

## SPRING 2025 SEMINAR

### **A6688: Making Invisible History Visible: Preserving Sites of Cultural Significance**

Andrew S. Dolkart

In the United States and in many other countries as well, official preservation has focused primarily on buildings that are of architectural interest or which are very old by their community's standards. But most preservation ordinances also permit the designation/listing of sites of cultural significance. Why has the preservation community been so lax in identifying and interpreting these sites and, where appropriate, seeking their official designation? My experience as a co-founder of the NYCLGBT Historic Sites Project as brought this issue to the fore. Before this project began, exactly one of the approximately 90,000 National Register listings was specifically for an LGBT site. The number of sites recognized by the National Register and state and local landmark agencies for their significance to African, Asian, Hispanic, and other groups has been equally lax. A similar pattern is evident in the listings in other countries around the world

In this seminar, we will discuss issues relevant to cultural preservation through readings, discussions, guest lectures, and student presentations. The issues examined in this class will, I believe, become increasingly important as we wrestle with how to identify, interpret, and preserve sites that may lack architectural significance or which may have incurred serious alterations over time.



Former Stonewall Inn

First site listed on the National Register for its LGBTQ significance