connected to the DAR through her mother and grandmother, who were both members. Though she did not share their same feelings, its importance in her family’s life opened her mind to “broader questions of heredity and inherited characteristics.” Hinkel was more of a stranger to the CDA ahead of her employment, but soon found herself among a group of “highly educated, highly professional” women who were so “interested in early American

history.” Now with a deeper understanding of the organization and its mission, she feels comfortable shattering the idea that these organizations are filled with “ladies who lunch and don’t do much else.”

These hereditary societies have similar goals of education and outreach, and their internal goal of fostering community among members is shared, though how members have come to be part of that community is varied. Women in the western states interviewed for this project mostly joined as an activity to do with their mother or other friends. Tanzosh joined with her mother and sister, though her mother’s retirement and need for an activity was what prompted their application. Wicks and Brett also joined at the behest of their mothers. Krecker, mother of Brett, was impressed by the women of hereditary societies who had spent a “lifetime gathering information.” Brett moved back to Arizona in 2010 and found that DAR activity immediately gave her “something to do” and was especially touched by her chapter’s interest in some of her own family history projects. East coasters tended to also have family influence in their decision to join, but also had social and philanthropic goals in their minds. Wheat received an heirloom book on his family’s history at a young age, while Knowles joined CAR at 10 years old, which filled her childhood with educational history-oriented field trips. Several interviewees on both coasts confirmed their respective organizations offered an immediate network of “like-minded” people and activities, particularly when moving to new cities.

All members recognized that older generations were generally more represented in chapters than junior members. Tanzosh’s original thoughts were that it was going to “a lot of older women.” While this was confirmed, she grew fond of the age demographic and felt she gained surrogate aunts. Carr became involved in hereditary societies while living in Denver, and experienced the same significant age gap as Tanzosh. Though the preponderance of retirees can

indicate a group with more financial means and time to volunteer, Carr did not feel her chapter adequately catered to junior members with social activities or even convenient times for the young professional or student. Once on the East Coast for her PhD studies, Carr affiliated with chapters that fulfilled those wishes and consciously limited her time to organizations with “larger junior contingents,” such as the Parent Chapter of CDA, which is the only CDA chapter with a dedicated junior committee.

This study aimed to understand the unique emotional pull and outreach these hereditary societies have for members. Johnson believed DAR emphasized a member’s “duty” to tell the history of their ancestors and the country, and one of the ways that is done is through site preservation. For Wheat, that duty is not just to the past, but also to the future. He explained that his membership made him aware that he will one day be someone’s ancestor, and his descendants may be the only ones that keep his memory alive. Memorably, he stated, “If it takes you eight generations to get back, you may start thinking about eight generations going forward.” Wheat further shared that “many people join because they want to keep green some aspect of their family,” and be “part of a living inheritance.” Though Max Page claimed the past provided this false sense of security to otherwise “modern people,” Wheat believed that the preservation of “tangible memories,” through objects, land, or architecture, is “expression of gratitude for these people who lived through important parts of American history or devoted particularly some sort of sacrifice during that period.”⁵⁶ Wheat further explained that genealogy is the avenue from which a potential member joins, but it is the active research and preservation of shared history, not just the history of famous people, that generates undeniable emotions and retains sustainable membership.

⁵⁶ Randall Mason and Max Page, *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 29.

Discussion

These interviews revealed the importance of the amateur in historic preservation, and what a large contingency of amateurs the hereditary society community represents. The hereditary society community has established values around community, philanthropy, volunteerism, family, and historic preservation. This community ultimately encourages a preservation-oriented culture, from their fundraising efforts and community service projects to activities and volunteer opportunities centered around history. While each chapter had their own niche in their respective communities, they centered their engagement around preservation of a site or documents, fundraising for scholarships, education, American holiday celebrations, and veterans philanthropy.⁵⁷

Each interviewee confirmed that non-members have a curiosity about their organizations but whether that curiosity was rooted positively or negatively varied from person to person. Especially in women's hereditary societies, non-members tended to paint members as "dilettante" ladies who lunched. Some were surprised the organizations exist, and others thought it is a lot of older people lording over each other with their genealogy. While pride may be a factor in joining for some, both Wheat and Knowles, who have been at the helm of significant hereditary groups, pointed out that gratitude for the service or sacrifice of their ancestors was more often the reasoning.

The Researcher's Guide to Genealogy by Val D. Greenwood preached a philosophy reflective of changes in historiography at the time. Far from the Hegelian histories of great men doing great deeds, more modern modes of historiography analyze the stories of everyday people and how they lived imperfect lives through historical events. His work picked up about 15 years

⁵⁷"Volunteer Projects," Daughters of the American Revolution, May 6, 2014, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/become-member/volunteer-projects>.

after Alex Haley's *Roots* sparked massive interest in family history, and home computers made research even more accessible. While Greenwood did not address hereditary organizations, he thoroughly explained the emotional connection people have to family history and the desire to root oneself and find community. Quoting Old Testament scripture in his guide, genealogy sought to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers."⁵⁸ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, which has been and continues to be a significant contributor to genealogy, represented the earliest incarnation of the more democratic form of genealogy argued for in Greenwood's guide, and found scriptural justification for this in the Book of Malachi 4:5-6.⁵⁹ This connection to ancestral pasts breathes life into the past, and, according to Greenwood's research among psychologists, this understanding of the past and the patterns within a family helped to create a more "secure, responsible, and self-directed person."

Greenwood's research skillfully illustrated the "why" behind genealogy for those who have never been interested in it before. To him, family history was so valuable on an individual level, and that value was why these organizations elicit such strong emotions from their members. Family history merged genealogy with history to bring ancestors to life.⁶⁰ According to this guide, genealogy must fundamentally shift away from proving grand, perfect, or legitimate lineages, and toward unpacking the proverbial skeletons in the closets and unmasking the emotions of one's ancestors. While DAR no doubt remembers famous names, the organization now emphasizes members' connections to regular people - the common wife or the young drummer boy. The DAR's philosophy is that an ancestor does not have to be noteworthy to be important to a descendant or the broader historical narrative.

⁵⁸ Greenwood, *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 566.

⁵⁹ Greenwood, *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 566.

⁶⁰ Greenwood, *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 567.

Pannekoek stated that “professional validation has become required to secure recognition” and these societies certainly strive for that recognition by investing in professionals.⁶¹ The interviewees who had knowledge and experience in this situation all confirmed a harmonious relationship, and the professionals interviewed, especially Hinkel and Morgan, expressed their appreciation for the amateur and, with Hinkel, pleasure in getting to know just how knowledgeable members are. Beyond hereditary society members’ value as advocates and allies, as I had originally posed, Morgan further insisted on their vitality in accessing and documenting community history. Community history rejects top-down historiographical approaches and instead embraces the local histories told by their respective communities.⁶² It was hereditary society members’ unique involvement in history that was so deeply rooted in specific communities that makes them terrific for engaging communities that might otherwise be overlooked by or inaccessible to academics and professionals.

Morgan’s book, *A Nation of Descendants*, provided insight into the methodology of genealogy outside of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants with colonial roots, particularly for African American people who have more difficulty tracing family members because of the dehumanizing institution of slavery, and Indigenous people who “fall outside the traditions of documentation.”⁶³ In addition to her highlighting of minority genealogies, she was one of only two authors to credit the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Saints with its contribution to genealogical research and the expansion of genealogy beyond the upper classes. She also credited the pop culture influence of television shows like *Roots* and *Who Do You Think You Are* with expanding the more recent genealogy craze. However, Morgan's work acted more like a history of genealogy than a history

⁶¹ Frits Pannekoek, “The Rise of the Heritage Priesthood or the Decline of Community Based Heritage,” (Historic Preservation Forum, Spring 1998, vol. 12. no.3), 5.

⁶² Alison Twells, “Community History,” Community History - Articles - Making History (Institute of Historical Research), https://archives.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/community_history.html.

⁶³ Morgan, *A Nation of Descendants*, 5.

or exploration of hereditary organizations. But, in her writing about the DAR, she provided examples of the DAR's establishment of libraries, mirroring women's suffrage groups, and their more inclusive admissions requirements.⁶⁴ While she correctly identified the blatant racism of the earlier years of the DAR, such as when the DAR refused to let African American singer Marian Anderson sing at Constitution Hall, Morgan's book did not contend with the more recent decades of the DAR, in which the DAR recognized its past wrongdoings.⁶⁵ Her work also did not address DAR's tangible commitment to broadening paths to membership with only genealogy courses, acceptance of DNA evidence, and the creation of Speciality Research guides for those of African American, Spanish, Native American, or Jewish ancestry.^{66 67}

Despite the tendency of some authors to focus on the DAR's political involvement and institutional history, there is so much to be said about the Daughters' role in preservation both before and after the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. According to the DAR's Historic Sites and Properties Database, the DAR currently has a hand in 288 sites of historic significance in all 50 states. In addition to the sites operated or owned by the DAR, they have contributed to or commissioned several large scale memorials, such as the Women in Military Service Memorial and permanent art at the United States Capitol Building, assisted in the marking gravesites and reforestation of the country, and provided literacy outreach to underserved local communities.

⁶⁴ Morgan, *A Nation of Descendants*, 21, 28, 32

⁶⁵ "Dar Launches Archival Project to Celebrate the 80th Anniversary of Marian Anderson's Lincoln Memorial Concert," Daughters of the American Revolution, August 22, 2019, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/media-center/news-releases/dar-launches-archival-project-celebrate-80th-anniversary>.

⁶⁶ "Dar Begins Accepting DNA Evidence and Launches New Online DNA Genealogy Class Family Tree DNA Offers Special Discount on Y-DNA Testing for DAR Application Purposes," Daughters of the American Revolution, July 16, 2014, [https://www.dar.org/national-society/media-center/news-releases/dar-begins-accepting-dna-evidence-and-launches-n](https://www.dar.org/national-society/media-center/news-releases/dar-begins-accepting-dna-evidence-and-launches-new)
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⁶⁷ "Specialty Research," Daughters of the American Revolution, October 26, 2022, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy/specialty-research>.



Figure 3. DAR State Forest located in southeastern Texas. Dedicated in 1929. Courtesy of Texas State DAR.



Figure 4. Portion of the DAR commissioned art in the Capitol Building called “A Bicentennial Tribute to the United States of America”

These findings demonstrated strong relationships between the amateur and professional in active preservation. It is important to note that hereditary societies serving as custodians of history should not be interpreted as gatekeepers of history across the board. Certain hereditary societies, namely the Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy, propagate dangerous versions of history like Lost Cause ideology, but these specific organizations are not representative of nor are they wholeheartedly supported by the broader hereditary society community.⁶⁸ The DAR feels a particular kinship with being American and, more specifically, the American Revolution, but they are by no means exclusionary in separating the American public from their own ancestral history. Outside of chapter meetings, their work is focused on the public’s relationship with the American past, from patriotic events and grave markings to funding historic preservation and research. Hereditary groups embrace the value of the trained professional and dedicate significant sums to supporting preservation projects. For example, the DAR Special Projects Grants program provides \$250,000 annually to preservation projects around the country and uses

⁶⁸ Brendan Wolfe, “United Daughters of the Confederacy & White Supremacy,” Encyclopedia Virginia, November 16, 2020, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/united-daughters-of-the-confederacy-white-supremacy/>.

professional preservationists to score the applications.⁶⁹ These results show professional preservationists and academics that hereditary societies welcome professionals and also that these organizations are valuable resources for historians, curators, and preservationists alike in their research and practice.

In researching the community and culture of hereditary groups, it was fascinating to uncover how these organizations influenced the daily lives of members and what their membership base looks like. Hereditary societies with regular meetings, activities, and programming foster a strong membership base. The importance of these organizations to the individual also affects how members give of their time, expertise, and money to support the organization's cause. The junior members interviewed in this project were divided in both their original goal of joining and somewhat in what they get out of their membership. For the western states, Tanzosh and Wicks both indicated they joined with their mothers as an activity to do together, but ultimately found some fulfillment in taking leadership roles and having a service oriented activity. They both noted that their chapters both have a significant portion of their membership occupied by older generations. However, Carr and Johnson sought out these organizations independent of their families and valued the strong friendships they have made with junior peers in the organizations. Across the junior membership, though, was an agreement that hereditary societies, namely the national multi-chapter organizations like DAR, provide great networks and immediate connections when in a new town. For an increasingly mobile generation of young professionals, setting up a sense of roots was deeply important for junior members.

⁶⁹ "Dar Historic Preservation Grants," Daughters of the American Revolution, June 6, 2022, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/dar-historic-preservation-grants>.

Davies' work engaged the ways in which the DAR created community and a space for women to exercise agency and leadership roles outside the home. Though the DAR did not play a direct role in women's suffrage, it was nevertheless an important part of women's history in the 20th century. Today, the DAR is careful to not overstep its boundaries as an organization focused on preservation and education, lest they lose their 501C3 status, and continues to provide women with opportunities for community engagement, philanthropy, social events, and leadership roles.

As previously stated, Davies' work was foundational in unpacking the history of hereditary societies, but, having been written in the 1950s, lacks what is now 70 years of history and evolution. Pieces of literature written in the intervening period between Davies' and this project only tackled certain parts of the hereditary society community, such as the history of genealogy, neglected areas of history, such as women's and minority histories, or questionable political motivations that translated to public outreach. No authors tied the Daughters' historic past in the preservation movement with their current role as custodians of historic sites and the benefits of their involvement in professional historical work.

These interviews revealed how family oriented these organizations were at heart. While it may sound obvious to highlight that hereditary, i.e. family, societies were family oriented, it was necessary to illustrate that these organizations were filled with a wealth of generational knowledge and intergenerational connection, whether through junior memberships or entire organizations dedicated to youth involvement, such as the CAR. Intergenerational membership indicated that organizations were broad enough to encompass members across the age spectrum. This is significant because, even though junior membership may often be overshadowed by older women of the societies, their commitment to membership when their time is already spread

between careers, studies, relationships, and children suggests the value these memberships give to their lives.

Growing the junior portion of the membership can be difficult, but junior members interviewed suggested chapters schedule meetings and activities on weekends, during non-work hours on weekdays, or offer programming in a hybrid format. Current juniors felt that junior oriented programming and socials would also grow the junior membership. Wheat recommended junior membership must be well integrated with the regular membership, and that their relationship should be one of intergenerational exchange and accountability in their commitment to the organization. Junior membership is a vital part of growing and sustaining membership and renewing organizational investment in the future of preservation. Membership growth was only a small part of this discussion in the interviews conducted, which may allude to members' perception that sustainable growth is not a major concern. Finally, the emotional connection hereditary society members felt to their specific ancestors, and certain portions of history should not be discounted. As discussed in the literature review, one of Mayes' reasons for why historic places matter was the ancestral connection. When asked why they joined, several interviewees used verbs like "honor" and "remember" to describe their motive. These words are verbs that relate to someone other than the self; they are words that describe connection to and delineate service of something greater than the individual.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The amateur ladies of the MVLA were the guardians of a major historic site when no one else would take on the task, and today, the DAR and many other hereditary organizations spearhead preservation projects around the country, both big and small. In unpacking the more recent relationship between the amateur and the professional, the value of the amateur and sincere interest in preservation is a continuous thread. Mayes explained that an estimated 73% of Americans were interested in their family histories.⁷⁰ This estimate is a boon not only for hereditary societies but also historic sites and for-profit services such as Ancestry.com. People are interested in both the tactile connection to their family histories and the stories that go along with them. Hereditary societies' role merits the recognition of their historic achievements and their current commitments to continuously documenting and celebrating community history. The DAR's most recent project, funded by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, will celebrate community history with new historic markers across the country as part of celebrating 250 years since the country's independence.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 85.

⁷¹ "Dar and William G. Pomeroy Foundation® Launch Historic Marker Program to Commemorate Revolutionary America," Daughters of the American Revolution, October 25, 2022, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/media-center/news-releases/dar-and-william-g-pomeroy-foundation%C2%AE-launch-historic>.

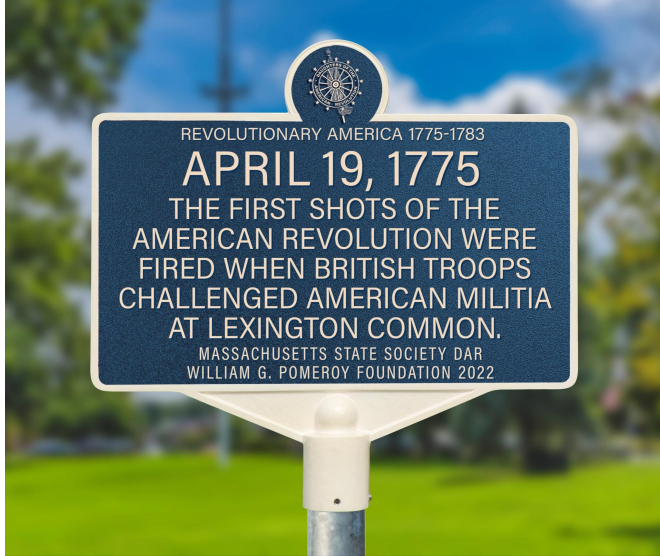


Figure 5. Example of Revolutionary Marker that will be installed as part of a collaboration between the DAR and William G. Pomeroy Foundation. Courtesy of the DAR.

The literature review revealed how women, particularly in the DAR, contributed to the creation of national identity in the post Civil War period, and books by Strayer and Gibbs illustrated the continued serious and professional preservation work undertaken by the DAR. The findings from the interviews explained that a deep historical consciousness was one of the reasons why certain states or regions may have more preservation oriented sites and projects. Members did not mention whether they felt their organizations helped create the national identity. Mendlicott's article illustrated the DAR's presence in the first half of the 20th century as one of conservative values and active political involvement, which is not tolerated today, as it would affect the DAR's 501 (c)3 status. Members even mentioned that they enjoy that hereditary societies are not politically affiliated now.

The issue of the amateur versus the professional was discussed at length in interviews. Though it was not tackled in the reviewed literature to the same extent as in interviews, interviewees explained that women in the early years of hereditary societies were not professionally trained in historic preservation, conservation, or archaeology, because the field of

preservation was not yet professionalized. After their pioneering years in the late nineteenth century, the field had a significant gap in documenting and recognizing hereditary societies' contributions to the field. The findings revealed that amateur status was not necessarily an indicator of a lack of knowledge or a group of "ladies who lunch." Many of the interviewees explained that members tend to have a great knowledge base in history, their own genealogy, and ways to support their society's mission. The findings also confirmed that some 60 years after Strayer and Gibbs' work in the mid twentieth century, the DAR and other women's hereditary societies are still deconstructing negative ideas about their identity. More recent literature also addressed how professionalization risked alienating the necessary amateur.

Davies was the only author encountered in this project that wrote about hereditary societies at length and connected them to the lineage of American historic preservation and the Women's Club Movement. Other than Davies, authors in the intervening period brushed over the community that these organizations created or painted their historic predecessors as part of some militant faction of patriotic women, namely Medlicott. It was understandable that a community would not be treated seriously as a major draw or benefit of membership when outlining quantitative accomplishments like fundraising and the number of sites maintained was much easier and perhaps treated with greater respect. However, at over 190,000 members, the DAR clearly possessed a large community that deserved analysis, and those interviewed for this project agreed that the community forged within hereditary societies was beneficial to them. For some, they gained aunt-like figures to mentor them, and others gained sincere friends among their peers. The network provided was based on more than just genealogy; it was a genuine interest in history, preservation, service, and community.

In *Why Old Places Matters*, Mayes listed that ancestors were one of the ways people connected with historic places. Historic places can feel so removed from the present, and historical figures can feel more literary than literal. Sometimes, it is the connection to someone in your family tree that makes the past real and a historic structure more important, because, as Wheat noted, it “brings you in touch with the emotions of your ancestors.” Uncovering this personal connection explained why descendants hundreds of years later still feel a duty to the past and carry out that duty through preservation, service, and the creation of genealogical literature like Virkus’ *Handbook*. In Morgan’s article, which covered a more historic era of hereditary societies, she linked genealogy to deliberately improving one’s social capital. However, Knowles stated, “In no way by joining any of the hereditary groups do I or any of the people I know that are involved feel like in some way superior to others.” Statements like Knowles spoke to more contemporary feelings about hereditary societies and how these organizations evolved beyond creating or confirming social capital. Morgan’s book also emphasized how genealogy informed one’s identity. This was confirmed in the interviews with members, explaining how they felt a connection to the past, a duty to the future, and a kinship with like-minded members because of these organizations.

The findings in this project largely supported and expanded the literature. This project circulated a more contemporary account of the experience of hereditary societies membership and filled in some of the preservation literature gaps previously outlined. From this project, readers should better understand members’ perceptions, reasons for membership, and the breadth of the hereditary society community. The professionals that had experience with hereditary societies likewise confirmed that these organizations had so much to offer, not just in terms of money and support for historic preservation, but also volunteers and actual historical knowledge.

The amateur greatly contributed to the field as custodians of historic sites and family histories and practitioners of community history. The division between the professional and the amateur is artificial, and a more modern divide codified by the Professional Qualifications Standards from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.⁷² But, a strong partnership between the amateurs in hereditary societies and the professionals showed the permeability of these divisions. Their role should not be discounted or evaluated on a purely historical level, which Mayes explained may be the reason professionals are reluctant to engage members.⁷³ From this work, professionals should see the benefit of a bridged relationship with hereditary societies and actively seek out the amateur as partners in their work.

Recommendations for the Future

In the future, this research can be expanded with more quantitative data to build solutions for growing a sustainable junior membership in hereditary societies. Such research in partnership with the Hereditary Society Community could build data that explains regional, cultural, and generational discrepancies only touched upon in this project. Organization wide surveys or surveys sent out by the Hereditary Society Community, the proverbial encyclopedia for hereditary organizations, with both open format and multiple choice questions, may better produce quantifiable data that could identify the extent of membership issues and propose specific solutions for the growth of junior membership in several organizations. Furthermore, research on and attendance at Hereditary Week may reveal more on how this yearly reunion solidifies interest in hereditary societies, history, and builds community identity.

⁷²Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, *Federal Register* Vol. 48, No. 190, September 29, 1983. Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/FR-1983-09-29>, 44739.

⁷³ Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 88.

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The researcher, Jolie Vanier, from the University of Oregon is asking for your consent to this research. The purpose of this research is to understand the perceived experience of either membership with or employment by a lineage or hereditary organization. You are being asked to participate because of your association with these organizations. 6-10 people will be interviewed for this study. I expect that your participation will last no more than one hour during one visit.

Potential participants will be identified and recruited based on their association with lineage or hereditary organizations or their connection to the field of historic preservation, or both. Potential participants may be identified through previous or present professional connections of the researcher and/or her thesis committee. Potential participants may also be identified through published research, internet searches, or recommendations from the thesis committee or University of Oregon's Department of Historic Preservation. Potential participants will be emailed about their invitation to participate in this study and provided with this informed consent document ahead of their interview. Potential participants that complete this informed consent document are considered official participants of the study, unless they later rescind their consent and request the destruction of any information given to the researcher.

If you agree to participate in this research, your participation will be to answer a series of questions pertaining to your association with a lineage or hereditary organization. There are no right answers, I am interested in your experience as a whole. You may skip any question that makes you uncomfortable and can request to terminate your participation. You may elect to have your name kept anonymous in the final copy of my research. With your permission, your name will be used in my thesis. This study will be conducted via telephone call or zoom call. I would like to record this interview with your permission. Clips from the interview will not be published in any capacity but are useful to me as a record.

I will take measures to protect your privacy. Despite taking steps to protect your privacy, I can never fully guarantee your privacy will be protected. Measures I will take include: your participation by Zoom or telephone will ensure participant privacy, as you may select the setting in which you give your answers. Data will be stored on my personal laptop and discarded after the final submission of my thesis. Individuals and organizations that conduct or monitor this research may be permitted access to and inspect the research records. This may include access to the information you provide to me. These individuals include my thesis committee members.

There may be risks of stress, emotional distress, inconvenience and possible loss of privacy and confidentiality associated with participating in a research study. There are no known direct

benefits to you from participating in this study. However, it is hoped that information gained from this study will help to grow the understanding of the contribution of hereditary and lineage societies to historic preservation.

It is your choice to participate or not to participate in this research. If you do not wish to interview via phone or Zoom, there are no alternatives to your participation. Taking part in this research study is your decision. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to take part in this study, but if you do, you can stop at any time. You have the right to choose not to participate in any study-related activity or completely withdraw from continued participation at any point in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with me or the University of Oregon. You may request your information not be used up to one week after your participation session and the recording of your participation will be deleted. There are no risks associated with terminating your participation. There are no costs associated with this participation in this research study. You will not be paid for taking part in this research. If you have questions, concerns, or have experienced a research related injury, contact the researcher:

Jolie Vanier
(480)231-0072
jvanier@uoregon.edu or joliejvanier@yahoo.com

Statement of Consent

I have had the opportunity to read and consider the information in this form. I have asked any questions necessary to make a decision about my participation. I understand that I can ask additional questions throughout my participation.

I understand that by signing below, I volunteer to participate in this research. I understand that I am not waiving any legal rights. I have been provided with a copy of this consent form. I understand that if my ability to consent or assent for myself changes, either I or my legal representative may be asked to re-consent prior to my continued participation in this study.

As described above, you will be recorded while performing the activities described above. Recordings will be used for analysis only.

Initial the space below if you consent to the use of recordings as described.

_____ I agree to the use of recordings.

With your permission, your name will be used in Jolie Vanier's thesis.

Initial in the space below if you consent to the use of your name as described.

____ I agree to the use of my name and the information and opinions I provide in the interview.

____ I confirm that I am an adult participant, over the age of 18 years old.

Name of Adult Participant _____

Signature of Adult Participant _____

Date _____

I have explained the research to the participant and answered all of his/her questions. I believe that he/she understands the information described in this consent form and freely consents to participate.

Name of Research Team Member _____

Signature of Research Team Member _____

Date _____

Questions for Members:

Name? Location? Hereditary organizations you are involved with?

Leadership experience in these organizations?

What was your first impression of the DAR and other similar organizations?

What are your impressions of the DAR and other lineage organizations now?

What was your experience in applying to be a member? Were members helpful, withholding?

Why did you apply in the first place?

Tell me about your experience as a member. Are you involved?

What was your goal in becoming a member of this organization? Has the goal evolved?

How has DAR impacted your life, positively or negatively?

What do you know about historic preservation?

What do you know about the Daughters' early history?

Do you feel that Daughters and lineage counterparts have a role to play in professional preservation?

What are the benefits of nonprofessional entities such as lineage societies in historic preservation?

How does the DAR work with professionals in preservation, academia, etc? Is the relationship strained?

Do you feel judgment about being a member from non-members, friends, family, colleagues?

What sort of outreach does the DAR and/or your specific chapter perform?

Do you feel that your age range is well represented in your organization and/or chapter? If not, why and is that a concern?

If you have children, do you envision your children being involved?

What skills or qualities do members of organizations possess that academics may lack?

What are the benefits of knitting lineage organizations together with the professional field of historic preservation?

What are the benefits of non-professional entities such as lineage societies in historic preservation?

How are the sites under the DAR's charge being interpreted?

How do you envision the DAR growing?

Questions for Professionals:

Name? Location? Hereditary organizations you are involved with?

Why did you choose to research the practice of genealogy?

What was your first impression of these organizations?

What are your impressions now?

What do you know about historic preservation?

What do you know about the Daughters' early history?

Do you feel that they have a role to play in professional preservation?

What are the benefits of nonprofessional entities such as lineage societies in historic preservation?

Do you know how the DAR works with professionals in preservation, academia, etc? Is the relationship strained?

What do you know about their outreach?

What skills or qualities do professionals possess that members may lack?

What skills or qualities do members of organizations possess that academics may lack?

Are there benefits? If so, What are the benefits of knitting lineage organizations together with the professional field of historic preservation?

What are the benefits of non-professional entities such as lineage societies in historic preservation?

Revisions to the U.S. Department Health and Human Services "Policy for Protection of Human Research Subjects" exclude oral history from IRB review found under section §46.102:

1. Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy,

whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities. For purposes of this part, the following activities are deemed not to be research:

1. Scholarly and journalistic activities (e.g., oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship), including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected.

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