Colton California

Preserving Historical Architecture at

“The Crossroads of the San Bernardino Valley”

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Pitzer In Ontario
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FORWARD

The door to the Mayor’s office was glass with a black metal frame. Across the middle of the door was a glossy silver handle, and I grasped the cool metal as I pulled it open and slipped inside. The secretary beamed up at me as I walked up to the desk while thinking silently to myself, “Well, here goes nothing!”

Stuck at a somewhat frustrating turning point in my internship, I had decided to take the day and accumulate any information I could find related to my project. I had driven out to Colton on a solo trip with my video camera and spent around two hours exploring and documenting the cities antique architecture and various landmarks. About to pack up the camcorder and head back west, I decided on a whim to make one last visit to the Civic Center on La Cadena, the main road out of town.

“Yes, excuse me. I was hoping to ask you a few questions.”

“Go right ahead.”

“I am working with a non-profit organization that is interested in researching and developing historical architecture throughout this area. I have been driving around and have noticed decorative ridge caps on many of the roofs, and was hoping you might have, or know someone who might have, some more information on these features.”

“Right. So, wait. Why...uh, what are these again?”

I broke into a sheepish grin and donned a look that suggested I understood the markedly random request as well as her reason for being confused.

“I go to Pitzer College and I am interning with an organization called the Inland Heritage Group. We are working on a project that involves the ridge caps, or decorative features that line the top of certain homes, and we are looking to help preserve them as they represent a part of Colton’s history that may very well be lost forever. I was thinking there might be a slight chance you may know something about them.”

“Okay, r-i-d-g-e-c-a-p-s. I’ll see what I can do.”

She scribbled for a few seconds on a sticky note and then disappeared into the back. A few seconds later she re-emerged with an older lady, and I began the explanation once again. This time however, it produced concrete results.

Despite her initial agitated reaction upon being summoned at that moment, the second lady proceeded to seriously ponder what I was saying (I would like to think that it was my constant eye-contact that softened her up to my cause, but who can really know anyways...)}
She told me there was a man named Larry Sheffield who she could put me in contact with, and at that moment my entire semesters work began to coalesce into a definable and substantial topic: Historical Preservation.

Out of the multitude of experiences I learned from throughout this term, it was this unfolding that provided me with the greatest insight into the nature of academic research and community engagement. We can talk all we want about what methods work in what situations and for what types of research, but the most important underlying assumption is that one must throw their self completely into the process of their research if they hope to find meaningful results (respecting the plentiful ethical dilemmas of course). This theme has emerged, resonated, and become apparent to me throughout the process of my research and the evolution of this final paper.
INTRODUCTION

If I were compelled to select one phrase that accurately portrayed my overall experience this year in the Ontario Program, it would be “Nothing ever turns out how you think it will.” And if I were, in reflection of this semester, to create my own response to this saying, it would be, “…and that is perfectly ok!” It was within this uncertainty and constant reshuffling of approaches during my internship that I found the most creative and unexpected developments in my project. Over the course of this semester I worked to take my project from affecting purely local concepts and change, to an effort that symbolized much larger issues and dealt with concepts that could potentially prove to be critical in today’s climate of rapid change.

As much as our discussion-based work this semester was to trace the relationship between larger structuralized challenges within contemporary social issues and their subsequent effects on the everyday community member, I view my internship as a way to study an everyday experience and explore how it ultimately traces back to the larger structures we read about. Through this comprehensive approach to community research projects, we gain the ability to identify and articulate the “how and why” of these largely invisible forces that dictate much of our interaction today, and thus how we can effectively move to further the cause of each of our chosen projects within those parameters.

I struggled this semester to connect my highly specific project to the larger issues we were learning about in class. However, it was through this struggle that we uncovered the most important purposes of our efforts. In this paper I will share
the evolution of this project, and how it’s message ultimately proves to be more relevant than one might think to our built environment and the decisions we will have to make regarding it in the near future.

Before we discuss the details of my internship this year, I would like to include some about myself, for my positionality is intimately tied to my perception of the situation and thus how my research is presented.

Marin County is the kind of place that, knowing what I do now about the state of the world, provided a heaven that pumped out incredible childhood experiences. Whether we knew it or not, my friends and I were spoiled. Fortunately I was raised with super conscious parents who, despite the additional affect of me being an only child, managed to provide me with the experiences and advice that resulted in me being aware of the incredible blessing it is to live the way I do.

Looking back upon my life to date, I have identified a number of events that I feel have largely influenced the person who I have become today and the perspective that I bring to the table. During spring break of 2005 my father passed away in Mexico while we were swimming in the ocean. Needless to say it was an experience that I will never completely get over, and am still learning from today.

More than anything else this experience compelled me to dive deeper into the “bigger questions” in life. I hold the belief that every last problem we have in society can be solved by changing ourselves through the constant act of mindfulness and pursuing a greater understanding of our capabilities. I have experienced that it is from this knowledge that arises the awareness of how to solve the problems we face in our daily lives. Much of the conflict I see today is because of a direct violation
of one of the first rules I ever learned at my elementary school, “Treat others as you would like to be treated”. This idea was reinforced in me first hand during several incredible experiences that took me around the world.

The summer before my senior year of high school I worked with a non-profit organization based out of the Bay Area called YouthGive. I co-lead a youth group from around the country on a three-week trip to South Africa and Zambia to investigate how microfinance could be used to address problems such as malaria and access to clean water. We used flip-cameras to record our experiences and then created short documentary videos about our topics.¹ It was my first experience of going into a place and systematically addressing an issue in order to benefit a community. It was the trip that embodied in myself that “if you have the ability (to help), you have a responsibility to use it”.

The third experience occurred this last year during the time I took off from school. I had the incredible opportunity to travel to South-East Asia. During the last two weeks of my trip my friend and I volunteered at the Cambodian Children's Fund, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Our time was spent teaching English and surveying the trash heaps where most of the children had previously lived.² Walking through the village and hearing stories of where the kids I was teaching came from was what changed my life. I had formed a connection with many of the children, and seeing the extreme and often brutal circumstances they once lived in was truly heartbreaking. I feel as if it was

¹ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cp5jlp6ijcU
² An article I wrote about my experience: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/youthgive/from-tinseltown-to-the-tr_b_681742.html
this period that I realized I really had a passion for helping those less fortunate. Whether it be through spoken word, volunteering, or preserving historical architecture, I realized in how many ways it is possible to affect positive, and many times critical change in someone's life, and possibly help give them the tools to do it for themselves.

This is what ultimately led me to the Ontario Program at Pitzer College. I saw first hand the effect that structure and space have on communities, and I sincerely want every living person alive to benefit from what their communities can offer them, and vice versa.

And it was this that drew me to the Inland Heritage Group, as well as my desire to manually work on redevelopment projects and learn more about how Non-profits are organized. A group of 4 students and I met with Jan Taylor, CEO of IHG, in February and we began to envision what our semesters project would look like.

In order to better understand how this project relates to the larger issues we have been focusing on in class, we can explore the various contemporary perspectives within the topic of "Historical Preservation." This topic did not present itself as a focus of immediate investigation, but through the trial and error of our group process, it emerged as the dominant issue relating to our project. But before explore these concepts it is helpful to get a clearer idea of how the Inland Heritage Group is connected to these projects. I have included some general information about the organization.

Research paper #2
Write 3-4 pages regarding your internship site’s history, mission, goals/objectives, primary social issues, funding, staff roles, internal hierarchies, relationship to community and “clients”, and organizational culture.

For my internship I am working with the Inland Heritage Group (IHG). IHG has founded as a result of a job that Jan, Matt, and Quinn completed in Ontario. Officially called a “receivership”, they reconstructed an old mid-century property and began to wonder what it would be like if they needn't be constrained by certain legalities and codes. Thus they founded IHG, an idea for a non-profit organization in which they could develop historical properties and put them sustainably back on the market for an affordable price without having to deal with legal riff-raff.

IHG’s mission statement essentially says just that, “To preserve and archive relevant housing stock in the Inland Empire”. They sustainability factor comes into play when we look at the organization goals and objectives. These are, according to Jan, “To participate, acquire and partner on relevant architectural projects throughout the Inland Empire with an emphasis on sustainability and preservation.”

Naturally some of the most pressing social issues IHG deals with relates to housing affordability and living in a healthy environment amidst pressing economic concerns and the depressed monotony of mass residential housing development projects (Ok, I guess I DO have some biases…😊). This is complimentary to the issues surrounding historical preservation in general, which I have outlined in a separate (and included) Literature Review.

IHG’s funding consists entirely of the stipend it receives from Pitzer College. Other than that, Jan, Matt and Quinn volunteer their time to work with Pitzer student’s on projects that are directed towards their goals and objectives.
Jan is the President of the Inland Heritage Group. Matt is the Vice President and Quinn is the Secretary. Matt and Quinn are brothers. For the most part all three folks work together on the Organization’s projects, but for my internship I mostly dealt with Jan. Although I have no evidence of this, I get a feeling that Matt and Quinn were somewhat uninterested in the ridge cap project, and decided to spend their time on another cause. This gives n partial insight into the internal dynamics of the group, and who has the final say when it comes to what projects we work on during the semester.

IHG’s relationship with the surrounding community and City officials is “Good”. Other than natural “back-and-forth” that is the industry standard in the real-estate business, I have observed our interactions as mostly pleasant and intriguing. People are generally interested in the historical identity of their residence and community, and they usually enjoy talking about what they know about where they live and any other relevant information regarding inquiries we may have had.

Currently Jan searches for new projects and appropriately directs IHG’s resources towards the current projects they are working on. When Jan finds a project he will pitch it to Matt and Quinn and they will decide what further steps to take, if any. IHG is currently still unapproved for official NGO status despite an 8-month process with the IRS peppered with miscommunication and trivial details.

Despite natural postponements due to an imperfect IRS service, I can’t help but draw a connection between the unapproved status of IHG’s non-profit application, and the general indecision and reserved attitude towards our project during the semester. I recognize that this is because IHG is a “side project” away
from the members’ main work, and that many of the imperfections result from the limited amount of time participants have to address organizational challenges. Now that we know more about IHG we can continue to examine the main perspectives of Historical Preservation.

Literature Review
Historical Preservation

Historical preservation has burst into the collective consciousness of man relatively recently along our journey as a civilization. It is a topic that has warranted few investigations, but is gaining rapid momentum and relevance as we begin to address many of today’s challenges. It is an idea that seems to possess an uncomplicated implication, but when taken into context with ideas such as social issues and sustainable development, the complexities and potentials begin to become apparent.

Current perspectives regarding historical preservation have not been crystallized into a predominant attitude on the subject, although from personal experience our social stereotype seems to tell us it is an activity partaken by the grassroots/activist type. The different thoughts and contributions to the issue mostly fall dialectically between those in favor and those who oppose the concept.

Christine Boyer’s “The City of Collective Memory: It’s Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments” and Mike Davis’ “City of Quartz” represent an oppositional perspective and investigation into the modern complicating processes, respectively, that undermine the general goals and purpose of historical preservation. Boyer tells us that historic preservation is still influenced by 19th
century procedures and perspectives on building and construction, and hence deserves no consideration when taking into account contemporary city building and general construction\textsuperscript{3}. She says that current construction philosophies include methods that contain remnants of structural solutions for dated building challenges that no longer exist.

But for whatever the reason is for abandoning this idea, Davis explains to us the current relationship between historical preservation and the current political and economic forces that are currently acting against it. Davis uses the greater Los Angeles area as a case study for other cities across the country, and reminds us that it represents the best and worst of our capitalistic ideology\textsuperscript{4}. He informs us that the nature of historical preservation has no applicability to the processes of capitalism and growth, for expansion and (re) development are the fundamental beliefs.

This directly conflicts with the idea of preserving old buildings and creating on top of past structures. Consequently you get institutionalized barriers that discourage the habit, however discrete or blatant the barriers may be. Examples would range from public legislative laws or business ventures placing some form of restriction on the practice (such as planned communities) to more subtle clues of what “new styles” are popular and indicative of good taste, unofficially yet originally propagated by those very laws stated above. But there are certainly those who fight for those rights to keep around remnants from the past, and there are good amounts of people doing it.

\textsuperscript{3} Boyer – “The City of Collective Memory...” – 1

\textsuperscript{4} Davis – “City of Quartz” - 18
The major views I collected in favor of historical preservation broke down into two inclusive justifications. The first deals mainly with the idea of sustainability. The second claims that historical preservation is good in itself. Sorenson's "Managing Megacity" and "Historical Preservation" by N. Tyler, I. Tyler, and Ligibel provide us with the sustainable potentialities of historic preservation.

Sorenson begins by enlightening us to the scientific fact that currently over half of the world's population resides within the urban limit, a.k.a. "the city". He stresses the idea that the city-structure is absolutely essential to global survival as more and more people flock to big cities in hopes of acquiring resources, to put it broadly. He recognizes the current economic crisis and disintegration of old systems and offers the path of “green” infrastructural re-development as the long-term solution to our current challenges. The piece “Historic Preservation" affirms this philosophy from a very similar direction.

The basic, but powerful idea behind this piece is opposing the idea of consuming more “new” and throwing away the “used”. It’s important to realize that this philosophy is still “pro-growth” but rather conditionally, in that the “new” literally needs to be built “upon the old”. The author’s bring up the interesting meaning of the word “pre-serve” as literally contributing to the future, and not just for a short period of time. Although he does mention a Chinese philosophy that carries disdain for material remnants of the past as symbolic barriers for the new

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5 Sorenson – "Managing Megacity" - 1
X There are multiple articles referenced starting with “Historical Preservation”. This one refers to the one co-authored by Norman Tyler, along with two others. See Bibliography.
7 Norman Tyler, Ted Ligibel, and Ilene Tyler. See Bibliography.
creative processes to manifest, I believe this doesn’t apply to our contemporary circumstances and our need to be creative in the ways we organize the increasing number of people we have migrating to urban centers. Paul Philippot introduces us to the beneficent factors that address the nature of preservation in itself.

In Philippot’s version of “Historical Preservation” he insists that historical preservation is our modern way of maintaining a relationship with “cultural works of the past” ⁸. He argues that while the industrialization era made available the resources for humankind to exponentially grow as it did, it also severed our continuous connection, consciously and subconsciously, with our historical origins as a species throughout nature and, some feel, from the beginning of our time. We now view “history” as a completed event rather than a continuous moment, and although it allows for a new approach to historical knowledge, it couldn’t offer the same continuity of tradition ⁹. It is this connection with history we seek to nurture through historical preservation, as this need for identity that is inherent in our human nature.

As if we hadn’t gotten it by now, Philippot leaves us with one last analogy of “language” as a way to polish our understanding. He ventures that the unique artifacts and styles that are product of the past are unique and cannot be recreated. Just like a language, one can understand Latin but not speak it because the true significance and “genuine voice” is lost to the past. He goes on to say that it is this “genuine voice” that we need to preserve and protect. But as genuine a voice these

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⁸ Philippot “Historical Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, and Guidelines, 1” – 268
⁹ Philippot -1
historic prospects might be, there is one perspective that has much more superficial constructions.

Carol M. Rose is assured of herself when, in her “Preservation and Community” piece, she state’s that in 1979 historical preservation became “vogue”, widely culturalized, and governmentally endorsed. She goes on to observe that despite it’s trendy appeal, when budget cutters took the floor in Washington, it was an immediate target, and is increasingly losing it’s relevance in the official governmental conscience today. Now that we have gained a realistic understanding of the larger roles played in Historical Preservation, we are ready to look more in depth at the nature of this years IHG project.

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Inland Heritage Group
Pitzer In Ontario Internship
Spring 2011

**Topic:** The city of Colton is home to some of the only known “ridge caps” in the world, but many of these are disappearing fast for a multitude of reasons that fail to take into account the benefits of preserving structures. Who built the ridge caps, and
when? What is their function? What is the “story” that they tell? These are the questions we have been asking this semester.

**Thesis:** By preserving Colton’s rare ridge caps we are benefitting the community in multiple ways ranging from improving individual homes to preserving Colton’s genuine character in the midst of a societal system that requires change.

**Research Question:** What was the justification for building the ridge caps, and what can we do to help make sure they don’t continue to disappear?

**Significance:** We hope to have this project culminate in a publication highlighting Colton’s rare ridge caps so that these voices do not get lost in time, and help instead to define this sprawling community and give a greater significance to it’s purpose and future functions within the San Bernardino Valley and greater Southern California area.

**Description of My Research Project**

For my research project I will be observing, and participating in work being done by the Inland Heritage Group (IHG). It is an existing CBR initiative at Pitzer College. The IHG is a Non-Profit organization that works to educate, promote and preserve the architectural heritage of communities through the renovation, restoration and rehabilitation of real property utilizing historical, modern and recycled design concepts with a focus on affordability and sustainability. Jan Taylor is the C.E.O. of this group and his employees Matt and Quinn have been working with us since the beginning.

Since our first meeting Jan has proposed a research project that, since, we have only completed preliminary work on. It turns out that Colton has a specific
kind of architecture that is unique to the city. On many of the old homes in northern Colton exist ridge-caps that line the main beams on roofs, and are formed with decorative designs that give a particular flare unparalleled in the surrounding area.

The focus of my research project will consist of two points. The first is figuring out the purpose and function of the ridge caps, as they almost certainly provide a greater function than decoration. The second point is to figure out how to stop the rare architecture from systematically disappearing as developers tear them off when they renovate properties. The ridge caps prove to be a unique aspect to the fascinating town of Colton and should be preserved as a tribute to its’ history, especially in these days when the past so easily gets erased forever.

We will begin by mapping out the properties that contain the ridge caps. We will do this by driving the streets and taking two pictures of each house. One will include both the ridge caps and the address. The second will be a close-up on the actual ridge-cap. After we have the pictures, we will create a map of the area that they are in. We will do this first because it may prove very valuable in facilitating the next step.

The next step will be doing research into the ridge cap’s function. We will do this by multiple methods. The first is utilizing the Colton public library on any resources they have on the subject. The second will be searching for folks who may have knowledge about the ridge caps, hopefully starting with ones we have a previous relationship with, and asking if they have any knowledge about these rare architectural features.
Once we begin to synthesize the data Jan says that he will help us put together our findings into a book on the subject, and hopefully get it published. The aspect of my project that addresses the preservation of the ridge cap architecture will be carried out throughout this earlier process. We will be continually looking for a property to purchase, preserve, and renovate. It is mostly these aspects that caused me to choose this project.

All of the elements of this project allow me to learn multiple skills. Somewhere in this process Jan will introduce me to his grant writer, who will teach me how to write a grant in order to purchase the property we hope to find. The second will be the manual building skills when renovating the property. The third will be to learn about non-profits in general by spending time with Jan and hearing what he has to say regarding the situations we encounter. Fourth, I will be able to create relationships that I hope to sustain in the future, because I hope to be doing something similar for my career.

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**Methods Discussion**

I have identified a number of methodological frameworks and philosophical approaches that I am using in my research project with Inland Heritage Group (IHG). Using Creswell’s piece “Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design” I will explain my methods and philosophy under the philosophical, paradigmatic, and interpretive headings that he uses.
During the course of my project I will personally use interviews and ultimately narration to present what I have found during my time at IHG. On top of this I will use information from outside ethnographic sources relating to different topics in historical (and architectural) preservation.

I will be interviewing two sources for information. The first is Jan Taylor, leader of my internship at IHG. The second is Larry Sheffield, a general historian and resident who has numerous publications and relationships within Colton, California.

The end, “action” piece of my research project is going to be a short documentary film about Colton. We will introduce its history and depict in individual story in the larger processes developing throughout the decades. This will be the narrative piece. We will include photos, video, voiceovers, text-overs, and music to introduce the ridge caps and their relevance within the larger issue of historical preservation and property development in Colton.

The ethnographic resources I will employ consist of different contemporary perspectives on historical preservation that I have compiled and included in the appropriate section. Throughout my paper I will identify the relationships between the abstract concepts and my project with IHG.

I will be using a methodological philosophical approach towards my project. Creswell defines this as using inductive logic, and continually revising one’s questions in the field. My project is definitely going to be using trial and error, constantly assessing what angles will work and what plausible actions we can take in preserving the historical sites.

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10 Creswell – 17
According to the paradigms he defines in his work I am using pragmatism\textsuperscript{11}. This means that my project is more focused towards consequential actions rather than precedent conditions. IHG in itself may not manifest this paradigm, but my project definitely uses this approach.

For my interpretive framework I seem to mostly fall under the Critical Race Theory (CRT). This means that my project is concerned with empowering people to transcend certain constraints placed on them by structural processes they are mostly unaware of. While working with preserving architecture doesn’t directly involve people, ultimately it is in service to them. From sustainability, to preserving unique stories, and even nurturing an inherent connection with our past, there are numerous benefits people have from exploring the idea of historical preservation in all of its elements and definitions.

Hopefully by using these frameworks throughout my project we will be able to effectively portray the situation accurately and convincingly. Using Creswell’s ideas helped me identify important patterns throughout my internship, and they will become an important influence in the ways I decide to present my data and material.

Ethics, Positionality, and My Personal Experience

The methods and goals we lined up earlier on in the year proved to be slightly ambitious, and we began to juggle and rethink how we were going to both

\textsuperscript{11} Creswell – 23
address necessary outcomes needed for the classroom and simultaneously stick to
Jan’s ideal project. It was by navigating this experience that I gained some of the
most valuable knowledge this year, and it culminated in the connection with Larry
Sheffield, a somewhat surreal experience that seemed to catalyze the
transformation of our difficult situation into one that was inspiring and meaningful.
No doubt, Jan’s project was inspiring and meaningful in itself, but it lacked any
intentional connection to something larger that might make a difference for people
outside the Colton City Limit.

The year began with lots of ideas, and when we first began the project we
were unsure of what form it might ultimately take during the semester, while
keeping in mind Jan’s overall plan for a publication highlighting the unique ridge
caps. At first our plan was to produce this publication, but as the weeks rolled on we
realized we needed to set more realistic expectations. This became a huge learning
experience for me during this process. Jan was relatively uninterested in the larger
issues pertaining to Colton’s ridge caps, as this had been a small project he had been
hoping to work on for over a decade. I ended up in a situation where I needed to
step up and take the project in a direction that Jan, my Internship Director, didn’t
necessarily agree with at the time.

It was during this time that my approach to this project changed drastically.
Instead of going with the flow of the group that, unfortunately, wasn’t producing the
result I needed for class, I decided to put myself on the line and discuss my situation
openly and honestly, and bounce ideas around for how we might be able to both
benefit from this time we had spent together.
We brainstormed as a group, although at first Jan was hesitant to offer his personal opinions on how the next steps should be taken and seemed content to let us take the project where we needed it to go. This produced an interesting situation that we had addressed specifically and in-depth during our class discussions: the need for a reciprocal relationship where both parties can equally benefit from the experience. With the support of the group, Jan began to warm up to the idea we were forming. We decided to make the short documentary film that could include social issues and general history of the area as a way to highlight the importance of Jan’s project and pose these questions to a larger audience.

With this new breakthrough our project was imbued with new energy and intention that we used to pull together a 10-minute film. I had suggested the video to the group because of the many possibilities to represent the project, and I had some experience in making a few short films before. Immediately after starting to work on our project in this way, events started to unfold that encouraged our new direction. The two main examples of this for me were the fortuitous connection with Larry Sheffield and the newly abundant source of academic literature I could use to contextualize my experience.

The methods and purpose of my internship had changed, although not drastically. One of the main differences was the already minimal community interaction involved in my project decreased even more. One of the regrets I noticed I have is not doing more person to personal research. The work I did was largely within the built community and my two community interactions consisted of

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12 I created the YouTube video that has a link in the earlier footnotes
interviews with Jan and Larry. But despite the overall lack of relational experiences throughout the year, I did notice certain ways that I affected my research.

Reflexive Statement

Throughout the year I have noticed that my personal positionality has had very minimal impact on my project, besides the fundamental components I share with my classmates because of the nature of our circumstances and internships. The nature of my project does not require a huge element of community interaction despite how intimately involved the project is with the surrounding area and the people living in it. But however minimal the effects were, I did notice a few effects my positionality had on the situation.

The parts of my identity that I noticed affected the situation the most were probably my race and class. Colton is a predominantly Hispanic community and I did notice myself being watched a few times by Hispanic workers outside of different houses. Because of how we were documenting the roofs (driving around to the properties, parking, and taking pictures) we did receive some attention for obvious reasons. There might have been a slight difference in how people reacted because of my race, but I would say not much.

On top of this, even if I, or our group did look out of place, the only thing people might do would be to stare until we left, and I have a growing feeling that this was partly because of my class. We were dressed in our normal attire but a lot of the community was in labor-style clothing, and I noticed that some people I tried
to make eye contact with were very hesitant to say the least. One could say that these were negative affects, but they really didn't make too much of a difference. And for the small, possibly negative influence they could have had, there actually were some resolutions.

As far as resolving the negative affects of my positionality as it relates to race and class, it was done by doing something relatively simple. Personally, and as a group, we did converse with a few of the residents living in properties with ridge caps, and by finding common ground in the conversation all negative affects of my positionality seemed to fall away.

Regarding my positionality in terms of biases in my perspective, I have tried to adhere as much to my “methodological” scientific approach as possible, with the only bias I am aware of being the will to produce the most amount of good for the most amount of people. I’m confident that in most circumstances that bias will not bring me too much trouble.

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DATA/RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The fact is, given the nature of my project, the majority of the data and results are manifested in my “action piece” or the documentary video which represents the culmination of what we have learned so far on this topic. The video documentary we made as the culmination of our internship and assigned “action piece” is significant in multiple ways. First, it is represents the

13 The video can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5dhxcNnxKl
completion of realistic goals for what is possible to get done with the internships in one short semester. It took time to realize just exactly what was a practical outcome for our time, but in the end I see the video ended up as an excellent representation.

Secondly, it embodies a project that benefits both the Inland Heritage Group and myself. As we have talked about many times about in class, it is critical that people’s self-interests are being equally addressed. If this does not happen, karma may result that can lead to difficulties for the project.

Thirdly, I believe film is one of the most incredibly powerful ways to increase awareness of...anything. It provides an experience that imprints a level of impact that goes beyond intellectual understanding, and seeps into our sensory experience as human beings. The music especially can influence the mood or perception of a topic just by how it is presented to the participant.

The data we accumulated unfortunately could not answer many of the questions we originally posed about the rare ridge caps in Colton. However we did discover how many exist, where, and it what condition they are in\(^\text{14}\). Instead, most of the data we were able to accumulate pertained to Colton’s historical past, and served to justify just how important our project was. And nobody explained in better than the man himself, Larry Sheffield\(^\text{15}\).

He proceeded to explain to us that part of the identity of our community... part of who we are, is derived from where we live, and how we live. In a capitalist society, change is inevitable. As Capitalist markets sweep everything away in search of more markets, we call it progress. We, as people, are things that are bound by our

\(^{14}\) See map in Appendix A and online portfolio for further information

\(^{15}\) Transcript of BOTH Larry Sheffield AND Jan Taylor included in online portfolio
identities and are constantly adapting to changing conditions. Adapting to these changing conditions trumps identity. This is inevitable given the nature of a capitalistic society. Things either change, adapt, or perish. Colton embodies this process. Apparently this applies to human processes as well because if we hadn’t adapted our project to new circumstances it might never have got completed.

CONCLUSION/REFLECTION

Throughout this year I have learned equally as much about community research from how we adapted to our internships as I did from the actual outcome of the projects. It turned out to be the perfect blend of literally “physical” community research and inter-personal experience. I learned an immense about the organizational structure of Non-profits from Jan, about the city of Colton in general, and about how putting yourself out there is crucial towards gaining meaningful progress on research.

Although there are other aspects of Colton that do separate it from other surrounding communities (such as it’s central location in the SB Valley that fostered it’s growth as a rail town, or its pioneering breakthroughs in Hispanic political representation in Southern California) preserving the ridge caps seems to prove the most practical way to currently preserve Colton’s “genuine voice” while at the same time improving the surrounding community and benefitting the people who live there.
We are continually looking for information about these historical ridge caps in hopes of generating a greater effort to preserve them. We hope to have this project culminate in a publication highlighting Colton’s rare ridge caps so that these voices do not get lost in time, and help instead to define this sprawling community and give a greater significance and identity to it’s purpose and future functions within the San Bernardino Valley and greater Southern California area.

Just like many other human phenomenon, opinions regarding historical preservation span a spectrum. Some believe old paradigms of creation should be completely exterminated to make room for the new and improved methods and styles. Others believe it provides us with a head start for building sustainable infrastructure, and that it sustains an important connection with the past that is inherent to our experience as human beings.

From what I have gathered about the direction we are heading as a whole of human civilization, placing this heightened awareness on sustainable city-structure, as it relates to historical preservation, will be a hyper-relevant endeavor. On top of this, I can see how on a personal level the relationship between maintaining a “living relationship” with the past through preserving it may be an ultimately rewarding experience. It seems to me that eventually those in favor of historical preservation will produce the normalized perspective on the subject.

On a personal note, however, I would like to add that I believe there is a sense of urgency missing in the affirmations of the benefits of preservation. We are running out of energy resources, which means we are running out of money. Before
we run out of time and money, we need to allocate our resources towards securing safe and sustainable infrastructure for the future before it’s too late. Whether this means retrofitting our nations highways so they don’t collapse, or it’s preserving old homes so we don’t waste resources as we try to provide basic needs for everyone, historical preservation and sustainable development based on current infrastructure needs to be intimately involved in the decisions we will make in the near future\textsuperscript{16}. 

\textbf{Bibliography}


\textsuperscript{16} Norman Kline has an interesting piece that is relevant to these topics, but I have not read the full works and thus don’t feel informed enough to enter his concepts into our discussion.


APPENDIX A
This map shows the locations of the properties in Colton, CA that contain decorative ridge-caps.

⭐ = ridge cap

Highway 215 Intersection