

HIST 204.303 The Politics of Cultural Heritage

Spring 2008
Caster A14
Tuesday 1:30-4:30

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Through a series of case studies, this course explores the politics of cultural heritage and examines the historical contexts in which culture has been claimed, defended, denied or effaced. Nations and political groups frequently have understood their identities and asserted their rights through cultural patrimony. Museums, world's fairs, and historical monuments have often served to bolster concepts of nation and empire. They have also become sites of controversy, as different groups contest versions of the past and the meaning of objects. In a similar vein, tourism and the exploitation of local and regional heritage have often sparked disagreements among preservationists, commercial developers, and citizens. Looted art and archaeological treasures have been the spoils of war and trafficked objects for sale in a burgeoning global market; evolving national policies and international agreements about preservation and repatriation point to an emerging yet ambiguous linkage of cultural property and human rights. This growing interest in and concern for cultural heritage—and the political controversies that surround it—is the subject of this course.

Readings:

These books are available at the Penn Book Center and are on reserve in Rosengarten:
Alexia Bloch and Laurel Kendall, *The Museum at the End of the World* (Univ. of Penn Press)
Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press)
Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Harvard Univ. Press; note this is in hardcover; you may want to read the reserve copy or use borrow-direct)
David Lowenthal, *Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge Univ. Press)
Lynn Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa* (Vintage)
Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair* (Univ. of Chicago Press)
Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World* (Harvard Univ. Press)

Articles marked "CR" in the syllabus will be available in a course reader (bulk pack) from Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut Street. Articles marked "BB" and links to external websites are on Blackboard [courseweb.upenn.edu] under "Course Documents." Please note that articles on Blackboard are not in the bulk pack.

Requirements:

***In Class:** Attendance is mandatory, except in cases of illness or emergency. Close reading of assignments and participation in class discussion—quality, not quantity—is expected of everyone. (Attendance and participation will be 20% of final grade.)

***Short Exercises:** These are intended to help you develop specific research and analytical skills. Assignments are described in the syllabus and will be discussed in class. Maximum length 3 pages, due the day of class. Be prepared to present your findings in class. (30% final grade).

***Research Project:** The research project may be on any topic related to the subject of the course, and will be developed in close consultation with me. The project must use primary sources, which include printed texts, archival works, manuscripts, visual and sound materials. (Projects may not use Internet

sources exclusively.) My aim is to introduce you to “doing” history, following roughly the procedures historians follow as they identify historical issues to study, develop a research plan and bibliography, conduct research, write up their findings, and receive feedback from colleagues. Thus I take a ‘hands on’ approach to research, and you will be required to follow a step-by-step process for developing your project and writing a 20-25 page paper:

- initial “musings” about possible topics (due 2/26)
- statement of research topic, preliminary thesis, and bibliography of primary and secondary sources (3/18)
- first draft (4/8)
- a reading/critique of the first draft of a “writing partner” (4/15)
- presentation on research project to class (4/29)
- final paper due (5/2)

Meeting these deadlines is crucial for your success! (Research process, including presentation, 15% of final grade; final paper 35%)

Other Matters:

Communication: I hold office hours because I’d rather speak to you in person; if you have a schedule conflict, we can make an appointment at another time. Please write email using accurate and appropriate (i.e. business-like) language. I will respond to email but not always immediately; if your question requires a lengthy reply or a conversation, I will ask you to see me during office hours.

Written work: All written work should be double-spaced, with 1" margins and 12-point fonts. No email attachments or faxes, except where noted. Late papers may be marked down.

Evaluations: In evaluating your work, I look for how well you have understood the material and formulated a thoughtful, engaging, and persuasive response; how well you back up your statements with evidence and offer an argument, not simply an opinion; how coherent, clear, and well organized your paper is; how you use language, with a preference for writing that is vivid, precise, and grammatically correct.

Students are required to complete all assignments to pass the course. Improvement over time will be taken into consideration in determining course grades.

Academic honesty: Plagiarism, fabrication, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others are grounds for failure in this course. Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as your own work. You may not copy another writer's exact words without using quotation marks around them and citing their source. Nor may you use the ideas or information of another without citing their source in a reference (a footnote or endnote). You may not submit the already written papers of another or the research of another. Although you are encouraged to discuss the readings and your ideas with your classmates, you must develop, outline, and write your papers alone. Please ask if you are unsure about how to cite sources.

Topics and Readings

1/22 **Course Introduction: keywords, frameworks, sources**

In class: Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, "A Plea for the Return of an Irreplaceable Cultural Heritage to Those Who Created It" (1979)

1/29 **Changing uses and meanings of cultural heritage in American history**

Reading: Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian*

2/5 **The culture of world's fairs, nationalism and imperialism**

Reading: Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, introduction, ch 1-4, 6, 8, conclusion

Exercise: Analyze a guidebook from one of the world's fairs discussed in Rydell: Philadelphia, 1876, Chicago, 1893, Buffalo, 1901, St. Louis, 1904, San Francisco, 1915.

2/12 **Museums, anthropology and ethnographic encounters**

Reading: Steven Conn, "Between Science and Art: Museums and the Development of Anthropology," *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1920*, [CR]
Alexia Bloch and Laurel Kendall, *The Museum at the End of the World*

Exercise: Go to one of the following museums in Philadelphia, and analyze the display of collections (choose one or two rooms). Provide a little historical background in your paper (a paragraph), explaining the museum's mission and how has that changed over time. Then discuss: what does the display, selection of materials, wall text, or other information tell you about this museum? Feel free to do this assignment in pairs. Choose: Mutter Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Barnes Museum, Franklin Institute, Rosenbach Museum, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Recommended special event: Gregory Maertz, "Nazi Art in Museums? Canonization and Controversy," Friday, Feb. 15, 5:30-7 pm, at the Slought Foundation, 4017 Walnut Street

2/19 **The New Deal and culture in the 1930s**

Reading: Warren I. Susman, "The Culture of the Thirties" and "Culture and Commitment, from *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* [CR]

Sharon Ann Musher, "Contesting 'The Way the Almighty Wants It': Crafting Memories of Ex-Slaves in the Slave Narrative Collection," *American Quarterly* 53 (2001): 1-31 [BB]

Exercise: Analyze two examples of the work of the Federal Writer's Project and discuss how the FWP understood and presented culture (heritage, folkways, traditions). Note: Only one of your sources may be from a digital collection.

Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers Project, 1936-1938

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html>

Federal Writers' Project WPA Guides or other publications: keyword search "Federal Writers Project" in Franklin

- 2/26 **Looting, preservation, and restitution: The case of World War II**
 Reading: Lynn Nicholas, *Rape of Europa*
- Research paper:* Email 1-paragraph initial ‘musings’ about possible research topic no later than today
- 3/4 **Cultural heritage and Cold War public diplomacy**
 Reading: Penny von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*
- 3/11 No class: spring break
- 3/18 **Historic preservation movement: place as history, memory and heritage**
 Reading: Briann Greenfield, “Marketing the Past: Historic Preservation in Providence, Rhode Island,” in Max Page and Randall Mason, ed., *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* [CR]
 Daniel Bluestone, “The Mecca Flats Blues,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 57 (December 1998): 382-403 [BB]
 Andrew Feffer, “Showdown in Center City: Staging Redevelopment and Citizenship in Bicentennial Philadelphia, 1974-77,” *Journal of Urban History* 30 (2004): 791-825 [BB]
 Eric Gable and Richard Handler, “After Authenticity at a Heritage Site,” *American Anthropologist* 98 (September 1996): 568-578 [BB]
 Peruse websites:
 Chris Fennell, Historical Landscapes of New Philadelphia”
<http://www.anthro.uiuc.edu/faculty/cfennell/NP/newphilgeog.html>
 National Trust for Historic Preservation: <http://www.nationaltrust.org/>
- Research paper:* statement of research topic, preliminary thesis, and bibliography of primary and secondary sources
- 3/25 No formal class meeting (I’ll be away): Screen “Bones of Contention”
 Schedule individual conferences on research, Monday 3/24
- 4/1 **Ethical & political responses to cultural devastation: Native Americans & NAGPRA**
 Reading: Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope*
 Elazar Barkan, “Native American Restitution: Land, Human Remains, and Sacred Objects,” in *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* [CR]
 National Park Service NAGPRA website: <http://www.nps.gov/history/nagpra/>
- 4/8 **Cultural heritage and human rights**
 Reading: John Henry Merryman, “Two Ways of Thinking about Cultural Property,” *American Journal of International Law* (1986)
 Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Whose Culture Is It?” *New York Review of Books* 53, no. 2 (Feb. 2, 2006) or “The Case for Contamination,” *New York Times Magazine*, Jan. 1, 2006 [both on BB]
 Laws and international conventions:
 Lieber Code, 1863, <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/110?OpenDocument> (scroll to Section II, “Public and Private Property of the Enemy”)
 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property, 1954,
<http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/400?OpenDocument>

UNESCO Culture and Human Rights website--peruse:

<http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php->

[URL_ID=34603&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=34603&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Research paper: First draft due; copy to KP and research partner

4/15 **Heritage tourism, traditional knowledge, and globalization**

Reading: Jane C. Desmond, "Picturing Hawai'i: The 'Ideal' Native and the Origins of Tourism, 1880-1915," *Positions* 7 (1999): 459-501 [BB]

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Destination Museum," in *Destination Tourism: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* [CR]

Alison Leitch, "Slow Food and the Politics of Pork Fat: Italian Identity and European Politics," *Ethnos* 68 (December 2003): 437-462 [BB]

Peruse websites: UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage:

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=home>

Slow Food: <http://www.slowfood.com/>

In class film: "Cannibal Tours"

Research paper: Reading/critique of first draft due from research partner; copy to KP

4/22 **Heritage as late 20th/early 21st c. "movement": assessments**

Reading: David Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, chapters tba

4/29 Presentations and discussion of research projects

5/2 *Research Paper Due*