a sense that Montpelier, like other plantations, was a world created and inhabited by enslaved people, and that their stories are as important as those of the people who benefited from their labor. Although this is happening at other historic sites, Montpelier has truly "flipped the narrative" and shown what a truly inclusive site can be.

As I walked through *The Mere Distinction of Colour*, I could not help but notice the boxes of tissues discreetly tucked into exhibit spaces. When I discussed the exhibit with other scholars who have visited, I learned that like me, they had all been deeply moved by what they experienced. Montpelier may be at an advantage because it is so new, relative to other historic sites that must strip away years of great man-dominated history, but the staff at the site have clearly worked tirelessly and with passion to present an engaging, troubling, and critical story of America's development. It should serve as a model for historic sites seeking to tell a more inclusive, problematic, and authentic history.

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*Under One Roof*, Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, NY. *Annie Polland*, Senior Vice President, Education & Programs; *Dave Favaloro*, Director of Curatorial Affairs; *Nick Capodice*, Education Associate for Programs & Digital Content. December 2017–ongoing.

In January 2002, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, a historic site dedicated to preserving the apartments that greeted so many thousands of immigrants upon their arrival to New York City, found itself in a nasty dispute over real estate with a neighbor. The museum had attempted to purchase 99 Orchard Street, which adjoined its main building, 97 Orchard Street, but the owners had rejected its offer of one million dollars in cash. Pursuing a different tack, the museum enlisted political allies and the state-backed Empire State Development Corporation to acquire the building using eminent domain. Renovations next door, the museum claimed, threatened the structural integrity of 97 Orchard Street, which had been architecturally stabilized to the year 1935, when the building was vacated as a residency. This was the official reason for why eminent domain was necessary, although the museum was also forthcoming about plans to install an elevator in 99 Orchard Street, which would make tours of 97 Orchard Street more physically accessible. In the future, the additional building would allow the museum to extend its interpretive focus to cover immigrants who worked and lived on the Lower East Side in the second half of the twentieth century.

The museum emerged from the spat with a black eye and no building. Critics argued that eminent domain had no place in a dispute about property damage that could be resolved in civil courts. The museum's plan to evict fifteen tenants and a Chinese restaurant, Congee Village, from 99 Orchard Street, drew media coverage ruminating on the irony of the museum's perceived indifference toward
the neighboring building’s living occupants. Political support for the use of eminent domain vanished.¹

It would take another five years, until 2007, for the Museum to instead purchase 103 Orchard Street, at the corner with Delancey Street. Originally constructed as three separate tenements in 1888, the property was combined into a single building after numerous modifications. In 2012, the Tenement Museum moved its visitor center and shop to 103 Orchard Street, and in December 2017, began offering its Under One Roof tour. The Tenement Museum, established to tell the social histories of immigrant and working-class tenants, is now a landlord. In 2014, it began relocating 103 Orchard Street’s remaining residents to a third property that the museum owns on the block: 91 Orchard Street. Rent controls traveled with them, but 91 Orchard Street also contains dwellings leased at market rate. Included among the relocated tenants is Mrs. Wong, whose life the Under One Roof tour showcases. The museum had initially selected another Chinese American family to feature in the tour. However, according to museum officials, the original subjects “ultimately opted to not have their family story told, and the museum subsequently decided to

Bluma and Bella Epstein, c. 1935. (Photo courtesy of the Tenement Museum)

tell the story of the Wongs, another Chinese American family that lived in the building, in part because [it was] believed their story was better suited to achieving the larger interpretive and educational goals of the exhibit.” To what extent the decision to opt out stemmed from the first family’s dissatisfaction over the terms of their departure from 103 Orchard Street, as one inside source who wished to remain anonymous claimed during my research, was not something that museum officials felt obliged to explain.

The Wong family’s story is indeed educational and deserves to be told. But the museum’s maneuvers as a landlord—coupled with the fact that it has invited multiple real estate developers to serve on its board of trustees—should not be dismissed as irrelevant to what it does in its programming. Routinely ranked as one of New York City’s top sightseeing destinations, the Tenement Museum receives lavish praise for providing visitors with an authentic window into the past. When I gave tours at the Museum between 2001 and 2003, Jewish and Italian old timers who were former residents of the neighborhood always found humor in the fact that the ubiquitous living spaces they had called home were now sites deemed
worthy of historic preservation. Sometimes city school children on class visits, who were no strangers to cramped apartments and the economic and cultural struggles of immigrant wage earners, echoed this same point. Whereas in 2002 gentrification was still a somewhat shocking development on the Lower East Side, in 2018 it feels like an irreversible conclusion. In this context, the contradictions that define the museum—and its multifaceted role in the neighborhood—are even more difficult to ignore. The museum is a bulwark defending the past and imploring visitors to the Lower East Side to remember what the neighborhood once was, yet its own growth has been fueled by the boom in restaurants, bars, clothing boutiques, and art galleries that now surround it.

With the new *Under One Roof* tour, the Tenement Museum still manages to marvel visitors with social history. The museum has always been at its best when

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2 I worked at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum from September 2001 to July 2003, first as an intern and educator, and then as a grant writer in the Development Department. While a PhD student, I conducted research on the Moores, whose tenancy at 97 Orchard Street in the 1860s is the basis for the Museum’s Irish tour. More recently, I consulted informally on the Museum’s hire of a new president and I am currently planning to do a talk there, unrelated to the focus of this review, in the fall of 2018. I also routinely bring classes there on field trips.

3 According to available public tax records, the Tenement Museum brought in approximately 6.5 million dollars in revenue from programs in 2016 and received another 4.5 million dollars in contributions and grants. The Museum charges $25 for its standard 60- or 90-minute tours. The Museum’s 2016 IRS Form 990 can be accessed at: https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/133475390 (last accessed June 13, 2018).
illuminating how research into the “ordinary lives” of tenement dwellers can be integrated into narratives that speak to issues of national importance and significance. As was the case with tours in the museum’s original building, developing Under One Roof involved an elaborate process. To make the physical space in 103 Orchard Street correspond to the different time periods the tour portrays, designers had to analyze myriad changes to the space’s interior and exterior layout. They had to hunt down period-appropriate furniture and objects corresponding to residents’ memories of what they owned. Under One Roof makes ample use of oral histories, segments of which are presented as audio interludes during the tour. Additionally, many of these features can be viewed on the excellent website that launched with the opening of the new space: http://www.tenement.org/exhibit.php.

The entirety of the Under One Roof tour, unlike programs in 97 Orchard Street, takes place in a single apartment. The apartment in 103 Orchard Street has been restored so that it now includes four rooms and an annexed space where the tour ends. The tour focuses on three families who lived in the building at different times. Entering the apartment, visitors first encounter the Epstein family, whose story is told from the perspective of Bella Epstein Seligsohn, daughter of Kalman and Regina (Rivka). The Epsteins were Polish Jewish Holocaust survivors who arrived in the United States in 1947, after meeting in the Zeilsheim Displaced Persons Camp in Germany. The tour then shifts focus to the 1960s and the Saez-
Velez family, migrants from Puerto Rico who were part of a wave of postwar arrivals whose presence led to the neighborhood's Spanish-inflected rechristening as the Loisaida. Ramonita Rivera Saez, the family's matriarch, worked in a garment factory on East Broadway for more than thirty years, raising two sons, Andy and Jose, as a single mother. The tour concludes in the Wong apartment. The Wongs were Chinese immigrants who arrived on the Lower East Side in the 1970s from Hong Kong. Mrs. Wong also labored as a sewing machine operator. By this point the garment industry—the major employer of immigrants in the neighborhood for a century—had been decimated by the flight of capital to places with cheaper labor costs. However, local shops continued to employ roughly twenty-thousand workers, often new Chinese arrivals, to meet consumer demand for fashion trends that could not wait for overseas' shipments. Under One Roof concludes in a room designed to emulate a garment shop of the 1980s and is replete with interactive sewing machines that, when engaged by visitors, share area residents' recollections about working conditions, union actions, and, eventually, 9/11's final blow to what remained of the industry.

Under One Roof places crucial emphasis on how the migrations of the tour's three families were governed by different policies and laws. Educators leading the tour are quick to point out that today's debates about "legal" versus "illegal" immigration often take place in a vacuum, and that most Americans fail to grasp immigration policies' complicated racial, colonial, and inconsistently humanitarian histories. The Epstein's, for instance, were granted admission after President Harry S. Truman signed an executive order in 1945, permitting 13,000 refugees to resettle in the United States. But this order was necessary to begin with because the biased quotas implemented by the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act had greatly limited the number of Eastern European immigrants eligible to enter each year—a policy that had tragic consequences for those attempting to escape Nazi persecution. The Saez-Velez family were not immigrants at all, but rather Puerto Rican migrants who, under the 1977 Jones Act, were permitted unrestricted travel to the mainland United States as colonial subjects. With the lasting devastation caused by the federal government's bungled and inattentive response to Hurricane Maria causing thousands of Puerto Ricans to migrate to New York in the fall of 2017, this point resonated sharply on my tours. When the Wongs came to the United States in the 1970s, their entry was enabled by the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which finally ended federal policies that had been overtly discriminating against Asian immigrants, and the Chinese in particular, since 1882. Given how many misperceptions persist in public dialogue about US immigration and naturalization policies, the tour's focus on legal differences relating to how different groups of migrants were governed is timely. As David Pavoloro, the museum's director of curatorial affairs, noted in an e-mail, the tour's designers "were eager to weave together the strands of what are essentially the overlapping stories of a refugee family, a migrant family, and an immigrant family, and the legal regimes that helped create those categories in immigration law."
Visitors’ experiences on the Tenement Museum’s guided tours can vary widely, even though educators are trained with a script and set of framing questions. Visitors’ politics, their eagerness to ask questions, and personal connections to the Lower East Side can all affect a tour’s dynamic. On the two Under One Roof tours that I took, one emphasized how 103 Orchard Street’s residents saw themselves as political and social subjects in respect to citizenship, whereas the other was more concerned with highlighting the place-specific memories that oral histories with former occupants of the building generated. A question that likely comes up on any tour is the assimilationist query: what makes an American? The educators I had handled this often-oversimplified and frequently clichéd question deftly. Visitors learn, for instance, that for teenaged Bella Epstein, “becoming American” meant listening to the quintessentially American songs of Paul Anka, whom the Yiddish- and Italian-speaking parents of 103 Orchard Street’s youth could not understand. Yet Anka himself was a Canadian of Syrian and Lebanese
descent. For Jose Velez, it meant joining Solidaridad, a local nonprofit advocacy group dedicated to helping Spanish-language speakers learn English—since local public institutions were often ill-equipped to perform this work. For Kevin Wong, it was selecting an American first name and graduating from college along with all his siblings.

Noticeably absent from both my tours was any discussion of the continued displacement of lower-income residents from the Lower East Side and the disappearance of rent-controlled and affordable apartments. Although the importance of garment unions to 103 Orchard Street’s residents does receive attention, the tour did not address how the working-class immigrants who remain on the Lower East Side and in neighboring Chinatown are now far more likely to work in service economy jobs than in manufacturing. In addition, in its capacity as an employer, the Tenement Museum has opposed unionization campaigns by its own staff. As a result, it was hard not to be cynical when confronted with a narrative that praises the importance of labor unions—for other workers. The Tenement Museum’s president, Kevin Jennings, has been an important voice in speaking out about how Americans misuse the concept of “illegal” immigration, a position that Under One Roof advances as well. But the museum should not shy away from difficult histories in which it is directly involved as an institutional actor. The museum can and should be transparent about gentrification and the conquest of New York City by financial and service economies, and encourage educators to engage visitors in these conversations. Dialogue is only as effective as its willingness to take on critical questions that are also self-reflexive.

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On November 6, 1917, a state referendum was put before New York’s male voters: Should women be granted the right to vote? Fifty-four percent said yes, and New York became the twelfth state and the first east of the Mississippi River to grant women suffrage. Nearly three years later, in August 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment to the US Constitution was ratified. Votes for Women: Celebrating New York’s