

only fault might be the book's non-prescriptive approach. For those looking for clear directions, you will find instead gentle suggestions, creative encouragement, and honest discussion of pedagogical disappointment. But since problem solving is a core skill of the public historian, you may find adapting the author's practices to be a thrilling exercise.

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Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco's Tenderloin by Joseph Plaster. Durham: Duke University Press, 2023. vii + 289 pp.; abbreviations, notes, bibliography, index; clothbound, \$104.95; paperback, \$28.95.

To explain Joseph Plaster's new book, *Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco's Tenderloin*, it is perhaps best to begin at the end. In 2014, San Francisco opened the Tenderloin Museum. This museum documented the supposed rise and fall of the Tenderloin neighborhood. Known in the 1960s for its upscale housing, the Tenderloin neighborhood was by the 1980s notorious for its visible population of economically marginalized "street kids," who performed youth and vulnerability for white, adult male sexual consumers (10). *Kids on the Street* is the opposite of the Tenderloin Museum. It offers an intervention into the narrative of urban decay, and puts street kids at the center of academic and public storytelling.

As of 2023, Joseph Plaster serves as a Lecturer and Curator in Public Humanities for Johns Hopkins University. *Kids on the Street* reveals his long engagement with public humanities work, from when he was a recent college graduate exploring the archives of the San Francisco GLBT Historical Society after hours to his extensive experience coordinating community-based projects and exhibits. Examining what Plaster dubs the "performative economies" of San Francisco street kids, *Kids on the Street* provides a well-cited academic contribution to queer and urban historiographies while illustrating the potential of public history methods to document street-based activism (5). Drawing upon more than eighty oral histories of the Tenderloin and Polk Street communities, as well as archival research and secondary sources, Plaster argues that street kids survived by practicing a moral economy rooted in reciprocity and mutual exchange. Plaster writes primarily for an academic audience, adding to a historiography that rejects linear notions of queer progress from a supposedly closeted past to a present marked by marriage equality and consumerism. In his intervention into this literature, Plaster argues that queer historians often privilege housed populations, whose records are more likely to be archived, and asks historians to include economically and socially marginalized communities in queer history. For public historians, Plaster offers a model for connecting academic-facing and public-facing scholarship, as well as a methodological frankness that enriches conversations about the ethics of public history work.

Plaster depicts the Tenderloin and Polk Street area of San Francisco as one node in a broader national network of urban districts through which street kids circulated from the late nineteenth to early twenty-first century. Although Plaster is attuned to political and economic transformations during this extensive timespan (for instance, he lays out the impact of midcentury urban redevelopment and the 1980s methamphetamine crisis on street kids), he argues that the social worlds of street kids have shown significant continuities over time. Central to these social worlds, he claims, were the norms of reciprocity that enabled street kids' survival, the presence of "street churches"—which provided both economic support and a moral order that affirmed street kids were worthy of belonging—and the use of riots in response to state and business violations of the community's norms (15).

Of particular interest for public historians is *Kids on the Street's* structure and methodology. Plaster juxtaposes chapters about the world of street kids with two sections, titled "interventions," that describe his public history work in the Tenderloin and Polk Street. The first intervention featured in the book, which Plaster titles "Vanguard Revisited," brought together a cohort of twenty-first century Tenderloin youth to reconstitute the street theater of Vanguard, a 1960s organization of street kids, and engage in conversations that cut across past and present. The second intervention, titled "Polk Street Stories," included mediated storytelling sessions with groups seeking to commemorate different aspects of Polk Street's past as well as an exhibit of audio portraits of longtime Polk Street community members. When conducting these public history projects, Plaster aimed to counter gentrification in the Tenderloin and Polk Street, keeping the neighborhood a home for street youth. By including descriptions of these projects in the book and having them "intervene" into his more conventional academic chapters, Plaster emphasizes both the community-based process through which he developed *Kids on the Street* and its political stakes. Through *Kids on the Street* and his many years of associated public history work, Plaster seeks to center street kids in queer historical memory—not just in San Francisco (although his commitment to the city is clear), but in broader narratives of queer life. Whether or not he has succeeded, however, remains an open question by the conclusion of the text.

Although Plaster's interventions most directly outline the importance of public history to his scholarship, his descriptions of his methodology throughout the text are also valuable for a public history audience. In order to conduct his research, Plaster emphasizes, he had to become part of the networks of reciprocity that he describes. At times, Plaster began his research as a consumer, turning drinks at bars or nights with tricks into connections for oral histories. At other times, he was a volunteer serving meals, or an organizer who leveraged connections to the wealthier parts of queer San Francisco for funds that encouraged street kids to participate in his project. Plaster depicts these multiple roles as part of the trust-building necessary to get sources to speak with him. His frankness about the role of money in making this project possible is provocative, and it

deserves to be included in graduate public history classes. It will enrich discussions about reciprocity in oral history, the nonprofitization of activism, and the ethics of community engagement.

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Lost on the Freedom Trail: The National Park Service and Urban Renewal in Postwar Boston by Seth C. Bruggeman. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2022. xvii + 301 pp.; notes, index; hardcover, \$90.00; paperback, \$29.95.

Lost on the Freedom Trail by Seth C. Bruggeman is a historical monograph that revises and recontextualizes an administrative history of the Boston National Historical Park (BNHP) that the author wrote between 2015 and 2020 under a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service (NPS) and the Organization of American Historians (OAH). *Lost on the Freedom Trail* not only adds another excellent case study to the UMass Press's *Public History in Historical Perspective* series but also provides a much-needed analysis of how the NPS sought to operate a historical park in one of the nation's most historically rich yet socially divided cities. On a broader level, Bruggeman's book offers an extended, granular exploration of a long history of NPS struggles to carry out effective historical interpretation, a story that is outlined in the OAH report *Imperiled Promise: The State of History in the National Park Service* by Anne Mitchell Whisnant, Marla R. Miller, Gary B. Nash, and David Paul Thelen (2011).

Bruggeman's purpose in *Lost on the Freedom Trail* is to explain how the BNHP, which in some respects has been a model for urban national parks, is freighted with prejudices and preoccupations that long antedate the postwar era. In a compelling first chapter, Bruggeman presents the formation of the Freedom Trail in 1951 as a culmination of the crafting of a selective, exclusionary history over many years. Bruggeman argues that influential Bostonians began as early as the 1820s to exhibit some of the mindsets that later guided decisions about creating an urban national park. Among these were a reverence for Revolutionary heroes and an interest in enshrining and turning a profit from Revolutionary-era Boston landmarks. He also sets up a central theme in the book—that of an alignment of federal and local interests on the interlinked agendas of urban renewal and development of the Freedom Trail, which “mapped nineteenth-century ideas about the past onto Boston's twentieth-century streets” (46). This aligning of interests, Bruggeman asserts, thereby preserved and packaged a selective past to generate profit. Chapter 2 introduces the Boston National Historic Sites Commission (established by Congress in 1955) and explores how it began to envision a park inspired by Philadelphia's Independence National Historical Park. Its vision comprised an assemblage of sites managed through cooperative agreements and meshed with broader efforts to use urban renewal to recast the urban landscape.