**RACE, SPACE & MOBILITY IN AMERICA:**

***a national public engagement & outreach initiative***

**Race, Space & Mobility in America** is a major national public engagement and educational outreach initiative intended to foster and enhance public awareness, civic dialogue and historical understanding of three closely-related aspects of the American experience, past and present: the contemporary phenomenon known as “driving while black”; the experience of African Americans on the road during the era of Jim Crow; and the complex, deeply embedded dynamics of race, space and mobility in America that lie behind both.

Beginning in May 2021 and continuing through December 2021, the twenty-four-month outreach campaign – a partnership between the Cooperstown Graduate Program, the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and Steeplechase Films – will be coordinated with and extend the intellectual and media assets of *Driving While Black: Race, Space and Mobility in America*, a two-hour documentary film, originally broadcast on PBS in the fall of 2020. The film reverberates with an urgent and powerful message for Americans today, reminding us of the fragility of democracy and the tenacity of a people. Told in large part through the stories of the people who lived through the Jim Crow era, as well as the major scholars whose research documented it, this story explores the deep background of the recent and all too common phrase — driving while Black — which is rooted in attitudes about race and mobility that have been an indelible part of the African American experience.

The outreach initiative, like the film, will use the rich history and experience of African American automobile travel during the era of Jim Crow as a point of departure, and a window through which to explore the complex nature of freedom, mobility, and race in America – past and present – in the hope that the insights such an exploration makes possible will inform and enhance collective understanding of race relationships today, serve as a catalyst for discussions about race and equality in American society, and promote healing and change.

To this end, the **Race, Space & Mobility in America** outreach initiative will be undertaken in collaboration with a wide range of local organizations around the country – including cultural institutions in ten anchor cities that exemplify key initiative themes in particularly illuminating ways – and in consultation with a distinguished group of project historians and advisors who will be actively involved in every phase of the design and implementation of the project. The multi- part initiative will include 20 or more major public engagement events: carefully planned and implemented screenings, panel discussions and other public dialogue events created in partnership with civic, cultural and religious organizations, museums and libraries, schools, colleges and universities, historical sites and places of remembrance; the design and distribution of dialogue toolkits – self-screening/public engagement kits, exploring the themes, intellectual content and film materials created for *Driving While Black*; the design and implementation of two 120-minute webinar facilitation training seminars to help partner organizations and their staff maximize effective public engagement; and online facilitation, coordination, and collection of archival materials.

For eighteen years, project partner International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC) has helped museums, historic sites, and other public spaces become dynamic centers for community engagement through personalized training solutions and resources grounded in the work of thought leaders, educators, and human rights advocates. The ICSC will lead dialogue at ten sites across the country and offer webinar trainings in facilitated dialogue to local scholars at ten additional sites where they will conduct their own community conversations.

**OUTREACH GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

● To maximize the reach, impact and public understanding of the historical information and insight uncovered and explored in the two-hour film, regarding the social, physical, geographic and economic mobility of African Americans, historically and today, including the history and legacy of Jim Crow segregation and the invidious privileging of whiteness in America.

● To catalyze and support cross-racial public dialogue about and understanding of the deeply embedded dynamics of race, space and mobility in the United States – before, during and after the invention of the automobile; dynamics that, historically and to this day, have shaped and continue to shape many crucial aspects of the social, political, economic, cultural, legal and administrative landscape of America – and the experience of African Americans within it.

● To engage and partner with a range of local, often historically marginalized, and under-resourced groups and institutions across the country – including church groups, historical societies, cultural organizations, historical sites, film festivals, art societies, libraries, community organizations, social justice groups, and others – in fostering local and community dialogue around the key project themes and narratives.

● To foster dialogue and understanding between police and community groups across the country around the issues of race and mobility.

● To design, implement and oversee an online public engagement campaign, using digital and social media channels to promote and expand public engagement with and awareness of the film’s historical content, insight and contemporary resonance and relevance.

**DIALOGUE PROGRAM PERSONNEL**

**Sarah Pharaon**, Principal and founder of Dialogic Consulting Inc., will serve as the project’s lead facilitator and trainer. She brings over twenty years of facilitation and training experience to every project, helping make hard conversations productive and enabling teams to work more effectively. She will work with the scholars and team to develop the toolkit, serve as a facilitator, and conduct trainings throughout the country. Pharaon previously served as Senior Director of Methodology and Practice for the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC) and lead facilitator of the ICSC's on-site dialogue training and community engagement program. She directed the ICSC’s work on issues of race, education equity, and incarceration; currently oversees From Brown v Board to Ferguson, a three-year collaboration between ten sites and their community partners to create dynamic youth public engagement programs that foster much-needed community dialogue on race, education equity, and incarceration in the context of civil rights history; and directed the Immigration and Civil Rights Network. From 2010–2014, she led twenty five U.S. museums in providing training and overall development for the National Dialogues on Immigration Project, an IMLS and NEH-funded initiative which linked sites across the country in hosting dialogues on contemporary immigration issues affecting their communities. She previously served as Director of Education at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, where her responsibilities included developing tour narratives, designing education programs and teacher training workshops. <https://www.dialogicconsulting.com/about>

**Dina Bailey**, CEO and founder of Mountain Top Vision, LLC, whose mission is to address the growing needs of fundraising and organizational development for small arts and culture organizations, will serve as program facilitator. She previously served as the Director of Methodology and Practice at the ICSC, Director of Educational Strategies at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, and the Director of Museum Experiences at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. At the Freedom Center, she oversaw the renovation of the Center’s permanent gallery, Invisible: Slavery Today as well as its highest attended temporary exhibition, Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America. Additionally, Dina is the author of numerous articles related to the contemporary interpretation of slavery including: What Can Confederate Iconography Tell Us About Race in America? (2016); and The Necessity of Community Involvement: Talking about Slavery in the 21st Century (2014). She will work with Pharaon as a facilitator and trainer at the program sites, thereby offering cross-racial facilitation (two facilitators). <https://www.mountaintopvisionllc.com/about>

**Braden Paynter** currently serves as the Director for Methodology and Practice, and supports Sites of Conscience members in developing programming, exhibitions and community engagement strategies. He also works with members to build the Coalition’s internal collection of resources, surfacing sites’ expertise and sharing it with others. Braden has trained dozens of organizations in dialogue and planning. He advises both members and non-members, as well as consulted on the new permanent exhibit of the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Area. He has also designed and coordinated a two-year intensive training initiative in dialogic interpretation for Connecticut Landmarks. Currently leading our work with Ford’s Theatre, Braden’s past work has focused on using public education spaces to connect people to each other and the world around them. Before joining the Coalition, Braden worked with the National Park Service at the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site where he oversaw public, education and professional development programs, web and social media, and exhibits. More information about ICSC: <https://www.sitesofconscience.org/en/home/>

**Gretchen Sorin**, Director/ Writer of *Driving While Black*

Dr. Gretchen Sullivan Sorin is Distinguished Professor and Director of The Cooperstown Graduate Program. Her book, *Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights*, form the basis of the scholarship for this project and was a finalist for the 2021 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary work. Her research explores the role that the automobile played in the lives of African Americans during the Jim Crow era, the way that African Americans expressed middle class American values through car ownership, and how cars helped change deeply entrenched racial etiquette. Dr. Sorin has more than thirty years of experience in the museum profession, working for more than 250 museums as a museum exhibition curator and education, programming, and interpretive planning and strategic planning consultant. She has served as a guest curator for many exhibitions. Major exhibitions include, *In the Spirit of Martin: The Living Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* for the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service; *Through the Eyes of Others: African Americans and Identity in American Art*; the nationally acclaimed traveling exhibition, *Bridges and Boundaries: African Americans and American Jews* for the Jewish Museum in New York; and the award-winning *Wilderness Cure: Tuberculosis and the Adirondacks* for the Adirondack Museum. Dr. Sorin holds a B.A. degree from Rutgers University in American Studies, an M.A. in Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program and a Ph.D. from the University at Albany in American history. <http://cgpmuseumstudies.org/gretchen-sorin>

# **Ric Burns**, Director/ Writer of *Driving While Black*

Ric Burns is a documentary filmmaker and writer, best known for his eight-part, 17-hour series *New York: A Documentary Film*, which premiered nationally on PBS to critical acclaim (1999, 2001, 2003). Burns has been writing, directing and producing historical documentaries for over 25 years, since his collaboration on the PBS series *The Civil War* (1990), which he produced with his brother Ken and co-wrote with Geoffrey Ward. Since founding Steeplechase in 1989, he has directed many films of note for PBS including *Coney Island* (1991), *The Donner Party* (1992), *The Way West* (1995), *Ansel Adams* (2002), *Eugene O’Neill*, *Andy Warhol* (2006), *Into the Deep: America, Whaling & the World* (2010), *Death and the Civil War* (2013), *American Ballet Theatre: A History* (2015), *Debt of Honor: Disabled Veterans in American History* (2015), *The Pilgrims* (2015), *VA: The Human Cost of War* (2017), *The Chinese Exclusion Act* (2018), *Oliver Sacks: His Own Life* (2019), and *Driving While Black: Race, Space and Mobility in America* (2020). His work has won numerous film and television awards including six Emmy awards, three Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia Journalism awards, two George Foster Peabody Awards, two Organization of American Historians’ Erick Barnouw prizes, three Writers Guild of America Awards for Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Writing, and the D.W. Griffith Award of the National Board of Review. Burns was educated at Columbia University and Cambridge University. He lives in New York City with his wife and two sons. <https://www.ricburns.com>

# **Emily Pfeil**, Impact Producer

Emily Pfeil joined Steeplechase Films in 2017 and has worked on *VA: The Human Cost of War* (2017), *The Chinese Exclusion Act* (2018), *Made for Each Other: A History of the Bond Between Humans and Dogs* (2019), served as associate producer for *Oliver Sacks: His Own Life* (2019) and producer for *Driving While Black: Race, Space and Mobility in America* (2020). She is currently managing outreach and engagement for Driving While Black in coordination with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. She is producing several upcoming films for Ric Burns including *The Alaska Film Project* and *New York: The Future of Cities*. She graduated with a master’s degree in Museum Studies from The Cooperstown Graduate Program and is also a graduate of The Honors College at the University at Albany.