

**IN THE SHADOW OF HAMILTON:  
EXPLORING DIVERSE HISTORIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE GREAT FALLS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY**

by

Melissa Nicole Archer

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Urban Affairs and Public Policy

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Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chandra L. Reedy, Ph.D.  
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Maria Aristigueta, D.P.A.  
Director of the Department of School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Suzanne Austin, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean of the College of Human Services, Education and Public  
Policy

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Debra Hess Norris, M.S.  
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| LIST OF FIGURES .....                         | v   |
| ABSTRACT .....                                | vii |
| Chapter                                       |     |
| 1 INTRODUCTION .....                          | 1   |
| 2 ORIGINS OF THE GREAT FALLS NHP .....        | 19  |
| 3 INTERPRETATION AND THE NATIONAL PARKS ..... | 39  |
| 4 DIVERSIFYING PATERSON'S HISTORY .....       | 60  |
| 5 CONCLUSION .....                            | 98  |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....                            | 112 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|            |   |    |
|------------|---|----|
| Figure 1.1 | View of Great Falls and the Hydroelectric Plant.....  | 14 |
| Figure 1.2 | View of Great Falls from pedestrian bridge .....  | 15 |
| Figure 1.3 | View of Great Falls, pedestrian bridge, and Hydroelectric plant .....   | 16 |
| Figure 1.4 | View of Great Falls from pedestrian bridge .....  | 17 |
| Figure 1.5 | View of Paterson skyline.....   | 18 |
| Figure 2.1 | Map showing Great Falls Historic District boundary and Paterson<br>Great Falls NHP proposed boundary .....  | 30 |
| Figure 2.2 | Statue of Alexander Hamilton located east of the Great Falls in<br>Overlook Park; erected in 1967 in celebration of the Great Falls<br>Natural Landmark Designation. .... | 31 |
| Figure 2.3 | View of historic mills on Spruce Street that have been adaptively<br>reused as a school and office space .....  | 32 |
| Figure 2.4 | View of the Roger’s Locomotive Works which has been<br>rehabilitated and used as a museum and office space .....  | 33 |
| Figure 2.5 | View of pedestrian trail located along the upper raceway .....  | 34 |
| Figure 2.6 | View of middle raceway.....   | 35 |
| Figure 2.7 | View of mill along middle raceway on Van Houten Street that has<br>been rehabilitated into housing .....  | 36 |
| Figure 2.8 | View of Great Falls Basin showing Allied Textile Printing site in<br>distance.....  | 37 |
| Figure 2.9 | View of Allied Textile Printing Site from the Great Falls .....   | 38 |
| Figure 4.1 | View of housing on Elm Street in “Dublin” .....   | 88 |

|             |  |     |
|-------------|--|-----|
| Figure 4.2  | Typical Housing found in southern section of “Dublin” on Mill Street.....  | 89  |
| Figure 4.3  | Front elevation of dwelling on Elm Street .....  | 90  |
| Figure 4.4  | View of intersection at Market and Mill Street .....   | 91  |
| Figure 4.5  | View of Hinchliffe Stadium .....   | 92  |
| Figure 4.6  | View of north entrance of Hinchliffe Stadium .....   | 93  |
| Figure 4.7  | Detail of ticket booth of Hinchliffe Stadium showing deterioration of terracotta roof shingles .....   | 94  |
| Figure 4.8  | View of former restroom, showing the extent of deterioration and vandalism .....   | 95  |
| Figure 4.9  | View of stadium bleachers from playing field .....   | 96  |
| Figure 4.10 | View of stadium playing field from bleachers .....   | 97  |
| Figure 5.1  | Exterior view of the Paterson Museum, formerly the Rodger’s Locomotive Works, located on the corner of Market and Spruce Streets.....  | 106 |
| Figure 5.2  | Engine 299 is displayed outside of the Paterson museum. It was used in the construction of the Panama Canal and was returned to Paterson in the 1980s through efforts by former Mayer Lawrence Kramer..... | 107 |
| Figure 5.3  | Front elevation of the Botto House/ American Labor Museum .....  | 108 |
| Figure 5.4  | View of Lambert Castle located on Garrett Mountain, overlooking the city of Paterson.....  | 109 |
| Figure 5.5  | View of the Great Falls and Hydro-electric plant in winter .....   | 110 |
| Figure 5.6  | View of frozen falls .....   | 111 |

## **ABSTRACT**

In March of 2009 Congress authorized the creation of the Great Falls National Historical Park and the National Park Service (NPS) will shortly begin creating the new park's management and interpretive plans. Paterson has a strong industrial legacy as America's first systematically planned industrial site, but it also possesses a rich ethnic history that is still evident today. The city has a complex, layered, and diverse history that has been overshadowed by the more nationally recognized themes of Alexander Hamilton and the city's industrial success. This thesis explores under-represented histories within the Great Falls and analyzes the extent to which the NPS's interpretive policies support or hinder the inclusion of minority narratives. A paradox exists within the Park Service management policy; on one hand they want to expand the scope of park interpretation to engage a broader audience, but on the other, their policies limit interpretive opportunities in Paterson by using an outdated, traditional definition of national significance. This thesis recommends initiatives that the NPS can take to make the park more relevant to a diverse population, many of which may feel little or no connection to resources within the Park System. The NPS has made a commitment to begin representing the heritage of more Americans, and Paterson is an ideal site to realize this goal.

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In many respects, Paterson is like any other industrial city in the northeast United States. It has experienced the same cycles of growth and decline and struggled with common urban problems like poverty, corruption, and crime on par with larger cities like New York, Newark, and Philadelphia. Like its larger neighbors, Paterson has seen rapid influxes in immigration and devastating periods of industrial loss. It was a center of labor unrest and a platform for civil rights, as well as the victim of fire, flood, and urban renewal. What sets Paterson apart is its unique status as the nation's first systematically planned industrial site, lead by one of America's most prominent founding fathers, Alexander Hamilton. In addition, the city boasts the second largest waterfall by volume east of the Mississippi, known as the Great Falls, and an over two hundred year history.

In 1970 the significance of the Great Falls and the eighteenth century industrial architecture along its raceways was recognized with the designation of the Great Falls National Historic District. The designation diverted a destructive highway project, lead to advancements in the field of industrial archeology, and increased awareness of



Paterson's resources. But throughout the past three decades, historians overlooked and tourists underutilized Paterson's rich history. Despite efforts to rehabilitate and reuse the historic buildings, the mill district and surrounding neighborhood developed a reputation of poverty and blight. The city continued to witness the deterioration of its Great Falls Historic District, which the Department of the Interior indentified as a Priority One Threatened National Historic Landmark from 1988- 2002.<sup>1</sup>

Today, however, Paterson has reason to be hopeful of its future. On March 30, 2009, President Barrack Obama gave long awaited confirmation of Paterson's national significance by approving the creation of the Great Falls National Historical Park (Great Falls NHP).<sup>2</sup> The funding and prestige associated with the NPS is anticipated to bring tourism and investments to a community hit hard by deindustrialization, and provide jobs and a sense of community pride. The park nomination, however, was not without detractors. While many herald the congressional designation a testament to the city's historical significance, many see it as a waste of tax dollars and an earmark for Paterson's largely minority population. The NPS itself recommended against the

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. House of Representatives. *H.R. 280: To Establish the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park, and For Other Purposes* (2009): 2.

<sup>2</sup> Applebome, Peter. "In New Jersey, History Speaks to the Present." *New York Times*, April 1, 2009.

designation, suggesting that backlogged maintenance of existing parks was more critical, and the history of Paterson too common.<sup>3</sup>

Now that the legislation has passed and plans for the park are in development, critical questions should be raised. As a National Park, can the Great Falls NHP embrace its regional and local history, or must it only appeal to a broader, national history? Should the history of the park be constrained by the physical boundaries and thematic frameworks of the historic district, or can it incorporate new themes that have not yet been identified by the Park Service? Is the park a celebration of the past, or can it challenge visitors by showing countering viewpoints of established national myths? The legislation creating the Great Falls NHP states that the purpose of the park is to “preserve and interpret for the benefit of present and future generations certain historical, cultural, and natural resources associated with the Historic District.”<sup>4</sup> Leaving the determination and interpretation of “certain” resources up to the discretion of the NPS makes development of the Great Falls NHP an unprecedented opportunity to incorporate alternative, underrepresented, and minority histories that are embodied within the Great Falls.

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Division of Park Planning and Special Studies. “Great Falls Historic District Paterson, New Jersey: Special Resource Study.” (2006).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. House of Representatives. *H.R. 280: To Establish the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park, and For Other Purposes*. (Washington DC: GPO, 2009).

Themes that relate to minority experiences include immigration and migration, sports and recreation, labor strife, segregation, assimilation, and nativism. Although all of these themes exist within the Great Falls, they have largely been untold or overshadowed by the predominant themes of Alexander Hamilton and the success of industries in Paterson. This thesis explores under-represented themes within the Great Falls and analyzes the extent to which NPS interpretive policies support or hinder the inclusion of minority narratives. Paterson's population is predominantly composed of minorities including African Americans, Dominicans, Columbians, Peruvians, and Palestinians, among many others. It is important to understand how the traditional and alternative histories of the Great Falls can relate to the current community, because ultimately, embracing Paterson's ethnic history will help make the park a more vibrant, diverse, and relevant experience for all park visitors.

### **Existing Literature**

Several histories of Paterson's industrial development were published in the late nineteenth century including Charles A. Shriner's *Paterson New Jersey Illustrated*.<sup>5</sup> It was published by the city's Board of Trade in 1890 and provides an

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<sup>5</sup> Charles A. Shriner, *Paterson, New Jersey Illustrated: Its Advantages for Manufacturing and Residence: its Industries, Prominent Men, Banks, Schools, Churches, etc.* (Paterson, NJ: The Pres Printing and Publishing Company, 1890).

account of Paterson's most successful industries, textiles and locomotives, and biographies of important entrepreneurs. The publishers released it primarily as an advertising campaign to attract investment to the city. Although limited in scope, all of these early publications provide valuable information on early industrialists as well as photographs of the city and its industrial and political leaders<sup>6</sup>. The 1920 *History of Paterson and Its Environs* by William Nelson and Charles A. Schriener provides the municipal history of Paterson, explaining the organization of government and the establishment of public services and institutions. <sup>7</sup>

At least two books written in the twentieth century expand on knowledge of Paterson's textile industry, including the 1936 *The Story of Textiles* by Perry Walton and 1985's *Silk City: Studies on the Paterson Silk Industry, 1860-1940* by Philip Scranton.<sup>8</sup> The latter provides not only a detailed account of the silk production process, but also a great discussion of labor conditions and unionization. It provides a history of the silk industry from its inception in the 1850s through its dwindling

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<sup>6</sup> WM Nelson, *The Founding of Paterson as the Intended Manufacturing Metropolis of the United States* (Newark: Advertiser Printing House, 1887); Levi R. Trumball, *A History of Industrial Paterson* (Paterson, NJ: C.M. Herrick Printer, 1882).

<sup>7</sup>Nelson, William and Charles A. Schriener. *The History of Paterson and its Environs*. New York: Lewis Historical Pub. Co., 1920.

<sup>8</sup> Perry Walton. *The Story of Textiles: A Bird's-Eye View of the Beginning and the Industry by Which Mankind is Clothed* (New York: Tudor Pub. Co., 1936); Philip B. Scranton ed., *Silk City: Studies on the Paterson Silk Industry, 1860-1940* (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1985).

success in the early twentieth century. However, it does not manage to convey the effects of silk's demise on the city or the role of women or children in the workforce. The book's application is limited to the silk industry and its historical account concludes in 1936, prior to the final demise of the textile industry in Paterson.

The 1960 study by James B. Keyon titled *Industrial Localization and Metropolitan Growth: The Paterson-Passaic District* examines the physical and economic development of Paterson and its suburbs.<sup>9</sup> It was written as a report to the Port Authority of New York to aid in the understanding and management of change in the New York and New Jersey metropolitan areas. The study is important because it is the earliest effort to look at the changing industrial landscape and effects of suburbanization on the region. Another study, which focuses more on the politics and social outcomes of Paterson's rise and decline is Christopher Norwood's *About Paterson: The Making and Unmaking of an American City*, published in 1974.<sup>10</sup> Norwood's work provides the most layered and heartfelt account of the city's evolution. Although the book casts a new light on the city's history by exploring both

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<sup>9</sup> James Kenyon, *Industrial Localization and Metropolitan Growth: The Paterson-Passaic District* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1960).

<sup>10</sup> Christopher Norwood, *About Paterson: The Making and Unmaking of an American City* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1974).

its successes and failures, it is an interesting, but anecdotal account that lacks notation and reads more like a novel than historical writing.

The most detailed and trustworthy historical research was conducted through archeological investigations in the early 1970s, sponsored by the Great Falls Development Inc. The first archeological investigation took place from 1973-1976 and resulted in Jo Ann Cotz, Mary Jane Rutsch, and Charles Wilson's 1980 report on the social structure of Paterson's Dublin Neighborhood.<sup>11</sup> This study spurred the dissertation of Lu Anne De Cunzo who used the archeological artifacts to paint an image of everyday life in the Dublin neighborhood.<sup>12</sup> A similar study was published in 1999 by Rebecca Yamin, analyzing the cultural findings of another archeological investigation of Dublin conducted in 1989. Subsequent work spawned from this study, including articles by Rebecca Yamin and Stephen Brighton, provide historical context to the artifacts retrieved during the excavations.<sup>13</sup> These publications provide

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<sup>11</sup> Jo Ann Cotz, Mary Jane Rutsch, and Charles Wilson, *Paterson's Dublin: An Interdisciplinary Study of Social Structure, Salvage Archaeology Project Paterson, New Jersey 1973-76 Volume II* (Paterson, NJ: New Jersey Department of Transportation 1980).

<sup>12</sup> Lu Ann De Cunzo, *Archeology of the Dublin Neighborhood in Paterson, New Jersey* (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1983).

<sup>13</sup> Rebecca Yamin, "With Hope and Labor: Everyday Life in Paterson's Dublin Neighborhood," (Trenton: New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1999). ; Stephen A Brighton, "Degrees of Alienation: The Material Evidence of the Irish and Irish American Experience, 1850-1910," *Historical Archeology* 42 (2008): 132-153. <http://www.bsos.umd.edu/ANTH/BrightonSHAarticle.pdf>.

invaluable insights into the everyday lives of some of Paterson's immigrant residents of the mid to late nineteenth century.

The most recent work involving Paterson's history are studies and reports written in the 2000s regarding the nomination of the Great Falls NHP.<sup>14</sup> These works draw on information presented in previous histories, but at times exaggerate or omit information. Writing by opponents of the park nomination, particularly within the NPS, tends to ignore or undermine the site's contribution to a wide range of historical themes while commentary by park proponents verges on exaggeration of certain historical facts in order to elevate the site's significance. Both perspectives fail to sufficiently recognize alternative historical themes that make the site not only significant to historians or industrial archeologists, but also relevant to an increasingly diverse, contemporary society.

In order to employ the full potential of the new historical park, park developers need to break from the status quo by introducing new themes beyond Paterson's founding and industrial success. Recent discourse on Paterson's significance focuses on Alexander Hamilton and exaggerates and romanticizes his role as Paterson's founder. The myths behind Paterson's founding, which most park proponents support,

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<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service, Division of Park Planning and Special Studies, "Great Falls Historic District Paterson, New Jersey: Special Resource Study," (2006).

should be challenged in the new park's interpretive plan. Several works in the last decade have been published in order to help public historians challenge national myths and form a more authentic, nuanced view of history.

The book *Invisible America* presents new approaches to the study of history, archeology, and material culture that breaks from traditional viewpoints. The book is intended to challenge conventional history that presents America's development as an "inevitable 'march of progress'" to reveal the dynamic, unstable, and unpredictable nature of the nation's past.<sup>15</sup> This book served as the inspiration for the approach taken in this thesis. Authors Mark P. Leone and Niel Asher Silberman contend that history is often presented as the "story of winners," an approach that can feed the national ego but fails to demonstrate the full spectrum of outcomes, both positive and negative. They argue that by adding alternative accounts of struggle and dissent, we contribute to the understanding of America as a constantly changing and diverse place.<sup>16</sup> Interdisciplinary authors including Dolores Hayden, Ned Kaufman, Thomas King, and Mitchell Schwarzer, among others, have contributed similar perspectives. Their

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<sup>15</sup> Mark Leone and Neil Asher Silberman, *Invisible America: Unearthing Our Hidden History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1995) 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.



vision of an inclusive, socially just history that acknowledges the contributions of ordinary people, not just elites, has yet to be realized in Paterson's Great Falls.<sup>17</sup>

## **Methodology**

I began my investigation of Paterson by making several site visits. I explored the city by foot, making my way around the mills, down raceways and through the nearby neighborhoods and commercial district. I captured the sites and sounds of the city through photography and audio recording and noted my observations and general impressions of the vicinity of the Great Falls. I visited the local Historic Commission and spoke with residents and public officials to develop a sense of the community's character. Though these initial discussions were off the record, they provided me with a valuable understanding of issues facing the community and aided in the development of an approach to study the park. I relied on newspaper accounts from the 1890s through the present to track developments in the park's formation while congressional studies, laws, hearings, and testimonies provided insight into the issues and attitudes surrounding the park nomination. I reviewed special studies and policy reports

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<sup>17</sup> Ned Kaufman, *Place Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Thomas F. King, *Places That Count: Traditional Cultural Properties in Cultural Resource Management*, (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003), Mitchell Schwarzer, "Myths of Permanence and Transience in the Discourse on Historic Preservation in the United States," *Journal of Architectural Education* 48, no. 1 (1994) 2-11. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1425305>.

published by the NPS to understand the role of interpretation in National Park resources while visits to three local museums, the Paterson Museum, the Botto House, and Lambert's Castle, served as examples of historical interpretative approaches currently in place in and around Paterson.

Discussions with professionals involved in the park's development, Bill Bolger of NPS and Mike Powell of the New Jersey Community Development Corporation, contributed to my understanding of the area's resources and the opportunities and challenges involved in their preservation. Lastly, I consulted numerous primary and secondary sources related to the city's history, including published books, articles, dissertations, and census data, to develop expanded approaches to the presentation of Paterson's history. Texts by leading scholars in historical archeology, anthropology, historic preservation, and museum studies guided my research throughout by challenging my understanding of heritage, ethnicity, and the concept of "significance."

## **Organization**

The second chapter of this thesis will look at the newly established Great Falls NHP and the reasons behind its creation. The impetus for the 2009 legislation actually dates back to 1970 when the community joined forces to prevent the destruction of the historic mill area from a highway spur. This period is significant because it is when interest in preserving the city's industrial history was at its peak. The majority of

historical archeology, documentation and research are available today as a result of the district's threatened status during this period. Examinations of these resources help explain how the NPS will likely approach the historical interpretation of the city and how these ideas were carried on in the park's 2008 nomination process.

Chapter Three traces the role of historical interpretation of NPS resources and documents the emergence of a more politically progressive interpretive policy. Exploration of the Lowell National Historical Park (Lowell NHP), which shares many common themes with Paterson, illustrates the evolution of Park Service policy towards interpretation while serving as a model that can inform interpretive goals in Paterson. The growing recognition within the Park Service, that parks need to represent more diverse and inclusive histories, should influence the approaches utilized in the Great Falls' interpretive plan.

Chapter Four provides a survey of some of the diverse historical themes found within the park's historic fabric that would accomplish the NPS's goal of incorporating underrepresented histories into the Park Service. This chapter looks at Paterson's industrial founding, the process of immigration, and the role of recreation in the lives of Paterson's citizens. These divergent histories are interconnected and support and supplement the city's traditional industrial and engineering story. This chapter also looks at the unique resources adjacent to the new park, the Dublin neighborhood and Hinchliffe Stadium, the former Negro league baseball stadium, and

the alternative themes that they can help present. The relationship between these resources and the surrounding community make them important resources to consider in the park's interpretative plan.

Chapter Five identifies the paradox within the NPS management policy. On one hand, the Park Service wants to expand the scope of park interpretation to engage a broader audience, but on the other hand, they are restricting interpretive opportunities by using outdated, insular notions of significance. This chapter recommends initiatives that the NPS can take to help integrate minority themes and make the park a national and local attraction.



**Figure 1.1 View of Great Falls and the Hydroelectric Plant**



**Figure 1.2 View of Great Falls from pedestrian bridge**



**Figure 1.3 View of Great Falls, pedestrian bridge, and Hydroelectric plant**



**Figure 1.4** View of Great Falls from pedestrian bridge





**Figure 1.5** View of Paterson skyline

## CHAPTER 2

### ORIGINS OF THE GREAT FALLS NHP

Age has long been considered one of the most important criteria for determining the historic significance of cultural resources. In many cases, age translates to rarity, and the more rare a resource is, the more significant it is considered.<sup>18</sup> In the case of Paterson, its early establishment and unique position as the oldest planned industrial development has led to widespread recognition of its significance, not only locally and statewide, but on a national level. The area surrounding the Great Falls has been honored as a National Natural Landmark, A National Historical Landmark, a National Historical District, a State Park, and most recently, a National Historical Park. In order to earn such widespread acknowledgement, local preservationists tended to emphasize Paterson's national role in industrialization and the city's connection to Alexander Hamilton. Scholars have explored other topics found in Paterson's history, particularly immigration and labor, however, even these common industrial sub-themes were surprisingly absent from

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<sup>18</sup> David N. Fixler, "Appropriate Means to an Appropriate End: Industry, Modernism, and Preservation," *APT Bulletin* 39, no. 4 (2008): 31-36. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25433963>, 32.

legislative discourse related to the new park designation. This chapter will trace the history of the park's nomination and identify the primarily self-imposed interpretive limitations faced by the NPS.

### **Citizen Action**

If it were not for progressive efforts in the late 1960s, it is probable that the Great Falls of Paterson would not exist as it does today. The site was first recognized as a National Natural Landmark in 1967 and then as a National Historical Landmark in 1976.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the seventy-seven foot high waterfall is still the most prominent feature in the city. Many proponents of the park have remarked that the Great Falls is one of few resources to be recognized for both its exceptional natural presence as well as its historical essence. The historic mills surrounding the gorge, however, did not receive the same national attention until they were in jeopardy of demolition. Mary Ellen Kramer, the wife of Paterson's mayor Laurence Kramer, recognized the potential loss and consulted John Young, a Columbia graduate student to help protect

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<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service, Division of Park Planning and Special Studies, "Great Falls Historic District Paterson, New Jersey: Special Resource Study," (2006) 18.

the mill district. Beginning in 1967, the two mobilized a grass roots effort to stop the plan of a four-lane highway that would cut through the heart of the industrial district.<sup>20</sup>

Young put together a National Historic District nomination that was approved in 1970 and formed the organization Urban Deadline to combat the highway destruction. They developed surveys and designs to help rehabilitate the district and created alternative transportation routes to mitigate the loss of historic buildings.<sup>21</sup> The team was able to negotiate with state transportation planners who agreed to divert the highway and tunnel drainage trenches below the historic district. This was a huge victory for the citizens of Paterson and the newly established Great Falls Development, Inc. In 1971, the corporation built a park overlooking the waterfall called the Mary Ellen Kramer Overlook Park, which for decades had been “a barren, fenced-off hill behind the waterworks.”<sup>22</sup> They had ambitions to expand the park even further, and in 1972, nominated the Great Falls Historic District as a National Park. The NPS, however, objected to the designation and cited three reasons: they argued that the site was not suitable because it lacked a single, unifying theme, because there

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<sup>20</sup> Ada Louise Huxtable. “A Lot Happens in Ten Years.” *New York Times*, May 9, 1971, Section: Arts and Leisure. <http://proxy.nss.udel.edu:2075> (accessed Jan. 3, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *New York Times*. “Paterson Dedicates Park in Celebrating Great Falls Festival.” *New York Times*. Sept. 2, 1971. <http://proxy.nss.udel.edu:2075/> (accessed January 3, 2010).

was no extant eighteenth century architecture, and lastly, because a water pipe across the ravine obstructed the view of the falls.<sup>23</sup> Though the National Park consideration was rejected, the NPS approved the nomination for the Great Falls National Historical Landmark in 1976.

Despite the legislative upset, the Great Falls Development, Inc continued plans to rehabilitate the mill district, and in 1974, seized on the drainage system excavation from the diverted highway project as an opportunity to collect archeological information on the historic site.<sup>24</sup> Federal legislation enacted in 1966 required federal funding of a salvage archeological study of the impacted area, so project coordinators arranged for investigations of a ten-lot study located just outside of the historic district boundary. The project included an archeological excavation as well as historical research and an analytical report that provided unrivaled information on the working class neighborhood known as “Dublin,” located south of the historic district. The effort was lead by industrial archeologist Edward F. Rutsch and is a valuable, in-depth micro-study of a nineteenth century Paterson neighborhood.

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<sup>23</sup> Martin Gansberg, “Paterson Factory Area Proposed as a National Park,” *New York Times*. Sept. 2, 1971. <http://proxy.nss.udel.edu:2075/>; The NPS also objected to the nomination of the Lowell National Historical Park that same year, citing lack of integrity as the cause, however Congress went on to approve Lowell’s nomination.

<sup>24</sup> Edward C. Burks, “Unearthing Paterson’s Industrial Past. *New York Times*. July 14, 1974. <http://proxy.nss.udel.edu:2075/> (accessed January 3, 2010).

Throughout the 1980s, various redevelopment projects in the district floundered, and the area went through a period of degeneration. In 1992 Congress appropriated \$4.147 million in funding through the Urban History Initiative, funds that were administered through a cooperative agreement with the NPS and the city of Paterson.<sup>25</sup> Part of the funding was used to conduct oral histories and an ethnographic study conducted by the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center. The ethnographic study focused on the "Peoples Park" neighborhood in central Paterson and explored the theme of working in Paterson. Other portions of the funding were used to restore and stabilize historic buildings within the historic district, including the Colt Gun Mill, which was largely in ruins after sustaining vandalism and fire.<sup>26</sup> In 1996, an additional \$3.3 million in matching grants was authorized through the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996. These funds were to be used to develop a preservation and interpretive plan for the Great Falls Historic District and a market analysis, however the Federal Government never distributed the

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<sup>25</sup> U.S. Senate, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Report 107-74, *Great Falls Historic District Study Act of 2001*. (Washington DC: GPO, 2001): 2.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

grant.<sup>27</sup> The city was unable to organize matching funds, and in fact, arranged to sell a portion of the historic district to a housing developer.<sup>28</sup>

Realizing that the future of the Great Falls was once again in jeopardy, a group of citizens led by the New Jersey Community Development Corporation drafted legislation in support of making the Great Falls National Historic District a National Park. In 2001, Congress authorized the NPS to conduct a special resource study on the suitability and feasibility of making the historic landmark a National Park against recommendations from the NPS.<sup>29</sup> The NPS argued that the administration should prioritize the backlogged maintenance and previously authorized studies, and pointed out that the city of Paterson had not taken advantage of funding opportunities from the 1996 Omnibus Act.<sup>30</sup> Despite numerous appeals by the Department of the Interior, Congress authorized the study, which was completed and made available for public comment in November of 2005. Immediately upon the study's release, the new National Park Designation became a contentious issue.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 2

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 5

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 1

<sup>30</sup> Joseph E. Doddridge. Statement Before U.S. House Committee. March 13, 2001. <http://www.nps.gov/legal/testimony/107th/grtflsnj.htm> (accessed Nov. 14, 2009); John G. Parsons Statement Before U.S. House Committee. July 17, 2001, <http://www.nps.gov/legal/testimony/107th/grtfalls.htm> (accessed Nov. 14, 2009).

## Interpreting Significance

The history of Paterson, whose exposure was previously limited to local school children, the occasional tourist, and a few interested scholars, was suddenly catapulted into the national spotlight. Articles in the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *USA Today* by famed writers like Paul Goldberger were springing up in support of the park.<sup>31</sup> The NPS was criticized for its “flawed” study and “total misreading of history” as historians and professors from across the country attested to the Great Falls’ significance.<sup>32</sup> The NPS Special Resource Study received the most fervent criticism for downplaying Paterson’s historical significance, particularly in regards to the Park Service’s exclusion of varied historical themes and its reluctance to identify Paterson as a unique resource. The NPS study resulted in a recommendation that Congress not designate the Great Falls a unit of the National Park Service on the grounds that it lacked two of the three criteria required for a federal designation. The NPS stated that although Paterson demonstrated national significance (the national significance was recognized in the National Landmark Designation of 1976), it lacked suitability or feasibility.

Many claimed that the NPS study was shortsighted and guided by budgetary constraints rather than a fair assessment of the site. While this may be true, the

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<sup>31</sup> Paul Goldberger, Face-Lift, “The Falls,” *The New Yorker*, August 3, 2009.

<sup>32</sup> Leonard Zax, Testimony before U.S. Senate Subcommittee on National Parks, Sept. 27, 2009. [energy.senate.gov/public/\\_files/ZaxTestimony.doc](http://energy.senate.gov/public/_files/ZaxTestimony.doc).



methods used in the Resource Study follow Park Service protocol for the identification of historic resources. The shortcomings identified within the Resource Study can be traced to failures in the initial landmark designation of 1976. Current NPS interpretive policy states that “every park will develop an interpretive and educational program that is grounded in (1) park resources, (2) themes related to the park’s legislative history and significance, and (3) park and Service-wide mission goals.”<sup>33</sup> Because of this policy, the Resource Study researchers turned to the first legislative action in which the Great Falls national significance was officially recognized- the 1976 Landmark nomination. The nomination, carried out by historian Russell Fries, is significant because it largely defined the parameters for the establishment of the new NHP. Not only does it influence the physical boundaries of the new park, but it also defines the period of historical significance from which future park interpretation will be guided.<sup>34</sup> It is important to know that Fries, an industrial historian, based the 1976 nomination on work carried out during the summers of 1973 and 1974 for the Historic American Engineering Record. Fries’ interest in the engineering aspects of the SUM and the Great Falls resulted in a nomination with a very narrow focus. The stated period of historical significance is 1792-1864 and 1912-1914, the primary years of

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<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Management Policies 2006” (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO (2006) 90.

<sup>34</sup> Bill Bolger. Personal interview. January 27, 2010.

construction, and the only significant theme identified is “engineering.” The significant historical figures identified are Alexander Hamilton, Pierre L’Enfant, and subsequent engineers involved in the design of the industrial project. The nomination provides detailed information on the physical evolution of the site and offers valuable insight into man’s manipulation of the natural environment for economic means, however it completely omits the rich social history tied to the Great Falls.

When considering the limited scope of the initial designation, it is clear that the Resource Study actually took a more liberal approach to the site’s interpretation by identifying themes beyond engineering as well as acknowledging aspects of Paterson’s history that fall beyond the limited period of significance. Some employees of the Park Service recognize the limitation imposed by the Landmark designation and hope to eventually update the nomination in order to facilitate an expanded interpretive plan. The manager of the Great Falls project, Bill Bolger, states that the kind of segmentation of history present in the landmark district is limited, but that it’s a process with a purpose; “[it’s] the process that we have, and what it results in are designations that are really focused.” The narrow focus, he explains, aids in establishing a strong case for national significance.<sup>35</sup> The taxing issue of delineating topics of national significance from mere local significance has been an ongoing issue within the Park Service. Author John Bodnar argued “that for the greatest part of its

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<sup>35</sup> Bill Bolger. Personal interview. January 20, 2010.

existence, the National Park Service has rejected dealing with local historical sites and themes, focusing instead on those arenas which enhance the process of developing a national ideology.”<sup>36</sup>

It is the pursuit of national significance that also prompted local proponents of the park to focus on an ideology focused on the city’s founding. As proponents of the park attempted to maneuver the Great Falls National Historical Park in the favor of legislators, the history of the city was simplified, focusing on the importance of Alexander Hamilton at the expense of the community’s story. Paterson started to take on the form of an eighteenth century manufacturing utopia rather than the gritty, multi-faceted, post-industrial city that exists in the twenty-first century.

Leonard Zax was one of the most vocal proponents of a National Park designation that promoted the Great Falls as an emblem of progress and the product of Hamilton’s vision. The Harvard professor and former lawyer was born and lived in the city until 1967 and testified to Congress that it was “at the Great Falls that Hamilton began to create an economy requiring not slavery but freedom, rewarding not social status but hard work, and promoting not discrimination against some but opportunities for all.”<sup>37</sup> In a senate hearing, New Jersey Senator Frank Lautenberg proclaimed, “ the

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<sup>36</sup> Thomas E. Leary and Elizabeth C. Sholes, “Authenticity of Place and Voice: Examples of Industrial Heritage Preservation and Interpretation in the U.S. and Europe,” *The Public Historian* 22, no. 3 (2000): 4.

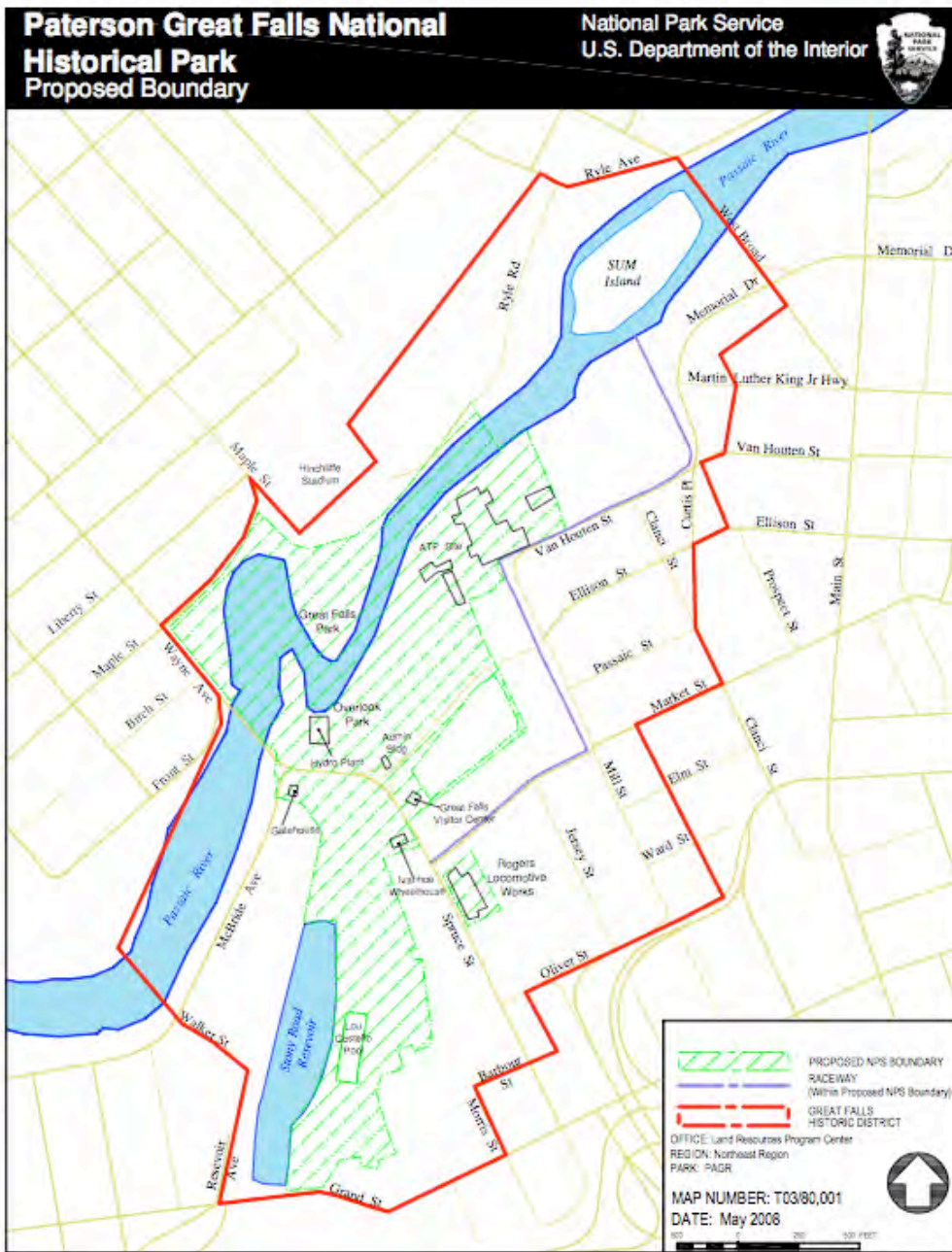
<sup>37</sup> Leonard Zax, Testimony before U.S. Senate Subcommittee on National Parks, Sept. 27, 2009. [energy.senate.gov/public/\\_files/ZaxTestimony.doc](http://energy.senate.gov/public/_files/ZaxTestimony.doc).

Great Falls in Paterson is the place that Alexander Hamilton selected to launch what we have come to call the American Dream.”<sup>38</sup> While statements like these, which can be found throughout the legislative testimony and in newspaper articles in support of the park, do not initially seem problematic, a closer look at the historical record brings the authenticity of such statements into question.

Along with the challenge of interpreting within a limited historical scope dictated by the landmark designation, interpretation of the park will also have to negotiate the uncertain and mythic aspects of the Great Falls’ history. Whether the NPS will pursue an objective or ideological approach to interpreting the new National Park depends largely on the historical themes the park will eventually include in its interpretive program. While the Resource Study indicates that the NPS will likely pursue a narrowly focused, industrial interpretation based on the Landmark designation, recent developments in NPS interpretive practices suggest that an expansion on such themes is possible. The evolution of NPS interpretive policy since the department’s creation nearly one hundred years ago shows a continued and sustained interest in expanding the range of historical approaches within the Park Service.

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<sup>38</sup> U.S. Senate, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on National Parks, S. HRG. 110-266.. *Hearing on Miscellaneous National Parks Legislation*(Washington DC: GPO, 2008) 9.



**Figure 2.1** Map showing Great Falls Historic District boundary and Paterson Great Falls NHP proposed boundary



**Figure 2.2** Statue of Alexander Hamilton located east of the Great Falls in Overlook Park; erected in 1967 in celebration of the Great Falls Natural Landmark Designation.



**Figure 2.3** View of historic mills on Spruce Street that have been adaptively reused as a school and office space



**Figure 2.4** View of the Roger's Locomotive Works which has been rehabilitated and used as a museum and office space





**Figure 2.5** View of pedestrian trail located along the upper raceway



**Figure 2.6** View of middle raceway



**Figure 2.7** View of mill along middle Raceway on Van Houten Street that has been rehabilitated into housing



**Figure 2.8** View of Great Falls Basin showing Allied Textile Printing site in distance



**Figure 2.9 View of Allied Textile Printing Site from the Great Falls**

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION AND THE NATIONAL PARKS**

There are abundant sources that chronicle the formation and expansion of the National Park Service (NPS). The intention of this chapter is to examine how the nation's parks have utilized interpretive programs to identify concepts that can be applied to the development of the Great Falls NHP. This evaluation will utilize resources published by the NPS in regards to its history and development of interpretive plans as well as scholarly research on the role of industrial history museums and parks. The Lowell National Historical Park (Lowell NHP) will serve as a case study from which we can draw lessons on the importance of involving community and the value of exploring innovative historical themes.

The NPS has the tremendous job of protecting and preserving the nation's most significant natural and historical resources. Since its inception in 1916, the Park Service has provided recreational and educational opportunities to millions of Americans and foreigners, and has become one of the most revered government entities. The Park Service's stated mission is to "preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment,

education, and inspiration of this and future generations.”<sup>39</sup> Though the mission of the Park Service has not changed since its founding, the role of the Service has expanded significantly. The initial legislation made the new bureau the custodian of forty existing National Parks and monuments as well as future National Parks, however development of the program was slow in the first decade.<sup>40</sup> Amendments in 1933 and 1935 expanded Park Service holdings by incorporating a variety of designated resources including landmarks, battlefields, memorials, and cemeteries, and most significantly, afforded the Secretary of the Interior the authority to preserve historic sites, objects, and buildings of national significance through the Historic Sites Act of 1935.<sup>41</sup>

The inclusion of historic sites in 1935 not only expanded the type of resources the Park Service controlled, it also expanded the Bureau’s role as interpreter of resources. According to park historian Frank Brockman, interpretation played a major role in National Parks long before the Park Service was even established. Early park administrators adopted informal and unstructured programs to attract and educate

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<sup>39</sup> Nps.gov

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Office of Information, “A Brief History and Description of the National Park System,” (Washington, DC: GPO, 1966) 7.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 9-21.

visitors and foster an understanding and appreciation of nature.<sup>42</sup> These early programs took the form of nature walks, guidebooks and campfire talks. Brockman explains that as the number of parks grew and visitation rose, interpretive activities expanded in hopes of communicating park significance beyond recreational use to reinforce the value of responsible patronage, respect for wildlife, and care of fragile ecosystems.<sup>43</sup> Park rangers and seasonal employees who identified as “naturalists” initiated these educational activities in Yellowstone and Yosemite to fill a service void, however their work was considered amateur and they struggled to earn legitimacy within the Park Service and the scientific community.<sup>44</sup>

With the addition of historical sites to the NPS in 1935, the importance of educational and interpretive resources became clear. Historian Barry Mackintosh points out that the earlier National Parks, which were established for their spectacular natural features, could be aesthetically and recreationally enjoyed regardless of visitors’ knowledge of underlying ecological or geological phenomenon. Park officials recognized that some Historical Parks could also function aesthetically or recreationally, but most could not be enjoyed to their full potential without an

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<sup>42</sup> Frank C. Brockman, “Park Naturalists and the Evolution of National Park Service Interpretation through World War II,” *Journal of Forest History* 22, no. 1 (1978): 24.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>44</sup> Barry Mackintosh, “The National Park Service Moves into Historical Interpretation,” *The Public Historian* 9, no. 2 (1987): 51-63.



explanation of what person or event was tied to the site.<sup>45</sup> In the case of historic sites, like a historic battlefield, the physical site is more often unspectacular, and without the aid of interpretive material, the value cannot be fully understood or appreciated.<sup>46</sup> In order to address this need, the NPS established a formal interpretative program by creating a museum division to guide the development and implementation of interpretive museums in parks.<sup>47</sup>

The 1935 Act formally authorized the creation of museums as well as a variety of interpretative tools including commemorative markers, displays, and educational services. President Franklin Roosevelt endorsed the expansion and publicized the patriotic value of the program by writing in a letter to Congress that “the preservation of historic sites for the public benefit, together with the proper interpretation tends to enhance the respect and love of the citizen for the institutions of his country, as well as strengthen his resolution to defend unselfishly the hallowed traditions and high ideals of America.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 54.

Like their naturalist counterparts, Park Service historians sensed that scholars in academia questioned their professionalism.<sup>49</sup> Sensitive to criticism, many newly appointed historians sought academic respectability by following research conventions of the time. Mackintosh states that some park historians tried to maintain their status as scholars by conducting research at the expense of visitor experience. Interpretation, particularly of historic battlefields, were consequently overly technical, focusing on factual details like battle movements rather than presenting overarching themes that are more accessible to a diverse audience. This approach was often criticized within the Park Service, but continued in many parks until a centralized interpretive system was created in 1966.<sup>50</sup>

Park interpretation also tended to reinforce the mythic notion of a collective national heritage, a practice that the park service is still trying to rectify. Park interpretation often used historical research selectively to create versions of history that promoted a patriotic history, symbolic of the nation's collective heritage, often at the expense of truth. David Lowenthal explores mythic heritage in public history and emphasizes that heritage should not be confused with history; whereas history succumbs to falsehood through error, "heritage exaggerates and omits, candidly invents and frankly forgets, and thrives on ignorance and error." He describes a few

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 56.

ways in which heritage manipulates the past: it upgrades, updates, jumbles, and selectively forgets.<sup>51</sup> Paul Shackle writes that the promotion of myth in exhibits, monuments, memorials, statues, and National Historical Parks can create a common history that allows diverse groups to experience a common bond. Communities reshape the past to fit present needs, a practice that is utilized by individuals and historians alike.<sup>52</sup> Most public historians acknowledge that heritage myth plays an important role in fostering national identity. Celebrating pieces of history and ignoring others reshapes history into a heritage that is easy for the public to embrace.<sup>53</sup> Unfortunately this collective memory, Shackle points out, has traditionally been supported by “focus[ing] on elites and traditional heroes, often leaving ‘others’ out of the picture.”<sup>54</sup>

The Park Service is aware of its past role in propagating heritage myths at the expense of minority histories. The NPS authorized an evaluation of park interpretative programs in 1973 that expressed a concern for the vitality and accuracy of park

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<sup>51</sup> David Lowenthal, “Fabricating Heritage,” <http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/journals/history/ham10-1.html> (accessed Dec. 2, 2009).

<sup>52</sup> Paul Shackle and Matthew Palus, “Remembering an Industrial Landscape,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 10, no. 1 (2006): 50.

<sup>53</sup> David Glassberg, “Public History and the Study of Memory,” *The Public Historian* 18, no. 2 (1996): 11; Lowenthal

<sup>54</sup> Shackel and Palus. 50.

interpretation. The study acknowledged that loss of funding had greatly diminished the quality of interpretive efforts in the latter half of the twentieth century. It also identified a need for the Park Service to become more inclusive, stating that the United States is a pluralistic nation and park resources ought to reflect the diverse character of the country and recognize and honor the contributions of various ethnic and cultural groups.<sup>55</sup> The author observed that visiting a National Park was a very middle-class activity, therefore NPS tended to orient interpretation toward an overwhelming white, middle-class audience.<sup>56</sup>

Since these early formal interpretive efforts, the Park Service has sustained an interest in the quality and breadth of their interpretive programs by involving more community groups in the planning process. Edward Linenthal, an NPS historian, explains that the Park Service has shown a greater sensitivity to community welfare by focusing on an inclusive planning process and using sites as a forum for public dialogue.<sup>57</sup> This has been demonstrated in both park interpretative programs and development of new parks. Within the past few decades the Park Service has expanded to include sites that not only symbolize America's beauty and grandeur and

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<sup>55</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center, William C. Everhart, *A Report on National Park Service Interpretation* (1973) 6.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>57</sup> Edward T. Linenthal, "The National Park Service and Civic Engagement," *The Public Historian* 28, no. 1 (2006): 2. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4491454>.

incite national pride, but also sites that challenge visitors to reflect on difficult and complex aspects of our nation's past.

An Ethnographic Studies department was created in the early 1990s to involve minority populations that had traditionally been exploited or ignored by the Park Service. Although the Park Service has made great strides in involving more people and presenting a more comprehensive national history, improvement is still a priority. A Cultural Needs Assessment conducted by the NPS in 2004 discovered that ethnographic resource studies have increased consultation with traditionally associated tribal groups, but have largely neglected other groups with strong ties to parks, like neighboring communities and ethnic groups who have been associated with a park for two or more generations.<sup>58</sup>

The Assessment also identified cultural inclusiveness as a concern of the Park Service. The author, Ned Kaufman, states that “minority participation in heritage programs has been limited, and the picture of American history presented by officially designated sites understates the diversity of the nation's actual history.” He illustrates the extent of the problem by pointing out that of the over 76,000 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the time of his search, approximately 823 were associated with African American heritage, fifteen with Asian, and only twelve

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<sup>58</sup> Kaufman, 25.

were associated with Hispanic heritage.<sup>59</sup> The study determined that the Park Service could recover equity within the system by making it a priority to create new parks that relate to the history of minorities or by identifying minority themes within existing park units. Many sites have begun reworking interpretive frameworks to include the contribution of minorities and examples include the White House and the Liberty Bell, which have both incorporated the often forgotten role of slaves.<sup>60</sup> The study recommends that the NPS “launch an ambitious program to identify new historic places and potential National Park units, improve the interpretation of existing places, and publicize and market new and old sites directly to minority communities themselves.”<sup>61</sup> Recent changes to the Park Service management will make it easier to identify and incorporate more diverse narratives into existing resources.

The Park Service has demonstrated a continued effort to expand and improve its interpretive services by being critical of the modus operandi and, when necessary, reworking systems to better accomplish the mission of the Park Service. This is evident by the ethnographic studies that have been undertaken as well as the restructuring and expansion of interpretive tools. One such tool, the thematic framework, serves as a guide for park interpretation, identifying broad historic themes

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 45.

of national interest commonly represented in park resources. The Park Service adopted the first thematic framework for history and prehistory in 1936 and has revised it several times since. Laura Feller, the chief historian for the NPS, explains that the first thematic framework was limited and presented history as a ‘march of progress.’ It was expanded in 1987 to thirty-four themes but was criticized for pigeonholing sites into rigid chronologic or thematic categories. The most recent revision occurred after a 1990 analysis determined that the development of a new thematic framework was necessary to capture the plural nature of National Park resources, departing from the earlier framework that attempted to separate and compartmentalize historical subjects into linear, one-dimensional historical narratives.<sup>62</sup>

The updated thematic framework was released in 1993 and encompasses eight interdisciplinary concepts that represent a broad range of activities: peopling places, creating social institutions and movements, expressing cultural values, shaping the political landscape, developing the American economy, expanding science and technology, transforming the environment, and the changing role of the United States in the world community. Feller explains that the revised framework encourages interconnection of themes to better represent the multiple and interconnected histories

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<sup>62</sup> Laura Feller and Page Putnam Miller, “Public History in the Parks: History and the National Park Service,” *American Historical Association, Perspectives*. (2000) <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2000/0001/0001pub1.cfm> (accessed Nov. 21, 2009).

that exist within a given resource. She states, “While the old framework set up multiple but largely exclusive, compartments, the revised framework makes clear that at any given site multiple themes will simultaneously be relevant.”<sup>63</sup> Barbara Little explains that the new framework presents a broader and more integrated view of history that emphasizes how to study history rather than identifying what to study. This flexibility is intended to allow park staff to identify broader periods of significance and incorporate themes of race, ethnicity, class, and gender.<sup>64</sup> This new method is intended to help dislodge the myth of a collective heritage by making it easier to communicate multiple histories in a single site.

The Great Falls NHP Resource Study identified three primary themes: Developing the American Economy through Alexander Hamilton, Expanding Science and Technology, and Peopling Places, which focuses on immigration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite the new framework’s transcendental design, it still seems to limit interpretive opportunities rather than expand them. The complex and multilayered history of Paterson cannot be fully appreciated through the compartmentalized use of only three themes. The Park Service is still gravely limiting the impact the new park can have on visitors, especially contemporary residents of

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Barbara J. Little, “Archaeology, History, and Material Culture: Grounding Abstractions and Other Imponderables,” *International Journal of Archaeology* 1, no. 2 (1997): 181. <http://www.springerlink.com/content/v8r002747377j356/>.



Paterson who immigrated in the latter half of the twentieth century. Of the eight thematic frameworks established by the NPS, Paterson could arguably be represented in all eight categories.

Bill Bolger acknowledges that despite the Park Service's interpretive advancements, "at the outset, formally, we're going to be limited to those things that have already been recognized as nationally significant."<sup>65</sup> As the park matures, it may be able to challenge and expand the static notion of national significance that informs the park's interpretive development. Park historians can look at the development of the Lowell National Historical Park, which faced similar challenges during its development.

### **INTERPRETIVE MODEL OF LOWELL, MA**

During preliminary studies and hearings of the Great Falls NHP, the topic of Lowell, Massachusetts was a subject of contention. Like Paterson, Lowell was a planned industrial community and a leader in cutting edge manufacturing that ushered in an era of industrialization. While manufacturing in Paterson took several decades to stabilize, the success of Lowell was immediate upon its founding in 1824. Because of its early success, Lowell has often been recognized as the "cradle of the industrial revolution," the significance of which was honored in 1978 with the establishment of

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<sup>65</sup> Bill Bolger. Personal Interview. January 27, 2010.

the Lowell National Historical Park.<sup>66</sup> When Paterson's Great Falls National Historical Park was proposed in 2001, the National Park Service asserted that industrialization was already sufficiently represented through other park resources, including Lowell. In the ensuing debates, the parallels between Lowell and Paterson were emphasized by opponents of the National Historical Park designation and downplayed by park proponents. While it is true that the two historic sites have a great deal in common, there are also enough distinctions to have warranted considerable debate and the eventual overriding determination by Congress. Now that the question of the Great Falls' eligibility has been settled, it is wise to revisit Lowell to look at what can be learned from the park's thirty years of interpretive programs.

The Lowell National Historical Park consists of several sites spread throughout an historic urban fabric.<sup>67</sup> It does not follow the model of traditional national parks with buildings, owned by the Park Service, enclosed in a neatly bound site. As collaboration between national, local, public and private entities, the establishment of the Lowell NHP was a cultural experiment and the first of its kind.<sup>68</sup> The exact

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<sup>66</sup> Cathy Stanton, *The Lowell Experiment: Public History in a Postindustrial City* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006) 4.

<sup>67</sup> Carolyn M. Goldstein, "Many Voices, True Stories, and the Experiences We Are Creating in Industrial History," *The Public Historian* 22, no. 3 (2000): 130 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3379583>.

<sup>68</sup> Stanton, 3.

structure of the Great Falls NHP has not been determined, but it will follow a similar path, involving collaboration between federal and local management.

Like Paterson and so many other post-industrial cities, Lowell suffered a devastating loss of industry in the twentieth century.<sup>69</sup> In the late 1960s and early '70s, the residents of Lowell were determined to revitalize the city utilizing urban planning that capitalized on the city's industrial history. The city used heritage tourism to spur redevelopment and used the National Historical Park designation to anchor the project. The effort in Lowell was a grass roots citizen led project. They were "using history to build community pride and rescue their city from over fifty years of economic and psychological depression."<sup>70</sup> The residents of Lowell who were racially and ethnically diverse wanted to incorporate as much of the city's recent history as possible, celebrating the multicultural and multi-lingual character of the city. The initial intention was to create a cultural park that would honor Lowell's diverse population, and "Lowell's ethnic heritage consequently became the historical glue that held the cultural park concept together."<sup>71</sup>

Many in Congress and the National Park System were leery of dedicating a national site that focused so much on local diversity. Many also believed that the

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<sup>69</sup> Robert Weible, "Lowell: Building a New Appreciation for Historical Place," *The Public Historian* 6, no. 3 (1984): 27. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3377006>

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

proposal was merely “a cleverly disguised urban renewal scheme” that was more interested in federal dollars than federal protection and expertise.<sup>72</sup> The Park Service rejected the cultural park and instead opted to develop a National Historical Park. Although the Park Service recognized the importance recent immigration played in the character of Lowell, they were primarily interested in interpreting the period believed to be of more national significance, roughly between 1820 and 1860. Locals worried that park interpretation would focus on the industrial narrative at the expense of “human themes.”<sup>73</sup>

Though initial interpretation would not focus on the experiences of modern immigration, park staff understood the importance of “human themes” and incorporated early labor and immigrant narratives that fit within the defined period of significance. Early park planners identified five themes to focus interpretation: waterpower, technology, labor, capital, and the industrial city. The inclusion of labor and capital indicated that the park’s interpretation would involve people as much as machines or textiles.<sup>74</sup> Cathy Stanton explains that the Lowell NHP was founded during the rise of the contemporary public history movement in which historians were

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>74</sup> Stanton, 52.

becoming increasingly aware of the need to expand traditional historical discourse. This coincided with broader movements in society as seen in the fields of historic preservation, archeology, and social sciences. As one of the first industrial historical sites, Lowell was already on the progressive side, so themes of labor and immigration developed naturally early in the planning stages.<sup>75</sup> As a pioneer in industrial and urban historical studies, Lowell set a precedent for similar sites that followed. One park staff recalled that “it was very conscious, that we were doing something very different and [were] going to set new rules.”<sup>76</sup> Although the Lowell NHP paved the way for new parks like Paterson by proving the value of industrial historical resources, the “rules” are merely guides that have proved flexible. Carol Goldstein, the former curator of the Lowell NHP claims that there are no interpretive rules and “the park generally remains a work in progress.”<sup>77</sup>

Stanton evaluated a few of the Park Service’s regular tour programs offered from late spring through early fall. The first titled “Run of the Mill” primarily focused on the city’s early development from the 1820s to the 1840s and is intended to show how economic, social, and natural forces impacted manufacturing.<sup>78</sup> This tour

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>77</sup> Goldstein, 134.

<sup>78</sup> Stanton, 45.

involves a canal boat ride and visit to the Suffolk Mill to view an exhibit on waterpower. The purpose of the tour is to explain the founding of Lowell, its physical layout, the logistics of mill operation and the shift from an early Yankee work force to immigrant labor.<sup>79</sup> Becker expresses that the greatest interpretive achievement has been the park's ability to present "technological artifacts and the built environment in economic, social, and cultural contexts."<sup>80</sup> The challenge of the park has been to utilize seemingly unspectacular industrial structures to convey disparate, but related concepts about people and power in a way that resonates with contemporary visitors.

Park attractions, like the main exhibit at the Boot Cotton Mills Museum, have typically avoided grand narratives that extol the virtues of capitalism and progress. Interpretation presents both the accomplishments and the pitfalls of industrialization and capitalism. The Boot Cotton Mill Museum states "forthrightly that it is in the nature of capitalism to produce social and economic inequalities." Focusing on labor and the social conditions that result from capitalism is a way for park historians to move beyond the conventional interest in technology and commemoration of industrial achievement.<sup>81</sup> Such dialogues challenge visitors to confront aspects of history that are often left out of the national narrative.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>80</sup> Goldstein, 131.

<sup>81</sup> Stanton, 54.

Stanton says that despite incorporating more complex and critical interpretations of labor strife, class relations, and capitalism, the park program avoids drawing connections between these past themes and the implications they have had on the city's present and future. She observed that many of Lowell's interpretive resources missed opportunities to go beyond one-directional narratives by confronting not only unpleasant aspects of the past, but also unpleasant realities of the present. Stanton explains that the park has the opportunity to help people make a connection between their own lives and the ongoing process of industrial capitalism through deindustrialization and globalism. Perhaps the mechanisms by which lessons can best be drawn from Lowell, she posits, are the material resources that symbolize the latest phase of the city's economic life.<sup>82</sup>

Another lesson that can be drawn from Lowell is the concept of the "living city" serving as an experiential museum. In Lowell, the park encompasses the downtown district, so the streets, stores, restaurants, pedestrians, and un-renovated buildings all function as an ad hoc interpretive exhibit. Stanton notes, "visitors appear stimulated by the fact that they are touring a living city rather than a simulation or a museum display."<sup>83</sup> The Park Service has capitalized on this by offering tours that penetrate the community by traveling through the historic working class

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 56-59.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 56.

neighborhoods, stopping at local churches, and patronizing ethnic stores and markets.<sup>84</sup> There is a growing interest in developing a more formal presentation of Lowell's twentieth century history and its implications on contemporary residents.

Goldstein explains, "Deindustrialization in Lowell brought about long-term economic instability throughout the twentieth century, and was still such a sensitive issue in the park's early years that staff members did not quite know how to deal with it."<sup>85</sup> She goes on to say that the staff now recognizes a responsibility to help future generations understand not only the rise of industry in Lowell, but also its decline, "and how economic booms and busts shaped Lowell's identity as well as that of other manufacturing cities."<sup>86</sup>

In commemoration of the park's thirtieth anniversary, the Park Service commissioned a series of bulletins in 2008 to highlight the Park's accomplishments and future directions. The reports recognized areas in which the park has excelled and others that need to be further developed. One of the reports states that Lowell needs to "advance beyond the single-minded focus on the nineteenth century recognizing [...] its significance also has lessons for the twenty-first century."<sup>87</sup> The park has

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 74-75.

<sup>85</sup> Goldstein, 135.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>87</sup> Dennis Frenchman and Jonathan S. Lane, "Assessment of Preservation and Development in Lowell National Historical Park at its 30-Year Anniversary: Where



established a goal of expanding park programming within the next ten years to more fully engage local residents by giving priority to interpretation of the newly adopted theme of “Newcomers and Ethnic Culture in Urban America.”<sup>88</sup>

While Lowell can serve as an example of a successful industrial-themed urban park, its program cannot and should not be replicated in Paterson. Each park is unique and should not be subject to an interpretive formula. The Lowell NHP’s interpretive programs merely illustrate the evolving and adaptive role of thematic frameworks and historical narrative. The future goals of the Lowell NHP’s program identify areas of research and community engagement that the Park Service has not yet had a chance to fully integrate into their interpretive programming. The development of Paterson’s park could benefit by exploring these topics early in the planning process and involving the local community to make the city’s historic resources even more relevant to a contemporary society. A Park Service historian wrote in the 1970s, “we must interpret our parks as they relate to our society. Interpretation cannot be left in the park. It cannot be confined to park boundaries and it cannot be confined to nature

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Have We Been and Where Should We Be going?” Lowell National Historical Park, (2008) 14. <http://www.nps.gov/LOWE>.

<sup>88</sup> Peter O’Connell and Gray Fitzsimmons, “The Presentation of Lowell’s Stories: Origins, Accomplishments, and Future Directions,” Lowell National Historical Park (2008) 7. <http://www.nps.gov/LOWE>.

or history.”<sup>89</sup> The opportunity exists to reawaken Paterson’s history, but also rewrite, reintegrate, and make it relevant to the current community.

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<sup>89</sup> Everhart, 1.

## CHAPTER 4

### DIVERSIFYING PATERSON'S HISTORY

One of the most exciting characteristics of the Great Falls is the layered, diachronous nature of its history. The variety of themes represented within the park make it a compelling place to study, but the variety also poses a challenge to historians and interpreters. Which aspects of Paterson's history should be prioritized? The engineering history and role of Alexander Hamilton have been identified as themes embodying the most national significance, but they leave out the social context that is more relevant to contemporary park visitors. Untangling and juggling the multiple themes that exist within the park is a problem with many possible solutions. This chapter will address Paterson's traditional history, offering alternate ways to address the city's dynamic character in a way that embraces rather than undermines the social history. Themes related to ethnic and race relations can be incorporated into the interpretive framework of the park in a way that is linked to and augments the broader, national theme of industrialization.

#### **The Founding of a Manufacturing City**

The heroic founding of Paterson has served as a dominant theme throughout the Great Falls NHP's development. As a champion of industrial

independence, Hamilton played a critical role in the selection and implementation of Paterson as the first industrial planned city (Figure 4.1). Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury, was a champion of a strong centralized government and believed that the only way the fledgling U.S. could ensure its economic security was to establish its own manufacturing base. As a highly influential politician, Hamilton lobbied Congress to support a \$1 million federal project to build a “national manufactory,” a bold measure that was ultimately rejected.<sup>90</sup> Hamilton used his political clout to help establish a private organization to build and manage the first large-scale industrial development. Hamilton’s industrial imprint on Paterson is an important historical theme that is certainly worthy of study, however his role is often romanticized to the point of glossing over certain aspects of history and glorifying others. Taking a more objective look at Paterson’s “founding father” will harness a greater understanding and appreciation of the social developments of the city. Far from incidental, the founding of Paterson had major implications on the future evolution of the city.

Biographer Lawrence Kaplan states that “of all the Founding Fathers of the American Republic, none, with the possible exception of Thomas Jefferson, has evoked more passions and aroused more controversy than Alexander Hamilton.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004); Leanard Zax, Testimony before U.S. Senate Subcommittee on National Parks (Sept. 27, 2009) [energy.senate.gov/public/\\_files/ZaxTestimony.doc](http://energy.senate.gov/public/_files/ZaxTestimony.doc).

<sup>91</sup> Lawrence Kaplan, *Alexander Hamilton: Ambivalent Anglophile* (Wilmington, De: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2002) 1.

Although narratives of Paterson’s founding often portray Hamilton as an industrial hero, he is actually a fairly divisive character in American history. Hamilton has been credited for creating the modern, industrial America that we recognize today. It is argued that through Hamilton, immigrants were given the opportunity to escape hardship and achieve the “American Dream.”<sup>92</sup> This message is only partially based on reality, and supports an idealized history that largely undermines the real life struggles endured by most immigrants. It is true that Hamilton did help conceive of the Society for the Establishment of Useful Manufactures (SUM), however his precise role in the society’s founding of Paterson is ambiguous. Regardless, the SUM was incorporated by the New Jersey Legislature in 1791, and chose a site along the Passaic River to build its first mill.<sup>93</sup>

In a letter to Hamilton, an associate named William Hall wrote, “Last night Mr. Mort & myself returned from the Passaic Falls—one of the finest situations in the world (we believe) can be made there [...] This situation so far exceeds our expectations that we are very desirous you shou’d see it.”<sup>94</sup> At the time, Paterson was just a small Dutch town consisting of merely ten houses and a tavern. What scouts, like William Hall, found memorable was a large waterfall that could be used to power

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<sup>92</sup> Zax

<sup>93</sup> Norwood, 37.

<sup>94</sup> Alexander Hamilton, *Industrial and Commercial Correspondence of Alexander Hamilton Anticipating his Report on Manufactures*, Edited by Arthur Harrison Cole, (Chicago: A.W. Shaw Co., 1928) 206

America's industrial independence.<sup>95</sup> James Kenyon explains that water played a huge role in attracting development to Paterson. Not only did the Passaic River and its falls provide waterpower and a mode of transportation, it also supplied a high volume of quality water for consumption.<sup>96</sup> The SUM immediately purchased land around the base of the falls and hired Pierre L'Enfant, the famed designer of Washington, DC, to layout the city. L'Enfant declared that he would design the most grandiose city that the nation had ever seen, but just two years later he was fired for working behind schedule and neglecting basic needs of the manufactory.<sup>97</sup>

Christopher Norwood emphasizes the significance of Paterson as a private endeavor by stating, "Paterson was not designed as a city; it was designed as a corporation." The New Jersey Legislature granted unprecedented power to the SUM, effectively allowing a private entity to act as a local government. The SUM was exempt from federal taxes, held the power of eminent domain, governed its own land, and held the drainage rights of the Passaic River. Most significantly, the Legislature did not include a legal provision for a city charter, so despite its founding in 1791,

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<sup>95</sup> Norwood, 30.

<sup>96</sup> Kenyon, 15.

<sup>97</sup> John R. Jr. Nelson, "Alexander Hamilton and American Manufacturing: A Reexamination," *The Journal of American History* 65, no. 4 (1979): 992. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1894556>.

Paterson was not incorporated as a city until 1831.<sup>98</sup> This had major implications on the life of residents that is not adequately explored in Great Falls Resource Study. In fact, much of the writing regarding Paterson's founding mask the difficulties faced by early immigrants by focusing on the industrial opportunities present in the fledgling city.

From the beginning, Paterson was founded as a textile center with the intention of recruiting skilled labor from Europe. The cotton textile industry was established in 1794 with the construction of a small ox-driven cotton mill, only the second in the country, that employed 125 workers.<sup>99</sup> The operation, however, was not successful. Most accounts of Paterson's founding focus on the city's eventual success, but industry did not succeed in Paterson until decades after Hamilton's death. The SUM was involved in a stock scandal that contributed to the nation's first depression, and by October of 1796, mismanagement and economic difficulties forced the SUM to abandon its project.<sup>100</sup> This was the first of a series of economic declines that the city experienced, with the population dropping from about 500 to just 43 residents. The war of 1812 revived the SUM by fueling a demand for domestic products, and by 1814 the population of the city grew again to 1,500. The cotton industry expanded to

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<sup>98</sup> Norwood, 37-38.

<sup>99</sup> Kenyon, 28-29.

<sup>100</sup> Norwood, 40.

eleven cotton mills, but by the close of the war in 1815, only two of the mills survived.

<sup>101</sup> The first quarter of the nineteenth century saw slow growth, and by most accounts, Hamilton's enterprise was a failure. Proponents of the Great Falls NHP largely ignored this fact, and it became an arguing point during the park's nomination.

Bolger factually points out that the federal industrial city that Hamilton envisioned simply did not happen.<sup>102</sup> This in no way discounts Hamilton's role or degrades the significance of Paterson. By 1825 Paterson was realizing its industrial potential by leading the country with eighteen cotton factories and a population that was increasing an average of fifty percent each decade.<sup>103</sup> It was accomplishing this not through a centralized, powerful entity like the SUM, rather it was thriving on a decentralized and diversified model. Though cotton production still had a large role in the city's economy, entrepreneurs began diversifying through manufacturing of locomotives, paper, and silk. Silk would prove to have the most enduring legacy, giving Paterson the title of America's "Silk City."

From its humble conception in the loft of a gun mill, the silk industry grew rapidly, and by 1860 it was on its way to becoming the dominant textile industry in Paterson. There were several factors that helped establish Paterson as the nation's

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<sup>101</sup> Kenyon, 29.

<sup>102</sup> Bill Bolger. Personal Interview. January 27, 2010.

<sup>103</sup> Kenyon, 29; Norwood, 40.



preeminent silk producer. The geography was a natural advantage over rival cities—the Passaic River supplied abundant water for turning water wheels as well as the processing and dyeing of fabrics, and the proximity to New York City, a major commercial center and fashion hub, also provided easy distribution to markets. Lastly, the availability of facilities and a skilled work force made the transition to a new textile product easier.<sup>104</sup> Though silk manufacturing benefited from the established cotton industry, cotton production was impaired by the arrival of silk. Competition from cotton producers in New England was stripping away business, and the higher wages offered by local silk manufacturers were reducing the labor pool. By 1859 only 1,200 workers were employed in cotton mills, which represented a clear stagnation of growth.<sup>105</sup>

The twentieth century saw the rise and fall of various industries as manufacturers struggled to adapt and maintain relevance in a rapidly changing economy. By 1900 the silk industry had grown to 175 businesses that employed 20,000 people. Despite this growth, industry bosses were concerned by regional competition and began looking for ways to cut costs and increase production. In 1913, one mill owner instituted a new system that required weavers to operate four looms simultaneously, rather than two. The introduction of the four-loom system set off the

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<sup>104</sup> Kenyon, 40-41.

<sup>105</sup> Kenyon, 34.

most brutal strike in Paterson's history, which lasted five months and financially devastated mill owners and families. Relations between workers and manufacturers had long been strained. Between 1850 and 1914, Paterson was the most strike-ridden city in the entire United States, resulting in violence, vandalism, and anarchism.<sup>106</sup> Despite this astounding fact, the theme of labor strife is absent from the Great Fall's Historic Landmark and the neighboring Paterson Museum.

The labor unrest had a huge impact on the city's development. One manufacturer claimed that he would rather sell his business than "be compelled to argue with his employees, not one of whom has any practical knowledge of the business."<sup>107</sup> Though his stance may seem extreme, many manufacturers relocated to avoid dealing with the unions. An exodus of large firms began around 1910, moving all or part of their operations to Pennsylvania or fringe areas of the city. The decentralization of mills served as a benefit to manufacturers who were able to withstand the 1913 strike by maintaining operations at their secondary locations. The loss of large firms however, did not signal the end of the Silk City. The demand for silk and other textile products increased with the onset of World War I. The decentralization opened the market to small, family run silk shops that helped meet the

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<sup>106</sup> Norwood, 56.

<sup>107</sup> Scranton, 76.

wartime demands. These small shops, employing twenty-five to thirty workers, were predominate through the 1930s, a phenomenon unique to Paterson.<sup>108</sup>

Unfortunately, the small family-run looms were particularly susceptible to changes in the economy. Business turnover was high, so despite high production levels, the state of Paterson's textile industry was precarious. The final blow came with the invention of rayon in the late 1920s. Some Paterson shops were able to adapt to the production of semi-synthetic fibers, but this period largely highlighted the obsolescence of facilities and equipment that signaled the end of Paterson's textile supremacy.<sup>109</sup> Despite the loss of textiles, Paterson's economy was once again revived with the onset of World War II. The war created a high demand for rubber, plastics, electronics, and aeronautical equipment. Nowland writes that the emergence of these new industries helped nudge the city out of its "torpor," and many reflect on this post-war period as Paterson's urban renaissance.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Scranton, 91.

<sup>109</sup> Scranton, 6-7.

<sup>110</sup> Nowland, 63.

## **The Founding of an Immigrant City**

The immigrant experience permeates Paterson's history. The mills that now stand empty represent not only the bold industrial pursuits of an elite class, but also the bold action of millions of foreigners seeking a better life. Unfortunately, the available historical records favor the former, but it should be remembered that for every spool of silk produced, there was a worker, and for every mansion built, there was a tenement. The significance of Paterson's immigrant history has largely been downplayed in the Great Falls park studies for two reasons. First, nineteenth and twentieth century immigration to Paterson largely follows the same trends seen throughout metropolitan areas of the northeast. The first immigrants were English and northern Europeans, followed by southern and eastern Europeans, and later, Hispanics. This is a familiar model that lacks the distinction that leads to declarations of national significance. Secondly, extensive records of Paterson's immigrant population simply do not exist. The people who came to Paterson are best represented through census numbers and statistics, which provide little insight into their human condition.

This is not to say that Paterson's immigrant history has been entirely ignored. Rather, its continuous presence plays a supportive role to more prominent industrial narratives. For example, immigration is most commonly examined through the lens of labor. Historians interested in labor incorporate the immigrant experience by examining workplace discrimination and specialized skills possessed by ethnic

groups. Studies of the 1913 strike, which launched Paterson into the national spotlight, also integrate the immigrant experience by looking at ethnic relations and radical political affiliations carried over from Europe. Another common immigrant narrative is the rag to riches story that involves poor immigrants who rose in rank to become wealthy industrialists. These stories are certainly important components of the city's history, but they fail to depict the experience of the large majority of Paterson immigrants.

Community studies undertaken in the 1980s, largely as a result of the Salvage Archeological Project of 1973-76, attempt to expand the scope of immigrant studies by moving investigations out of the factories and into the neighborhood. By looking at where immigrants settled, historians and archeologists are able to provide insight into how immigrants lived, what they valued, and the legacy they left behind. The neighborhood surrounding the mill district, "Dublin," provides a rich social history that complements the industrial story by adding a very accessible human quality. It also provides a framework for understanding how community networks developed and laid the groundwork for the present population.

Immigration to Paterson began when the SUM established the first cotton mill in 1794. The manufacturing of textiles was an entirely new endeavor in the U.S., so the SUM had to recruit skilled immigrant workers from New York and Europe,

primarily English and German.<sup>111</sup> English weavers and machinists were the most common in the early mills, and they increased in number as Paterson's industry expanded in the first half of the nineteenth century. The first period of neighborhood development occurred during the period following the War of 1812 when Paterson experienced its first economic growth. The first homes were primarily one or two story Federal dwellings, some of which were owned and leased by the SUM to its employees. Settlement occurred just southeast of the mill district, and for the first half of the nineteenth century this neighborhood was inhabited by laborers and mill owners alike. Lu Anne De Cunzo explains that in an age of limited transportation options, proximity to the workplace was desirable for both groups. Industry leaders differentiated themselves from employees and reinforced their superiority by building high style Federal homes that visually communicated the social and economic distance.<sup>112</sup>

The population increased steadily with large numbers of Irish immigrating in the 1840s. Despite the new arrivals, the "old" English-born immigrants occupied one quarter of the textile job market. Many of these earlier immigrants had used their knowledge of textiles to establish their own factories, and by the time silk production took off in the 1860s, English-born manufacturers dominated the city's textile

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<sup>111</sup> Kenyon, 29.

<sup>112</sup> De Cunzo, 21.

industry.<sup>113</sup> A declining economy in England and the promise of work in America fueled the emigration of skilled English workers during the period of 1840-1860. Existing networks between the old English silk towns and Paterson led to the establishment of an informal network of migration.<sup>114</sup> Established friends, family, and employers from the old towns facilitated these networks by extending assistance to new immigrants.<sup>115</sup> The specialized skills of Europeans gave immigrants a competitive advantage over the native-born, and many saw Paterson as an incredible chance at upward mobility. The idiom, “In England, the chances for success are one out of ten unless born of rich parents; in America, nine out of ten,” was said to inspire one of Paterson’s most successful manufacturers, Catholina Lambert.<sup>116</sup> As profits rose, mill owners built large, elaborate homes on the outskirts of town. The neighborhood surrounding the mill district became an exclusively working class neighborhood that extended further south to accommodate the growing workforce.

The great success achieved by Paterson’s early immigrants has resulted in the celebration of Paterson as the epitome of the “American Dream” and the proliferation of the ‘rags to riches’ myth. It is true that many immigrants were attracted to Paterson

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<sup>113</sup> Scranton, 10.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 18.

after hearing tales of menial laborers rising in ranks to eventually own their own business.<sup>117</sup> While instances of such achievement did exist, such stories presuppose that subsequent immigrants arrived in America with equal footing. In reality, the earlier immigrants, particularly the English, arrived as skilled laborers during a time of less competition, and with the advantage of speaking English. There existed a very American notion that individuals in Paterson had unhampered opportunity to work hard and reap success, a concept that is not supported by wage statistics. This optimism was coupled with a belief that failure to thrive lay only in “an individual’s inadequacy and immorality,” a belief that led to ethnic stereotyping and alienation.<sup>118</sup>

Though the specialized industry in Paterson afforded unique opportunities, the majority of workers endured very difficult conditions, and as the older generation of immigrants rose in rank, new waves of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe created more diversity as well as a more marked class divide. Many of the difficulties experienced by the immigrant working class were residual effects of Paterson’s founding. Although the SUM forfeited most of its influence by selling its property in 1845, the privileges that the New Jersey Legislature granted them in 1791

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<sup>117</sup> In the 1980s, labor historian Herbert Gutman reinforced the “rags to riches” myth in Paterson by using the city as an example of a truly free, capitalist city in which hard workers were rewarded through success. His study ignored the predominantly WASP heritage of Paterson’s early industrialists. See Melvyn Dubofsky, *Hard Work: The Making of Labor History* (Urbana, ILL: University of Illinois Press, 2000) 225-227.

<sup>118</sup> Brighton, *Degrees of Alienation*.



set a precedent of corporate power. From the beginning, the city failed to provide basic services like a responsive democratic government, public schools, or sense of community.”<sup>119</sup> In essence, Paterson was a moneymaking machine in which little consideration by leaders was made for the quality of life of its residents. Even after the 1831 government was established (with bitter opposition from the SUM), voting restrictions and corruption suppressed the voices of the people. In the election of 1850, out of 11,300 residents, only 536 voted.<sup>120</sup> This had a huge impact on community dynamics and resulted in bitter contests between employers and employees that affected every aspect of life in Paterson.

As mentioned previously, there are several studies that focus specifically on Paterson’s infamous labor strikes. Although it is not necessary to dwell on these events here, it should be understood that the conditions leading up to and following the labor unrest shaped the lives of Paterson residents. The labor conditions had a curious way of both uniting and fragmenting the city’s inhabitants. Although immigrants came for the same economic reasons, language and cultural differences caused disunity. As new groups of unskilled workers immigrated, tensions along the lines of ethnicity, skill, gender, and ideology surfaced, a point that many labor scholars downplay.

Experienced workers felt threatened by unskilled, low-wage newcomers

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<sup>119</sup> Norwood, 36.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 53.

who were eager to fill positions opened by strikers. This included women, who were harassed as “strikebreakers,” often with the approval of unions, for accepting skilled jobs at half the pay rate of men. The strikes were an opportunity for disadvantaged groups to learn new skills that were denied to them during normal times of production, but it also resulted in harassment and intimidation.”<sup>121</sup> Native and English-speaking weavers expressed their distrust of “inferior” groups by claiming they would “never join any body that includes the German, French, and Italian weavers.” Ethnic stereotypes proliferated with Italians taking the brunt of criticism, at one point being labeled “the very worst and most dangerous foreign element in the ranks of American labor.”<sup>122</sup> Manufacturers tried to take advantage of this by separating native workers from the foreign in hopes of reinforcing the cultural distrust.<sup>123</sup>

Manufacturers attempted to use the concept of patriotism to pit natives against immigrants. During the great strike of 1913, mill owners hung American flags in the mills to compel workers to choose between the American flag of labor or the “socialist” flag of unions. The event was known as “flag day” and was intended to bring an end to the great strike. Instead of returning to work, strikers of all nationalities wore an American flag card on their lapel, a powerful symbol of their

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<sup>121</sup> Scranton, 64.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 80.

brief solidarity.<sup>124</sup> When the workers returned to work five months later, conditions returned to more or less what they had always been. Broke and disheartened, the workers continued their fight to make ends meet. The only change that occurred was an even more defeated immigrant spirit and a more pronounced loss of manufacturing jobs to other cities.

### **Constructing a Shared history**

The first large Hispanic migration to Paterson were Puerto Ricans, but today the Hispanic population is extremely diverse consisting of Peruvians, Dominicans, Mexicans, and Columbians. The city has continued to serve as a gateway for new immigrants, but because of the loss of jobs that occurred at the end of the twentieth century, the city often serves merely as a temporary introduction to America. It is common for individuals and families to improve their situation by moving as soon as they have saved enough money. Very little research has been completed to understand the histories of the people who have come to Paterson in recent decades. A demographic study conducted by the New Jersey Development Corporation in 2008 indicates that about 67.9 percent of Dublin residents identify as Latino and 24.5 percent are foreign born. The study also shows that most are relatively new to the community with 7.2 percent having lived there since 1980 and 60.7 percent since

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 85-86.

1995. The study also found that 91.6 percent of Dublin residents are renters, which supports the concern that public officials have in trying to retain residents in a historically transient community.<sup>125</sup>

Many feel the new National Park could be the key to improving the quality of life for constituents and retaining residents who will be more invested in the community. The challenge of the Great Falls NHP will be figuring out how to construct a shared history that matters to the residents of Paterson—particularly those who are recent immigrants who may not feel a strong connection to the city’s industrial or traditional immigrant past. The Great Falls NHP’s position as a natural and historic resource within a multicultural community provides an excellent opportunity to incorporate new narratives that can resonate with Paterson’s diverse population.

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<sup>125</sup> Value Research Group, “Greater Spruce Street Neighborhood Plan,” (Paterson, NJ: New Jersey Development Corporation, 2009); statistics for the Dublin neighborhood were calculated by averaging data from survey tract 1820 (North Dublin) and survey tract 1818 (South Dublin).

## Two Hundred Years of Immigration

Most of Paterson's accessible history portrays the city as a thriving industrial center with economic opportunities for all, but today, the city is merely a vestige of its former self. The abandoned, charred ruins of the city's oldest mills and empty, littered raceways are evidence of the city's fate. The former economic powerhouse, once known as America's "Silk City," experienced a devastating loss of industry in the second half of the twentieth century. The colorful murals, ethnic flags and tropical sounds in Paterson attest to another kind of change that has taken place. The neighborhoods of Paterson have changed drastically as new immigrant groups replace older immigrant communities. The "Dublin" neighborhood, in particular, has seen significant change. It is not entirely clear whether the neighborhood is still known as "Dublin," or to what extent the current residents relate to the community's historic roots, however the neighborhood's persistence as an immigrant gateway has been a defining characteristic.

By the early 1920s, the former Irish "Dublin" was dominated by the new Italian presence. Small restaurants, markets, and bakeries were established on Cianci Street, which became the heart of the Italian community in Paterson.<sup>126</sup> As second and third generations experience upward mobility, they began to move out to the

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<sup>126</sup> Cultural Resource Survey, 1987; The Italians in Paterson, 1935

suburbs to better housing conditions and Dublin began to see its next wave of immigrants arrive. The history of the neighborhood shows a pattern of succession in which the newest and most marginalized immigrants inhabit the older, deteriorated housing around the mills. The departure of the Italians in the mid-twentieth century, however, differed from other demographic shifts because it coincided with deindustrialization of the city. Not only were residents moving to the suburbs for better accommodations, but manufacturers were fleeing to the suburbs as well.<sup>127</sup> This made economic conditions and the chance for upward mobility more difficult for the incoming immigrants who were attracted to the affordable rents of the older neighborhoods.

The significance of Dublin is its relationship to Paterson's manufacturing and its continual role as a working class, immigrant neighborhood. Though each successive group had their own unique circumstances, being apart of an immigrant continuum links them. Unfortunately, the reflection of this connection will be stifled by the Great Fall NHP's limited scope. By not including the Dublin working class neighborhood adjacent to the Great Falls, the Park Service will forfeit an excellent opportunity to not only reach out to the local community, but also incorporate an underrepresented demographic into Park Service Interpretation. The experiences of Paterson's early immigrants, from the Irish to the Italians, parallel many of the

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<sup>127</sup> Kenyan, 45.

experiences of today's immigrants. Introduction of this theme would provoke examination of concepts like national identity, nativism, and the role of community and religion in framing perceptions of identity.

### **Sports and Social Justice**

Hinchliffe Stadium is another omitted resource adjacent to the Great Falls that has the potential to greatly expand the Great Falls NHP's interpretive reach (Figures 4.4 and 4.5). The stadium was featured in the December 2004 issue of *Heritage Matters* in honor of its 2004 inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. In the report, the NPS identified the significance of Hinchliffe "in the areas of recreation/entertainment, ethnic heritage, and for its affiliation with Paterson native and Hall-of-Fame baseball player Larry Doby."<sup>128</sup> Just three years later, the Deputy Director of the NPS testified to Congress that Hinchliffe should not be considered for inclusion in the Great Falls NHP because it did not meet the qualifications for national

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<sup>128</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "National Register Nomination," *Heritage Matters* (Dec. 2004) 11. [http://www.nps.gov/history/crdi/publications/HM\\_10.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/history/crdi/publications/HM_10.pdf) (accessed Jan. 15, 2010).

significance and has “no connection to the NHL determined period of historical significance.”<sup>129</sup>

Flavia Alaya, president of the Friends of Hinchliffe Stadium, pointed out the Park Services had a failure of imagination by refusing to take on the challenge of interpreting the historic stadium within the park study. She writes that the NPS’s reluctance resulted in a missed opportunity to explore a narrative of the relationship between “work and play.” She writes, “Hinchliffe Stadium reminds us how work, recreation and decency are intertwined uniquely on the American scene, how essential hopefulness, the egalitarian, aspirational character of both our industrial culture and our cultural diversity are represented” by the playing field.<sup>130</sup> The stadium was constructed between 1929 and 1932 as a Works Progress Administration Depression era project, captured with the help of Paterson Mayor John V. Hinchliffe, for whom the stadium was eventually named. John Shaw, a local architect, broke away from typical sports arena designs. The horseshoe shaped stadium opened up to a rise overlooking the city, and the whitewashed, concrete structure incorporates Art Deco ornamental features and a terracotta tile awning. It has become an icon of the

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<sup>129</sup> U.S. Senate, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, “Statement of Daniel N. Wenk Concerning the Great Falls National Park,” (2007). [www.nps.gov/legal/testimony/110th/S148GreatFallsNP.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/legal/testimony/110th/S148GreatFallsNP.pdf) (accessed Nov. 17, 2010).

<sup>130</sup> Flavia Alaya. Letter to the Director of NPS. 2007, 2.



community, and its proximity to the Great Falls will make it an attraction for visitors to the new NHP.

The stadium is most recognized for serving as the home for the New York Black Yankees for twelve seasons, however it was also used for soccer, track and field, boxing, and midget car racing, as well as professional football teams like the Paterson Panthers, the Newark Bears, and the Jersey City Giants.<sup>131</sup> The stadium is a special place in the history of Paterson and the history of American ethnic and race relations. It tells the story of labor strife, racial segregation and integration, and industrial decline. Despite its deteriorated state, Hinchliffe is one of the most valued historic resources in Paterson. In November of 2009 voters passed a bond issue to rehabilitate the sports field. The outpouring of community support should signal to the Park Service the value that Hinchliffe possesses, not just to local residents or sports enthusiasts, but also for anyone who has experienced the dichotomies of alienation, discrimination, unity and victory.

Not only is the stadium tied to important civil rights themes, it is also intimately connected to labor and the city's industrial history. It symbolizes and serves as a legacy of the role sports and recreation played in the lives of Paterson's working class. Steven Riess illustrates this connection in *City Games* in which he explains how

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<sup>131</sup> Alfred Martin, *The Negro Leagues in New Jersey: A History* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008) 21.

governments of industrialized cities like Paterson increasingly invested in recreational opportunities for working class communities beginning in the 1920s. Manufacturers were encouraged by a 1919 federal investigation that reported that “industrial athletics encouraged a ‘closer welding of the heterogeneous groups of employees, together with a closer and more friendly relationship between workers, foremen, and superintendents.’”<sup>132</sup>

Like other manufacturing centers, Paterson established its own Industrial Athletic Association, which was a collaboration between 125 factories and provided adult recreation through the use of local parks and public school gymnasiums.<sup>133</sup> The popularity of such programs is demonstrated through the variety of activities and the number of league teams established in Paterson. Some of Paterson’s teams included the Paterson Celtics, Rangers, Silk Sox, Thistles, Wilberforce, Phillies, and the Paterson True Blues.<sup>134</sup>

The Paterson True Blues was a soccer team that achieved success by winning the AFA Cup. This is significant considering their victory occurred on April

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<sup>132</sup> Steven A. Reiss, *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989) 85.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*; Roger Alloway, *Rangers, Rovers and Spindles: Soccer, Immigration and Textiles in New England and New Jersey* (Haworth, NJ: St. Johann Press, 2005).

27, 1913 during the most bitter, turbulent strike in Paterson history.<sup>135</sup> Soccer, or football, was carried over by English textile workers and thrived as a sport in Northern New Jersey. The same link that brought English immigrants and the importation of textile skills from Macclesfielders, England to Paterson, also brought the game of soccer. By 1884, the Paterson Football Club was established, and by 1894, the Paterson True Blues reached the final of the American Cup which they would go on to win three times.<sup>136</sup>

By the time Hinchliffe Stadium opened, athletic activities in Paterson reflected both the diversity and distress of the city. On October 3, 1933 strikers held one of the largest labor strikes in the city's history at Hinchliffe. The 10,000-seat stadium was flooded with 15,000 workers who met in hopes of pressuring federal intervention of the labor dispute. The strikers returned to work twenty days later once the compromise of a \$23, forty-hour workweek was agreed upon.<sup>137</sup>

While the ethnic community utilized Hinchliffe Stadium to mobilize in opposition to labor practices, it was also used by African Americans to counter athletic discrimination. Migration of African Americans from the south to urban areas in the

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<sup>135</sup> Alloway, 52.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>137</sup> Special to the New York Times, "Silk Dye Strikers To Return Today," *New York Times*. Oct. 24, 1933. <http://proxy.nss.udel.edu:2075/> (accessed January 20, 2010).

north beginning in the mid-1910s had a huge impact on the popularity of baseball.<sup>138</sup> As African Americans were excluded from major league teams, Negro leagues were established, reaching their height during World War II, when urban black populations grew dramatically in response to war-related industrial job opportunities.<sup>139</sup>

While segregation of organized baseball was the unfortunate consequence of America's racial injustices, it also presented an unprecedented opportunity for black entrepreneurs and managers that is not often acknowledged. The African American sportswriter Wendell Smith wrote, "while wallowing in the mire of segregation and discrimination, the owners of Negro League baseball were the beneficiaries of that vicious system and they benefited greatly."<sup>140</sup> Ironically, just as the black leagues reached their zenith, a movement gained momentum to introduce African American players into the major leagues, which ultimately caused the demise of the Negro leagues.<sup>141</sup>

Many portray the integration of major league baseball as a long fought battle against injustice, but it also occurred as a result of slumping attendance in the major leagues and the need for a new marketing strategy. William Rhoden writes that

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<sup>138</sup> Ries, 118.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>140</sup> William C. Rhoaden, *\$40 Million Slaves: The Rise, Fall and Redemption of the Black Athlete*, (New York: Crown Publishers, 2006) 121.

<sup>141</sup> Ries, 120.

major league managers “exploited a psychological soft spot within the African American community—the desire to ‘measure up’—that made the invasion go infinitely smoother.”<sup>142</sup> Many celebrate the integration of Jackie Robinson in 1947 as the end of social inequity of baseball, however exploitation and abuse of black athletes continued well into the 1960s. The destruction of the color barrier also signaled the end of black management and entrepreneurial gains in Negro League baseball. By the time the minor leagues desegregated in 1951, there was no longer a use for exclusively black teams.<sup>143</sup>

The survival of Hinchliffe Stadium, one of only two remaining ballparks that hosted Negro League teams, and its location just yards from the Great Falls presents the NPS with an important interpretive challenge.<sup>144</sup> The stadium is linked to the Great Falls landmark not only through its physical proximity, but also through themes of sports, recreation, entertainment and the more substantive themes of ethnic and racial discrimination and solidarity. For the NPS to overlook this clear opportunity to incorporate underrepresented populations into the National Park would be contemptuous of not only the thousands of historical figures involved in the

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<sup>142</sup> Rhoden, 117.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>144</sup> Martin, 22.

institution, but also the millions of potential visitors who may share aspects of the site's history.

The Park Service's dismissal of Hinchliffe Stadium resulted in its removal from the NHP boundaries. Current management policies that limit park interpretation to themes identified in the NHL nomination would also exclude the stadium. In essence, as park policy stands, this important resource will be completely omitted from park interpretive resources. The significance of Hinchliffe and its potential to reach a diverse audience warrants a reassessment of park policy. The initial Landmark designation demonstrates that it is narrowly focused on the physical development of the district, neglecting two centuries of social history. If the Park Service is sincere about its desire to expand interpretation of park resources to reach a broader audience by including minorities, it should consider the interpretive value of Hinchliffe Stadium and its physical and historical relationship to the Great Falls district.



**Figure 4.1** View of housing on Elm Street in “Dublin”



**Figure 4.2** Typical Housing found in southern section of “Dublin” on Mill Street





**Figure 4.3 Front elevation of dwelling on Elm Street**



**Figure 4.4** View of intersection at Market and Mill Street



**Figure 4.5 View of Hinchliffe Stadium**



**Figure 4.6** View of north entrance of Hinchliffe Stadium



**Figure 4.7** Detail of ticket booth of Hinchliffe Stadium showing deterioration of terracotta roof shingles on sidewalk



**Figure 4.8** View of former restroom, showing the extent of deterioration and vandalism



**Figure 4.9** View of stadium bleachers from playing field



**Figure 4.10** View of stadium playing field from bleachers



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

No one disputes the historical significance of Paterson, but with a history as complex, diverse, and layered, deciding which stories to tell can be very difficult, if not contentious. The Federal legislation creating the Great Falls NHP simply states that the NPS will “interpret” the resources of the Great Falls and, one could argue, is intentionally ambiguous. Congress entrusts the identification of significant themes to the NPS for good reason; the NPS is a trusted steward of America’s cultural heritage and their knowledge, expertise, and sensitivity to the needs of Americans is presumed to guide an appropriate use of the park. Paterson presents the Park Service with an array of historical themes, from technological innovation to labor conditions and class conflict—all of which have the potential to engage the interest of various segments of the population. However, current park policy restricts interpretation to themes identified as nationally significant from the historic landmark’s 1976 designation, principally Hamilton, the SUM, and the site’s early engineers. These themes are indisputably significant to the city’s development; however, they should be augmented by social themes that can resonate with Paterson’s contemporary residents. The neglect of Paterson’s social history was a huge oversight in 1976, and unfortunately, it is an error that the 2008 legislation did not rectify.

As the park’s management and interpretive plans are developed through the spring and summer of 2010, the NPS will have to confront these issues. This thesis

has presented and challenged various historical themes that are represented within the Great Falls, and I will conclude by providing specific recommendations on how such themes can be incorporated into the park in a way that can be meaningful, not only to visitors, but locals as well.

### **Confront the Limitations of NPS Policy**

Although the historic district and landmark designations of the 1970s accomplished objectives at the time, specifically preventing the destruction of the district and honoring the site's eighteenth century establishment, the parameters of these designations are outdated and do not meet current goals of the Park Service. The NPS needs to consider extending or eliminating the period of significance, which will allow the park to take part in a more meaningful dialogue on the current condition of the city. By focusing on a narrow period of Paterson's history, 1792-1914, the past becomes isolated from the present and future. Establishing "periods of significance" disconnect the past from the present without fully acknowledging the site's ongoing significance. The inclination to stress the planned, static representation of Paterson overlooks the dynamic, changing character of the district and its inhabitants. This model advocates the isolation of the National Park from the modern city and it also suggests that the marginalized histories that are so evident in the Great Falls, like Hinchliffe Stadium, which falls outside of the identified period of significance, are somehow not relevant to the Great Falls' history. The physical boundaries of the park are necessary for the management and operation of the park, however historical and

interpretive boundaries are far more subjective and certainly more negotiable than physical boundaries. Boundaries imposed by time periods can undermine the historical contribution of minorities and should be reconsidered in the Great Falls NHP.

Not only should the Park Service reassess the site's early nomination and period of significance, it should also consider the role of "national" themes in a park as fully engrained in a community as the Great Falls. The national narrative represented in Paterson should not be isolated from the local context in which it exists. It is expected that a National Park should focus on themes of "national" significance, but should it do so at the expense of local and minority group histories? While the story of Hamilton is arguably the more "national," and certainly the theme that is most unique to Paterson, it does not mean that it is any more significant than the history of the men, women, and children who have called the area their home. Paterson is what it is today, not only because of the large role of a few powerful players, but also because of the small role of many ordinary individuals.

### **Promote the Great Falls as a Community Space**

To claim that the Great Falls area is currently the bedrock of the community would be misleading. The deterioration and neglect of the park's resources has made it a largely underutilized space in Paterson. A survey carried out by the New Jersey Development Corporation found that 89 percent of residents of adjacent neighborhoods rarely or never use The Mary Ellen Kramer Overlook Park, the area overlooking the falls, and 94 percent said they rarely or never used the Upper

Raceway park, which is also within the Great Falls NHP boundary. Area residents cited safety concerns, criminal activity, and condition and maintenance as reasons for not using the local parks.<sup>145</sup> Much of these concerns will be mitigated through NPS management of the area. The landscape will be beautified and increased tourism will make the park a more welcoming, relaxing place. The authors of *Rethinking Urban Parks*, however, caution that many contemporary design practices in historic preservation and park planning alienate and exclude certain groups and reduce social and cultural diversity. They explain that certain “design practices can reduce the vitality and vibrancy of the space or reorganize it in such a way that only one kind of person—often a tourist or middle class visitor—feels welcomed.”<sup>146</sup>

It is important that the NPS consider unique ways the Park’s resources can be used to integrate the diverse communities within Paterson. Hinchliffe Stadium presents the Park Service with a unique way to engage the local community. Assuming that a successful rehabilitation of the 1930s stadium can occur, either through the NPS or private parties, the stadium can be used to hold public events including festivals, concerts, and sports activities. Soccer in particular is a popular sport in Paterson with various youth and adult leagues. Hosting matches for the city’s local soccer league would encourage residents of the area to visit the park more and invite tourists to watch and to take part in the community’s long sports history. It

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<sup>145</sup> Value Research Group. “Greater Spruce Street Neighborhood Plan.” Paterson, NJ: New Jersey Development Corporation, 2009.

<sup>146</sup> Setha Low, Dana Taplin, and Suzanne Scheld, *Public Space and Cultural Diversity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005) 2.

would be a live action display of the significance and contemporary relevance of the stadium, as well as providing a space for locals to reclaim ownership of the site's history. At Hinchliffe, the role of minorities can emerge not as a subordinate theme, but as a primary, core theme within the Great Falls.

This type of positive activity at the Great Falls would not only bring residents and tourists together, it would also encourage integration of locals. Politicians and community leaders celebrate Paterson's diversity, but diversity in the city exists in segregated enclaves. While the park's themes of immigration are intended to promote solidarity and a sense of shared history, even this socially conscious theme advances a mythic version of history in which immigrants are a unified, homogenous group that add character and vibrancy to the city. In reality, Paterson's immigrant population rarely acts as a unified group. Even the labor strikes were fraught with ethnic tensions as groups competed for jobs and resources. Politics, religion, and social customs have distinguished groups from each other, and also caused fragmentation and distrust.<sup>147</sup> The Great Falls and the stadium can provide a public space for disparate groups inside and outside of the city to engage in a meaningful cultural exchange that promotes social tolerance.

Involving locals and encouraging diversity within the park through their inclusion would satisfy many of the Park Service's twenty-first century goals. The use of Hinchliffe Stadium can potentially add a recreational element to the Great Falls

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<sup>147</sup> Tensions have existed between Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in Paterson, a friction that originates from loyalties to the two neighboring islands; Bill Bolger. Personal Interview. January 27, 2010.

NHP not seen in any other historical park, but in order to accomplish this, NPS officials need to make it a priority and not let outdated notions of significance dictate what stories can be told. In their assessment of diversity in five historical parks, Setha Low, Dana Taplin, and Suzanne Scheld found that “if people are not represented in historical national parks and monuments, or more importantly, if their histories are erased, they will not use the park.” Sports and recreation may bring more locals to the park, but including their stories in the historical interpretation of the park is still critical.

### **Collaboration**

Incorporating the diverse histories of Paterson will create a richer, more profound visitor experience that will better reflect the complexity and dynamic nature of the city and our nation, but with so many themes and so much information to relay, it can be argued that the NPS will have difficulty adequately representing so many perspectives. No number of audio and visual displays, exhibits, pamphlets, or walking tours could cover all of the history of Paterson. One way for the NPS to address this is to spearhead a collaborative effort between the new park and related sites in the surrounding area. A network of sites including the Paterson Museum, Lambert Castle, and the Botto House in neighboring Haledon, NJ could help synthesize the histories of Paterson into a more inclusive and holistic park experience.

The city-owned Paterson Museum focuses on the technological developments of Paterson with exhibits on textile manufacturing, locomotives, and

other innovations patented in Paterson. The museum site is located within the Great Falls NHP boundaries in the rehabilitated Rogers Locomotive Building, and negotiations will be made regarding the NPS's future role in the management of the museum (Figure 5.1). The Botto House is managed by the American Labor Museum and is a period house museum that interprets the home of Maria and Pietro Botto, Italian immigrants who played a significant role in Paterson's 1913 silk strike. The Botto house represents an important period in Paterson's history that is not currently represented at the Great Falls site (Figure 5.2). Lambert Castle is also a privately operated period house museum that tells the converse story of the Botto House. Lambert Castle was the home of English immigrant Catholina Lambert, a silk baron who built an extravagant home on Garrett Mountain, overlooking the Great Falls mill district (Figure 5.3). These three sites help communicate three very different aspects of Paterson's history. With the leadership of the NPS, the sites could develop a collaborative program that reveals the diverse history of Paterson by linking sites that embody dissonant characteristics of the city's past: progress, success, power, exploitation, unity, failure, and change.

The inclusion of Hinchliffe Stadium into this network of sites would help the Park Service present Paterson's history in a more holistic way that would appeal to a variety of visitors. The cross marketing would also benefit participating sites, who are also struggling independently to reach out to broader audiences. Negotiating between the various museum missions, hours of operations, entrance fees, as well as developing an effective and convenient transportation route linking the sites pose a logistical challenge, but the benefits of such an undertaking for the Park Service, the

museums, visitors, and the local community, make it a proposition worth considering.<sup>148</sup>

Beyond a local collaboration, park officials should also consider networking with similar sites in the greater New Jersey and New York metropolitan areas. Anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that the Great Falls and nearby Botto house attract a great deal of foreign visitors to the city. The Park service would be wise to find out who is visiting the area, where they come from, and what they are seeking. Such market studies can help the park decide if it is practical to join a larger network of historical sites that attract more international visitors. Collaboration with sites like Ellis Island and the Tenement House Museum, which focus on themes of immigration, would help the Great Falls NHP reach out to a more global audience.

Paterson is truly a unique city, and the NPS has an abundance of historical and cultural material to work with while developing the park and its programs. In the last decade the Park Service has stressed the importance of representing the diverse, multifaceted character of the U.S. within Park Service resources, and the Great Falls is an opportune site to put their words into action. While it may be more convenient to develop the park using old frameworks, it is arguably more prudent to explore new ways of incorporating Paterson's diverse history. This would lay the groundwork for a park that is more historically challenging and socially aware of our nation's past, present, and future.

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<sup>148</sup> Several museums in the historic neighborhood of Germantown in Philadelphia, PA are collaborating in a similar way. The small museum network shares staff, resources, and uses cross marketing to more efficiently and effectively achieve their missions.





**Figure 5.1** Exterior view of the Paterson Museum, formerly the Rodger's Locomotive Works, located on the corner of Market and Spruce Street



**Figure 5.2** Engine 299 is displayed outside of the Paterson museum. It was used in the construction of the Panama Canal and was returned to Paterson in the 1980s through efforts by former Mayer Lawrence Kramer



**Figure 5.3**

**Front elevation of the Botto House/ American Labor Museum**



**Figure 5.4** View of Lambert Castle located on Garrett Mountain, overlooking the city of Paterson



**Figure 5.5** View of Great Falls and Hydro-electric plant in winter



**Figure 5.6** View of frozen falls

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