



**UPAC Statement on Antiracism and Black Lives Matter**

Science generally, and archaeology specifically has a long and fraught history of racism, disenfranchisement, and colonialism that we are only just beginning to contend with. Facing our historical and current misdeeds, presumed superiority and righteousness, and privilege is deeply uncomfortable but deeply important. While many of us wish otherwise, archaeology is inherently political. Our industry is defined by federal and state policies, we serve as the primary stewards and interpreters of the diversity of past peoples, the National Register of Historic Places, which is geared towards the built environment of Euro-American settlement in the United States, defines what is culturally significant, and we determine what on the cultural landscape is worthy of documentation, and the depth of that documentation. That is political, inextricably linked with race in America, and overwhelmingly enacted by white archaeological and anthropological practitioners.

At a speech at Cambridge in 1965, James Baldwin said of the Black experience in America “It comes as a great shock...to discover the flag to which you have pledged allegiance... has not pledged allegiance to you... It comes as a great shock to discover that the country which is your birthplace and to which you owe your life and your identity which has not, in its whole system of reality, evolved any place for you.” The protests all across the country, including in Utah, speak to the truth of this sentiment for BIPOC 55 years on.

We have a lot of work to do; a lot of soul searching; a lot of listening. We, as archaeologists in Utah, have a role to play in helping to evolve a place for BIPOC in America and in archaeology.

In the most recent issue of Scientific American, 500 Women Scientists Leadership authored an article called “Silence is Never Neutral, Neither is Science” (2020) in which they lay out a list of actions for scientists, academic institutions, and scientific organizations that we can draw from as we contend with our role in dismantling the systems that oppress in the United States:

- Create robust strategies to dismantle systemic racism within your institutions.
- Train, hire and support scientists of color.
- Hire external antiracism educators to help staff and trainees implement new practices.
- Require all employees and trainees to take bystander intervention training, which has been shown to be most effective in effecting true cultural change.
- Hire independent DEI consultants to assess organizational culture.
- Design and implement a reward system for mentorship and outreach, as these responsibilities often fall disproportionately on underrepresented members of the faculty.
- Require security staff to obtain regular antiracist de-escalation training.
- Break contracts with local police, and pledge not to call the police for nonviolent offenses.

UPAC is committed to making changes to make archaeology a safe place for BIPOC and we call on our partners in academia, the private sector, the public sector, and non-profits to do the same.

-The UPAC Executive Committee