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# Preserve: Cont'd

## Anthony Carfello

### Preservation

And we will probably be judged not by the monuments we build but by those we have destroyed.

—Ada Louise Huxtable<sup>1</sup>

**A Plausible Scenario:** The American Hotel at 303 South Hewitt Street in Los Angeles has been a microcosm of the surrounding city since its construction in 1906.<sup>2</sup> Despite serving as the first hotel in downtown catering specifically to Black tourists, being an active presence in the prewar Japanese American community, and being home to the legendary Al's Bar art and punk scenes from the 1970s through the 1990s,<sup>3</sup> the building is not on the city's list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.



Photo © American Hotel.

Today it is a fully functioning hotel in the Arts District, owned by Mark Verge—it will

be put up for sale in the early 2020s. One of the many investment groups developing towers downtown will jump up to purchase it—likely calling themselves "303 Hewitt LLC." Via their public relations firm, the anonymous new owners will tell the *Downtown News* and *The Real Deal* that they are "so proud to be a part of L.A. history." One year later, the hotel will no longer take bookings and storefront leaseholders such as Pie Hole and The Rogue Collective will be told that the owners will not renew. Still later, *Curbed L.A.* will write about the building's poor condition and boarded-up windows, how "ghostly" this legend has become. Meetings with the local councilmember—to whom 303 Hewitt LLC will find roundabout ways to donate generously—will reveal that the owners are filing for demolition permits to replace the four-story hotel with sixty-six stories of luxury condos packed with "smart home" amenities.

Since the building is not on the monument list, the few feeble protections available from the city will be useless until the Los Angeles Conservancy, the area's principal preservation organization, files the nomination. Meanwhile, 303 Hewitt LLC will go through the motions: lobbyists smiling, handshakes pumping. At the Planning and Land Use Management committee meetings, 303 Hewitt LLC will claim that they are producing much needed housing in the midst of a crisis and that the original building is beyond repair anyway; they will "offer" to include a yet-unspecified number of affordable housing units. Their spokespeople will whisper and smile during angry public comments at the Cultural

Heritage Commission meeting. The directors of the documentary film *Tales of the American* will appear on KCET. Kim Gordon from Sonic Youth will be interviewed about playing at Al's Bar. Beck, too. If declared a monument, formal objections and two 180-day demolition delays will still be the American Hotel's only official defenses.<sup>4</sup> A chain-link fence will encircle the hotel; signage at the corner of Hewitt Street and Traction Avenue will advertise units and show renderings of the new tower, now dubbed "The Atelier." (or perhaps "Muse")

Once it is clear that the developers will not spare the landmark and that the City Council's approval has been purchased, former Arts District residents—many of whom will be artists—will mount a formidable public shaming campaign. There will be talk of applying for the National Register of Historic Places. City officials will shrug and mumble about property rights and population growth while real estate agents still selling the image of post-industrial creative life will join with the preservationists. A "Save the American" rally outside the building will feature speaker after speaker sharing memories through bullhorns and imploring that the owners reconsider. It will attract a convoy of news vans. After 303 Hewitt LLC is discovered to be part of a scandal-plagued hedge fund, the owners will announce plans for a ground floor art space in the new tower programmed by the Museum of Contemporary Art. The Hauser and Wirth gallery around the corner then will offer to buy the building as-is and repair it as housing for artists. Panel discussions at the

Southern California Institute of Architecture will devolve into shouting matches between those collaborating with 303 Hewitt LLC's plans and those vigorously opposed. The permits will be granted. On the scheduled demolition day, a few dozen preservationists will show up and ...



The American Hotel in its early years.

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Wrecking balls and cranes cast long shadows as the Panama Papers crowd shuffles money around the globe. Vital community spaces are disappeared; empty glass boxes are sent higher and higher. Familiar environments become aloof. The theorist Hannah Arendt observed that "the reality and reliability of the human world rests primarily on the fact that we are surrounded by things more permanent than the activity by which they were produced."<sup>5</sup> Anyone living in a rapidly gentrifying<sup>6</sup> area in the twenty-first century confronts the deterioration of spatial memory, while clichés about the inevitability of changes to our surroundings are only repeated by those profiting from such reshaping. The concept of historic preservation at the dawn of the 2020s, is thus rooted in

apprehension, particularly as seen through the lens of American cities.

In its most overgeneralized understanding, historic preservation can be thought of as the *organized reaction to a threat*. A building or structure or space—which physically documents the culture that gave rise to it—might no longer be around, endangering either the tradition or self-image of that culture *or* acknowledgement by a later culture that currently inhabits the same geographical position.<sup>7</sup> Through time, there have been myriad motivations for countering perceived dangers with this "classic" notion of historic preservation, be they an affirmation of a community's present or previous contributions, the prevention of the removal of beloved or defining icons, the promotion of tourism, or the propagandizing of heritage. Herein, this undertaking is treated as distinct from its conflation with adaptive reuse and real estate schemes.

In the modern era, historic preservation originates alongside nationalist mythmaking trends: from George Washington's Virginia plantation, Mount Vernon, being one of the first such projects in the United States (1850s) to Eugène Viollet-le-Duc's (1814–1879) restorations of French Gothic architecture to the National Trust's preservation of aristocratic houses across the English countryside (1930s). Simultaneously, the preservation we know today is *also* inseparable from early understanding of the impacts of industrialization, especially in the United Kingdom and later the U.S.<sup>8</sup> The Arts and Craft Movement designer/activist William

Morris (1834–1896), the critic John Ruskin (1819–1900), and numerous others realized that mid-nineteenth-century capitalism was swiftly changing both the natural and built environments and that impactful physical spaces should not become victims of so-called progress. Each medieval castle, abbey, or parcel of land left alone was, *for a moment*, a vote against elimination, even if such shouts of resistance quickly died down into calcified patrimony.<sup>9</sup>

In the U.S., early modern preservation after the Civil War was part of cheering on the massive shift from small town life to an industrial economy, with tycoons like Henry Ford and John D. Rockefeller financing the "ritualized presentations of [the country's] preindustrial past," such as Old Sturbridge Village and Colonial Williamsburg, in order to "confirm the superiority of the present: of capitalism, progress, and the American way of life."<sup>10</sup> Over time, efforts turned toward dilapidated architectural masterworks (primarily the homes of the upper class) and the deterioration of single locations associated with an area's most famous resident or activity (mills in the Northeast, for example)—or, just highlighting the oldest house in town. Preservation organizations proliferated, proclaiming places' prominence,<sup>11</sup> "political virtues,"<sup>12</sup> and proximity to patriotic Protestantism. But by the mid-twentieth century,<sup>13</sup> rather than fighting for an aging structure's conservation, preservationists continually had to fight *against* new urban and suburban development (both municipal and private), e.g. the writer Jane Jacobs and her successful safeguarding of Greenwich Village against plans for the Lower

Manhattan Expressway,<sup>14</sup> or the famous failed struggle to save New York's original Penn Station.<sup>15</sup> Since then, the practice has existed in a state of protracted noncompliance with the real estate development industry.

Today, the U.S. federal government's preservation arm, the National Park Service, describes historic preservation as "a conversation with our past about our future,"<sup>16</sup> while the largest private organization, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, warns all that "regret goes only one way ... there is no chance to renovate or to save a historic site once it's gone ... we can never be certain what will be valued in the future"<sup>17</sup>—conveying that a core component of contemporary preservation is prudent *resistance* to short-sighted or selfish decision-making.

From where do such discipline-defining threats usually emerge? As often as the hazards come from outside the locale in peril—emotionally disconnected from the site's endurance or significance—the opposite occurs, where the aggressor is an insider whose personal gain, employment mandate, or ideology<sup>18</sup> outweighs concerns of longevity. It is nevertheless that prospect of obliteration, whether coming from business or government, that distinguishes preservation as a politicized *organizing* effort entirely separate from the upkeep of aging abodes or buildings being rehabilitated for commercial or residential adaptive reuse.<sup>19</sup> Preservation, as suggested in this text, starts with the need for *refusal*.

In Los Angeles, where Hollywood writers know they can always rely on the "evil developer" character type to round out their plots, one sees this dissent on East First Street in Little Tokyo, a National Historic Landmark since 1995 that marks a steadfast refusal to allow previous generations of Japanese Americans to be written out of U.S. history;<sup>20</sup> or, in the Avila Adobe in the heart of El Pueblo de Los Ángeles, a record of stopping the city's intended demolition of its oldest surviving house (1818).<sup>21</sup> The Wiltern Theatre in Koreatown was scheduled for bulldozing in 1979 and saved in part by classic direct-action protest. The boyhood home of Nobel Prize winner Ralph J. Bunche on East Fortieth Place was rescued from both dereliction and anonymity, reiterating a still underserved neighborhood's link to global affairs. Demolition permits issued in 2015 for the iconic Norm's Restaurant on La Cienega Boulevard prompted a flurry of news articles and on-the-ground mobilization to grant the Googie diner monument status. For over a decade, residents of Wyvernwood in Boyle Heights have been fighting against the Miami-based Fifteen Group LLC that still intends to supplant the city's oldest large-scale garden apartments with over 4,000 new market-rate units and 300,000 sq. ft. of commercial space.<sup>22</sup>



Wyvernwood Garden Apartments. From Lauren Walser, "The Fight to Save Wyvernwood, L.A.'s First Large-Scale Garden Apartment," National Trust for Historic Preservation (blog), December 9, 2015. Photo by Los Angeles Conservancy.

While indeed a single-point (and Southern California) perspective of a kaleidoscopic pursuit, historic preservation, in this specific sense,<sup>23</sup> is not a question of how to make something last forever, nor of earning the sympathy of the absolute widest audience; rather, it is a challenge for the right to self-determination. The elimination of a building is an exercise of power. "It is architecture's very impression of fixity that makes its manipulation such a persuasive tool: selective retention and destruction can reconfigure this historical record,"<sup>24</sup> says the author Robert Beven about the oppressive uses of demolition in conflict zones, presenting piles of rubble as war crimes and historical negationism. While removed from actual war, preservation operates with a similar awareness of the analogous dominance asserted by teardowns. In the time between the identification of a threat and its neutralizing (i.e. a successful campaign), preservation signifies a *hostility toward expendability* and a recognition of the antagonizing motives: markets, disinvestment, reinvestment, etc.<sup>25</sup> Knowing that it will be proven over and over again that any place is fair game—especially in the U.S. and even more so in

Los Angeles<sup>26</sup>—preservation as a community organizing action can thus be understood as a form of protest.

But after all is said and done, that spirit of defiance that envelopes the edifice evaporates, suddenly and consistently. While the disposition of refusal will be obliquely demonstrated throughout a building's continued existence, the emphasis inside and out shifts to celebration of the achievement of preservation. In historic districts, blockades become block parties. The refrain is a back-patting "Yay! We *saved* this place," in perpetuity, rather than any kind of ongoing shared analysis of "saved from what?" or warning that: "The forces that made saving this place necessary are coming your way next!"<sup>27</sup> Look at the preservation of Lincoln Place in Venice: a decade-long fight, beginning in 2000, to save a garden apartment complex from the 1950s consisting of fifty-two buildings in an area that was newly gentrifying (at the time), including mass evictions of longtime tenants.<sup>28</sup> Its similarity to Chase Knolls in Sherman Oaks and Wyvernwood in Boyle Heights today is undeniable and preservationists rightly connect the dots but *mobilization* in advance of the attempted displacement of *other* residents of *other* multi-acre apartment complexes (such as Dorset Village) is spearheaded by *other* organizations.<sup>29</sup> While appreciation of a single saved location's importance is underlined on-site, historic preservation projects rarely foreground their collective identity and routinely neglect to use their small platforms to promote popular education among those who will join the

fight in the future—from "woke" back asleep.<sup>30</sup> There are approximately 15,000 historic house museums in the U.S.<sup>31</sup> regularly open to visitors and virtually none of them feel like a local hall of the one big preservation union. With more pins on the map than McDonald's,<sup>32</sup> every historic house museum *could* agitate as well as steward, yet they are far from being anarchist bookstores of architectural legacy.

What so often keeps these sites more "me" than "we?"<sup>33</sup> Is it a vestige of that nationalist "virtue" (individualism) pushed by the U.S.'s early preservationists? Or a circumstance of class, with preservation chiefly seen as a battle among those who own property? Both, and more. Protest is *not* one of the evaluation criteria for the National Register, nor for L.A.'s Monument list. The intention of this text's purposefully narrow view of the practice is to call attention to a worthwhile, defining trait of historic preservation that is usually overwhelmed by connections with complacency or even complicity.<sup>34</sup> What undermines preservation's relation to occupation is a matter of conspicuous discrepancy between the ethos of how and why some place is preserved—an us vs. them offensive singing "We Shall Not be Moved"—and the questions of what is preserved and for whom, too habitually a them vs. us defensive position that becomes a form of navel-gazing.

Evidence in Los Angeles is the recent preservation of the Miracle Mile Irish pub Tom Bergin's, which includes saving the 1949 Tudor bar but placating the Las Vegas-based developer by razing two adjacent

rent-controlled apartments for the construction of new, more expensive ones.<sup>35</sup> In another, the Mendel and Mabel Meyer Courtyard Apartments on North Flores Street in Beverly Grove, the former home of the architect of Grauman's Chinese and Egyptian Theaters, were shielded from bulldozers but the former residents were not safe from eviction.<sup>36</sup> Preservation's protest sensibility is soon overshadowed by suspicions that it is a myopic enterprise fastidiously focused on masterpieces and "curatorial management."<sup>37</sup> The charitable Clifton's Cafeteria on South Broadway mutating into an upscale Mr. Hyde version of itself with an added nightclub after a restoration does nothing to slow down accusations of preservation's alignments with gentrification.<sup>38</sup> The campaign around St. Vibiana's cathedral downtown—where the archdiocese was stopped from demolishing an 1876 church thanks to a partnership with one of the city's leading proponents and beneficiaries of using historic buildings for real estate speculation, Tom Gilmore<sup>39</sup>—likewise sustains the assumption there is no difference between the type of historic preservation that requires organizing and the type of adaptive reuse that sells lofts, bungalows, and brownstones to yuppies. The church was turned into an expensive restaurant and wedding venue.





Case-by-case vilification of historic preservation dilutes the practice's *raison d'être*. But a recurring unwillingness on the part of preservationists to view themselves as akin to progressive organizers, environmental activists, political protestors, or radical utopians *after* their threats dissipate prolongs the disparities described above. This is what perpetuates the growing opinion of historic house museums being irrelevant, upper-crust time capsules<sup>40</sup> and encourages the frustrating appropriation of preservation's counterpositions in the name of exclusivity (i.e. permitting the appearance of "not in my back yard" when the intention is the "right to the city").<sup>41</sup> One case in point is the Case Study House Program, inexhaustibly lauded and included on the National Register. Launched as a mass-scale housing model for Angelenos, the initiative was a failure, but it still produced the portfolio of one-off pinnacles of modernism that today command respect as exemplars of preservation.<sup>42</sup> What better places to play host to discussions of the city's current housing struggles and affordability crises? Planners, tenants' rights organizations, architects, homeless services agencies, land-use attorneys, and more should be welcomed into these testaments to a previous era's civic-scale wrongheaded approach. Instead, one can pay steeply<sup>43</sup> to visit two of twenty remaining houses, while all sit inaccessible in neighborhoods with armed private patrols.

The professor and preservationist Max Page articulates the need for an attitude adjustment:

Preservation does not have to be paired with gentrification, or absent from the poorest areas, or a contributor to the housing crisis. It can, in fact, be a tool for securing more just communities. If preservationists truly care about creating dense cities and towns without pushing out the poor, they will have to offer a new model for saving both buildings and communities. Preservation has to be reconfigured as a social justice movement or else it will have lost its moral compass. Politics inheres in every choice humans make about what to preserve and how to preserve it. The historic preservation movement must be reconfigured as a key ally in a broader movement for social justice.<sup>44</sup>



First Baptist Church, Venice, CA. Photo by James Rafferty.

Members of the First Baptist Church gather every Sunday in the Oakwood section of Venice at the corner of Seventh and Westminster Avenues, coming together as they have for generations since the congregation was first founded as a haven for the Westside Black community nearly 110 years ago.<sup>45</sup> Residents greet the long-time worshippers before prayers are said, songs are sung, and blessings are exchanged. Sometimes a wave comes from a slowly passing vehicle. Helicopters and sunshine above as beach cruisers pass by.

Services are held outside these days since being locked out of the 1967 building in 2017.<sup>46</sup> In a questionable sale,<sup>47</sup> the billionaire owner of *Variety* magazine, Jay Penske, purchased<sup>48</sup> the entire site and has fought the parishioners for the right to build a "two-story home with a four-car garage spread over three lots"<sup>49</sup> for himself around their beloved modern A-frame of flagstone, glass, and wood.<sup>50</sup> While appealing to the city and fighting for control of the church in court, the congregation shows up each week—as they have since 1910<sup>51</sup>—both to exercise their faith and their right to protest. They say that sometimes Penske will pass by and stare.<sup>52</sup> Unlike the American Hotel vignette at the beginning, this story of cartoonish callousness toward history is entirely true.

The fight for the First Baptist Church and the campaign to protect the building return it to the control of the community is exactly where Max Page is imploring preservationists to direct their attention. Members of the congregation tried to have the structure landmarked in December 2018 and were unsuccessful: while the Oakwood resident and scholar Naomi Nightingale argued the case on behalf of Venice locals,<sup>53</sup> Penske contracted the services of the powerhouse Architectural Resources Group. The Cultural Heritage Commission ruled that the location met none of the requisite criteria and the worshippers suffered a major setback. Where was the L.A. Conservancy to organize any kind of counter messaging and pressure the Venice councilmember Mike Bonin to step in?<sup>54</sup> "The vote ... to reject the monument was disappointing to the small

group of supporters in the audience"<sup>55</sup>— Why was the group small and where was the larger preservation "movement"? Certainly not full of the passionate praxis that Max Page pleads for, nor marshaling support out of awareness that "an injury to one is an injury to all." Why were Venice activists the only ones writing about this when the screenplay practically writes itself? Where were the historic house museums, the preserved locations that regularly encounter a public to inform? All were nowhere to be found.

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1. Ada Louise Huxtable, "Farewell to Penn Station," *New York Times*, October 30, 1968, 38, <https://nycarchitectureandurbanism.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/huxtable-farewell-to-penn-station-1963.pdf>.
  2. It was designed by architects Morgan and Wells and opened as The Canadian Hotel.
  3. The archives of which are held at by the University of California, Los Angeles.
  4. "What Does Historic-Cultural Monument Status Mean?" Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, accessed November 2019, <https://preservation.lacity.org/commission/what-does-historic-cultural-monument-status-mean>.
  5. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition: A Study of the Central Dilemma Facing Modern Man* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959) quoted in Robert Beven, *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War*, 2nd ed. (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 24.
  6. Using the definition of the School of Echoes, Los Angeles: "Gentrification is the displacement and replacement of the poor for profit," [https://www.pitzer.edu/manifesto/wp-content/uploads/sites/104/2018/02/Ultra-Red\\_School\\_of\\_Echoes\\_Broadsheet-School-of-Echoes-2017-Anti-Gentrification-Syllabus.pdf](https://www.pitzer.edu/manifesto/wp-content/uploads/sites/104/2018/02/Ultra-Red_School_of_Echoes_Broadsheet-School-of-Echoes-2017-Anti-Gentrification-Syllabus.pdf).



7. Certainly, there are limitless possibilities for which accompanying variations and interpretations of "culture" may be invoked.
8. Diane Barthel, "Historic Preservation: A Comparative Analyses," *Sociological Forum* 4, no. 1 (March 1989): 89–93; 100–102.
9. And one that regularly has neglected to ask, "who is preserving what for whom?" Ibid., 97.
10. Ibid., 101.
11. Still, in the same vein as footnote 7, the answers to what was preserved for whom, by whom, are innumerable.
12. "In the United States, the first wave of preservation contributed to a larger effort at creating an appropriate political mythology for a people without king or crown. ... the preservationist crusade in America early assumed a didactic posture more directed toward inculcating political virtue rather than, as in Great Britain, encouraging aesthetic appreciation or moody reflection on nature." Barthel, "Historic Preservation," 101; and 93; 99.
13. Before the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966.
14. Oliver Wainwright, "Street fighter: how Jane Jacobs saved New York from Bulldozer Bob," *The Guardian*, April 30, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/apr/30/citizen-jane-jacobs-the-woman-who-saved-manhattan-from-the-bulldozer-documentary>.
15. Nick Bryant, "How Penn Station saved New York's architectural history," *BBC*, May 28, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-32890011>.
16. "What is Historic Preservation?" National Park Service, accessed November 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/what-is-historic-preservation.htm>.
17. Julia Rocchi, "Six Practical Reasons to Save Old Buildings," National Trust for Historic Preservation (blog), November 10, 2015, <https://savingplaces.org/stories/six-reasons-save-old-buildings>.
18. The YIMBY (Yes in My Back Yard) movement promotes laissez-faire approaches to housing development, in terms of decreased regulation and a trickle-down housing affordability. Some adherents dismiss historic preservation efforts as limitations on construction opportunities. See Cate Corcoran, "Is Historic Preservation Elitist?" *Brownstoner*, July 22, 2015, <https://www.brownstoner.com/history/is-historic-preservation-elitist/>; however, "it is wrong to blame the preservation movement for the lack of affordable housing when the real estate industry, supported by city administrators, seems focused on luxury housing." Max Page, *Why Preservation Matters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 112–114.
19. Adaptive reuse is the practice of using extant buildings for purposes unrelated to their original design. It is an endeavor frequently incorporated into gentrification schemes and will be discussed in the forthcoming third part of this text.
20. And the fight continued this past year over land lease rights for the Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC). See Kenji C. Liu, "Fate of Little Tokyo's First Street North to be Determined This Year," *Rafu Shimpo*, March 4, 2019, <https://www.rafu.com/2019/03/fate-of-little-tokyos-first-street-north-to-be-determined-this-year/>; and Press Release, GFBNEC, June 5, 2019, [http://www.goforbroke.org/news/press\\_releases/press\\_060519.php](http://www.goforbroke.org/news/press_releases/press_060519.php).
21. William D. Estrada, "Los Angeles' Old Plaza and Olvera Street: Imagined and Contested Space," *Western Folklore* 58, no. 2, Built L.A.: Folklore and Place in Los Angeles (Winter 1999): 114.
22. Roger Vincent, "Towering ambitions for Boyle Heights," *Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 2008, <https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-boyle11jan11-story.html>.
23. Here as opposed to more self-interested forms of historic preservation that do not involve community organizing, such as homeowner projects undertaken as part of the CA State Mills Act, those realized explicitly for real estate ventures or to increase property values, or commercial and residential adaptive reuse, which is different than the preservation described here and will be discussed in the forthcoming third part of this text.
24. Beven, *Destruction of Memory*, 24.
25. "Preservation and the NYC Landmarks law are a check on unrestrained market capitalism. Preservation and the NYC Landmarks law are an assertion of a public demand for history and education and quality of life (and other qualities) that are not accurately valued by (and therefore

not supplied by) an unfettered capitalist system." David Calligeros, "Is Preservation Elitist?" Remains (blog), July 31, 2015, <http://www.remains.com/blog/2015/07/is-preservation-elitist/>; Page, *Why Preservation Matters*, 38; 72–77; 112–125; 154.

26. One can speculate on which structures and spaces would be "truly" protected and unable to be demolished on purpose in any scenario—in most countries, they would likely be places associated with the government's identity, at that moment.

27. "Do Not Forget, Remember and Warn!" reads the plaque at the renovated Sarajevo City Hall (Vijećnica). It was formerly home to the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was shelled during the siege in 1992. See Guido Incerti and Senka Ibrisimbergovic, "Sarajevo peaceful and multicultural," *Abitare*, February 5, 2017, <http://www.abitare.it/en/habitat-en/historical-heritage/2017/02/05/sarajevos-city-hall-restoration/>.

28. See Vince Echavaria, "Venice: Evicted Lincoln Place Tenants Express Frustration to L.A. Mayor At Del Rey Event," *The Argonaut*, December 15, 2005, <https://argonautnews.com/venice-evicted-lincoln-place-tenants-express-frustration-to-l-a-mayor-at-del-rey-event/>; AIMCO - The Lincoln Place Evictions, Mar Vista Tract (blog), [http://marvistatract.org/Lincoln\\_Place\\_Evictions.html](http://marvistatract.org/Lincoln_Place_Evictions.html).

29. In this case of Los Angeles, groups such as the Crenshaw Subway Coalition, People Organized for Westside Renewal (POWER), Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), Unión de Vecinos, and the Los Angeles Tenants Union.

30. Noted exceptions are found locally of late not in traditional preservation organizations but in varying media projects or events, such as those of the preservationists Kim Cooper and Richard Schave (Esotouric), the tours of Maryam Hosseinzadeh, and growing numbers of social media accounts and art works.

31. Stephanie K. Meeks, "House Museums: A 20th Century Paradigm," *National Trust for Historic Preservation* (blog), October 30, 2013, <https://savingplaces.org/press-center/media-resources/house-museums-a-20th-century-paradigm>; and "What To Do With These Old Houses," *The Pew Charitable Trusts*, April 30, 2008,

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2008/04/30/what-to-do-with-these-old-houses-spring-2008-trust-magazine-briefing>.

32. Patrick Sisson, "Rethinking the modern house museum," *Curbed*, October 12, 2018, <https://www.curbed.com/2018/10/12/17967794/museum-home-wright-historic-preservation>.

33. Thinking of Muhammed Ali's succinct Harvard poem.

34. "Repeatedly, it has been the case that when an area is considered 'ripe' for preservation, it is also 'ripe' for gentrification and for a major change in residents from working-class minorities to middle- and upper-class whites." Barthel, citing a paper she had presented in Philadelphia in 1979, "Historic Preservation," 100.

35. The rent-controlled units will be replaced but their residents will not have a guaranteed right of return. A small portion of affordable housing is part of the planned 209-unit project, but the problems of developer-driven affordable housing is the subject of another text. In the meantime, see Jenna Chandler, "The big problem with affordable housing," *Curbed L.A.*, June 25, 2019, <https://la.curbed.com/2019/6/25/18659812/affordable-housing-los-angeles-covenants-expire>; and Alan Mallach, "Whose Affordable Housing?" *Shelterforce*, February 19, 2019, <https://shelterforce.org/2019/02/19/whose-affordable-housing-crisis/>.

36. Bianca Barragan, "Updated Beverly Grove condos designed by Egyptian Theatre designer hit the market," *Curbed L.A.*, July 16, 2019, <https://la.curbed.com/2019/7/16/20696612/beverly-grove-condos-meyer-apartments-for-sale>. Along the lines of footnote 30, the preservationist Steven Luftman worked with tenant organizers during his fight against eviction from the Meyer Apartments. He lost his home, but the buildings are still there and inhabited by wealthier people—preserved at the expense of what?

37. James Marston Fitch quoted in Page, *Why Preservation Matters*, 89. This notion also raises questions of the work to keep long-running small businesses open (such as the city of San Francisco's Legacy Business Program) while their cities change around them and dedicated customers are priced

out of the region. Which will be the focus, the single "human-interest story" or the linked local impacts of economic inequality?

38. It has even ceased to function as a cafeteria. See Elina Shatkin, "Clifton's Closed Its Cafeteria And Nobody Noticed," *LAist*, November 28, 2018, [https://laist.com/2018/11/28/cliftons\\_closed\\_its\\_cafeteria\\_and\\_no\\_one\\_noticed.php](https://laist.com/2018/11/28/cliftons_closed_its_cafeteria_and_no_one_noticed.php).

39. "Vibiana," Los Angeles Conservancy, accessed November 2019, <https://www.laconservancy.org/issues/vibiana>; Ed Leibowitz, "The Dreamer: How Developer Tom Gilmore's Wild Idea Launched the Downtown Loft Craze," *Los Angeles Magazine*, July 1, 2004, <http://www.lamag.com/longform/how-developer-tom-gilmores-wild-idea-launched-the-downtown-loft-craze/>; Bianca Barragan, "Developer who launched Downtown loft bonanza now buying in Chinatown," *Curbed L.A.*, June 13, 2019, <https://la.curbed.com/2019/6/13/18661440/chinatown-development-tom-gilmore>.

40. See Ruth Graham, "The great historic house museum debate," *Boston Globe*, August 10, 2014; and Deborah E. Ryan and Franklin D. Vagnone, *The Anarchist's Guide to Historic House Museums* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016).

41. See footnote 17 and one examples of such a straw man argument: Joe Cortright, "Historic Preservation: NIMBYism for the Rich?" *Strong Towns*, June 14, 2017, <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2017/6/13/historic-preservation-nimbyism-for-the-rich>.

42. The houses are indeed magnificent living documents of Southern California history and their conservation is important. Nevertheless, *Arts and Architecture* magazine verbalized their intention for greater impact than the Case Study House Program achieved. See "Announcement," *Arts and Architecture*, January 1945, [http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/pdf01/csh\\_a\\_nouncement.pdf](http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/pdf01/csh_a_nouncement.pdf); and Colin Marshall, "Our Car Culture Is Not a Problem," *Boom California* (Spring 2016): 58–64, <https://boom.ucpress.edu/content/ucpboom/6/1/58.full.pdf>.

43. The Stahl House, Case Study House #22, can be visited for a cost of \$60–\$90 depending on the time of day. The exterior of the Eames House, Case Study House #8, can be seen for \$10, the interior for \$275.

44. Page, *Why Preservation Matters*, 108.

45. Mike Bravo, "The First Baptist Church of Venice: A Brief History," *Save Venice*, November 23, 2017, <http://savexvenice.com/the-first-baptist-church-of-venice-a-brief-history/>. Writers and Venice residents Mike Bravo and Jon Wolff have covered this story extensively in the *Venice Beachhead*.

46. See "Join the Fight to Save The Historic First Baptist Church of Venice," *Save Venice*, accessed November 2019, <https://savexvenice.com/campaigns/save-historical-black-church-venice-ca/>.

47. The pastor was challenged in a lawsuit. "Former members took Allen to court, and a judge ruled he violated his fiduciary duty to the church and committed fraud. The sale, however, was a done deal." Kate Cagle, "Venice Pastor Defends Controversial Decision to Sell Church," *Spectrum News 1*, December 13, 2018, <https://spectrumnews1.com/ca/la-west/news/2018/12/13/venice-pastor-defends-controversial-decision-to-sell-church>.

48. "The First Baptist Church, after taking out millions of dollars in loans and suffering from declining membership, sold its property for \$11.8 million in early 2017, according to court records." Robert J. Lopez, "Op-Ed: The First Baptist Church has closed, a symbol of Venice's shrinking black population," *Los Angeles Times*, June 8, 2018, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-lopez-venice-first-baptist-church-20180608-story.html>; Jon Wolff, "Horace Allen and the First Baptist Church of Venice," *Venice Beachhead*, December 28, 2019, <https://freevenicebeachhead.com/bishop-horace-allen-and-the-first-baptist-church-of-venice/>.

49. Lopez, "Op-Ed."

50. "'The strategy was to convert the existing building into a residence and that was viewed as sort of the least impactful solution to this site,' says Thibodeau, who insists he has no plans to knock down the building. 'Basically, [we're going to] keep the form of the building and work around that to keep the residence they're going to raise their kid in.'" Jennifer Swann, "The fight over the First Baptist Church of Venice," *Curbed L.A.*, December 15, 2017, <https://la.curbed.com/2017/12/15/16780810/first-baptist-church-venice-jay-penske>.

51. The congregation was founded in Santa Monica in 1910 and relocated to Venice soon after.
52. Conversation with the author, January 27, 2019.
53. Jon Wolff, "The Fight for The Oakwood Church Continues," *Venice Beachhead*, January 6, 2018, <https://freevenicebeachhead.com/the-fight-for-the-oakwood-church-continues/>;  
"Recommendation Report: Statement of Significance," Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 48–56, <https://planning.lacity.org/StaffRpt/InitialRpts/Item%2006%20CHC-2018-5305-HCM.pdf>.
54. Bonin has been noncommittal at best, conspiratorial at worst throughout the campaign. Mike Bravo, "Mike Bonin Walks Out On Black History," *Venice Beachhead*, September 23, 2018, <https://freevenicebeachhead.com/mike-bonin-walks-out-on-black-history/>.
55. Emily Elena Dugdale, "Commission rules First Baptist Church of Venice will not become a monument," KPCC, December 7, 2018, <https://www.scpr.org/news/2018/12/07/87448/commission-rules-first-baptist-church-of-venice-wi/>.

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