

AMST1550 Methods in Public Humanities

Spring 2013

Prof. Steven Lubar

Lectures: MW 11:00,

Discussion section: Undergraduates, F 11:00, ???; Graduate students, F 11:00, JNBC

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This course provides a survey of public humanities work, including cultural heritage preservation and interpretation, museum collecting and exhibition, informal education, and community cultural development. It also includes an overview of the contexts of that work in nonprofit cultural organizations: management, trusteeship, and development.

This course focuses on the work that public humanists do: techniques, concerns, and practical issues. We'll look at what happens behind the scenes in museums and other cultural organizations in order to understand how the people who work there make decisions about content, interpretation, and presentation. We will try to understand and appreciate the work that public humanists do—as well as to question some of their assumptions and techniques.

The course is organized into four parts. Part 1 addresses the fundamental question in any discussion of cultural heritage: what's worth saving, what's worth remembering, and why? How do we as individuals and as communities decide what we want to keep? What is the role of the expert in that process? Part 2 considers the ways in which the things we save and remember are interpreted, presented to the public. Part 3 considers civic engagement, and Part 4, the institutions that do this preserving and presenting.

In general, Monday's class is a lecture; Wednesday, sometimes a lecture, sometimes a visitor; Friday, a discussion section. In the discussion, we'll talk about the material in the lectures, and also the readings. You should read the assigned weekly reading (marked with a *) early in the week. Additional readings of interest are listed on the syllabus as well. The readings are on reserve at the Rockefeller Library or on the library's reserve site (OCRA): the password is jnbc. Many are also at the JNBC library.

Over the course of the semester, you should keep up with web sites, blogs, twitter feeds, and newspaper stories on

public humanities and cultural heritage. Everyone in the class is expected to be on twitter, and to post thoughts and links of interest using the hashtag #amst1550.

The course looks at methods, the art of getting things done. The assignments reflect this. You'll write letters and memoranda, presenting guidance to a boss about what should be done, and why. You'll work in teams for some of the assignments, which are real projects that may (if they're done well) turn into public presentations.

Your grade is based on five writing assignments (10 percent each), a final group project (40 percent), and class participation (10 percent).

AMCV1550 Assignments

Assignment 1: Memorandum and letter to the editor, on one of the three contentious historical projects discussed in class

Draft due 2/4, revised paper due 2/13

Choose one of the three case studies considered in class last week: ADD HERE

, and write a 3-page memorandum summarizing the issues involved at the site. Give enough background for the director to understand the history and issues. Consider the “ownership question” (who has the right to tell the story?) and the politics of the decision. Conclude with practical advice. What should be done? What advice would you give? Who should be involved in the discussions leading to a decision, and what process should be followed? Include a 200-word letter to the editor of a relevant newspaper, to be signed by the director.

OR business history exhibition. At NMAH?

Assignment 2: Community Memory and Local History

Draft due 2/23; revised paper due 3/5

Write a 3-5 page memorandum to either the director of the Providence Preservation Society, the director of the Rhode Island Historic Society, or the director of the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, describing recent developments in community memory, oral history, and intangible heritage, and setting out a program for his or her organization to follow to expand into these areas. Be convincing: explain why this is a good idea. Do some research on the organization you choose so that you can argue from present mission, audience, collections, and expertise. Give some examples of other organizations that have done a good job of collecting and presenting this material. Spell out a specific plan of areas to collect, ways to use the material, and audiences that it will attract. (Extra credit: prepare a rough budget, with staffing and costs, and suggest potential granting agencies or foundations that might be interested in funding the project.)

Assignment 3: Exhibit Panels for Brown’s 250th Anniversary

Draft due 3/11; revised paper due 3/20

Jane Lancaster is writing a new history of Brown University. She’s completed a draft. Your assignment is to take one chapter of the book and turn it into one panel of an exhibition. The panel is already designed, and your words and images must fit into it. You need to write a 10-word title, 250-word main label; choose a single background image and three other images (you will need to do some picture research), and write 20-50 word labels for each; pick one quote of no more than 20 words; and pick three points for a timeline and write 10 words for each. Turn in your assignment as a single PowerPoint or Keynote slide; extra points for good design.

Assignment 4: Ethics Bowl question

Due 4/16

Write an “ethics bowl” question, using as models the sample questions at the Society of American Archaeology ethics bowl web site (<http://www.saa.org/aboutSAA/committees/ethics/eBowlcases.html>) or those at <http://www.iupui.edu/~mstd/a403503/ethicsbowl5.html>. Your question, a paragraph or two in length, should address an ethical issue that a museum curator or director, historic preservationist, or community cultural worker might find in his or her daily work. It should be complex and open-ended enough to allow for debate, and should reflect the issues raised in the codes of ethics listed on the syllabus.

OR: Compare two of the codes of ethics. Why are they different? What does this say about the two organizations that composed them?

Assignment 5: Fox Point exhibition and research

These assignments are to be done in small groups – each group will be responsible for one section of the exhibit, with one group responsible for overall organization of the show. Details, including dates, will be refined as we go along, but it will look something like this.

5A: Due 4/1: Group research/exhibition paper, 3-4 pages outlining a section of the exhibit – what history is important for this topic? What artifacts are available? What images? What 2-3 points need to be made?

5B: Due 4/3. The group should also prepare a PowerPoint presentation about their section, 5 minutes, to be presented in class 4/3.

5C: Due 4/6. Draft section labels (roughly 100 words) for the Fox Point exhibit due to writing fellows from each group. Final section labels **due 4/10. All objects and images must be selected and available by 4/10.**

5D: Due 4/15: Final script (object and images labels) for Fox Point exhibit due.

Assignment 6: Exhibition organization, design, publicity, installation, programs, and events

April 1 – April 29

Participate in some aspect of the exhibition beyond research, writing, and object and image selection. Details to be worked out in class. Mostly group work.

		Topic	Monday	Wednesday	Discussion	Reading	Assignment
1	1/21	Introduction, 1	(no class)	About the class: Defining the public humanities, and methods. Examples. About the assignments.	About the class, continued; Discussion of readings and advice to Obama.	Letters to Obama on cultural policy: examples on blog http://tinyurl.com/a4fwfs Museums & Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures, http://aam-us.org/upload/museumssociety2034.pdf	
2	1/26	Introduction, 2: Who owns culture? Who gets to tell the stories?	The politics of public humanities: Whose stories, and who tells them?	National and international structures	Who owns culture? Discussion of the three case studies	*Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Whose Culture is it?" in <i>the New York Review of Books</i> , Vol. 53, No. 2, Feb. 9, 2006. OCRA *David Lowenthal, "Heritage Wars," OCRA James Delingpole, "What are Museums For," <i>London Times</i> March 2006 OCRA Barry O'Connell, "Who Owns History And How Do We Decide?" at http://tinyurl.com/9hnw8f . UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970 http://tinyurl.com/99atlq Ken Burns invitation to talk about race in America: http://tinyurl.com/axhlg8 Paterson, NJ proposal National Park status OCRA, and at http://tinyurl.com/9fl434 National Museum of American History. http://tinyurl.com/8qmuv9	Start working on assignment 1
3	2/2	Preserving culture, 1: Collecting artifacts	What do museums collect, and why? What's worth saving? Who decides? Collecting objects or collecting stories?	Case study: 9/11 collecting	Collecting exercise	<u>Collecting in general:</u> *Stephen E. Weil, "Twenty-one ways to buy art." OCRA *James Gardner and Elizabeth Merritt, "Collections Planning: Pinning Down a Strategy," <i>Museum News</i> 81 (July/August 2002): 30, 33, 60-61. OCRA Elaine Heumann Gurian, "What is the object of this exercise: A Meandering Exploration of the Many Meanings of Objects in Museums," in <i>Daedalus</i> , 1999. OCRA Heritage Preservation, <i>A Public Trust at Risk</i> . OCRA Albert T. Klyberg. "Collecting, Preserving, and Sharing Rhode Island History: 175 Years." <i>Rhode Island History</i> . 1997 55(3): 88-99. OCRA Steven Lubar and Peter Liebold, "What's worth saving?" OCRA Collecting Stories: Connecting Objects: http://dl.lib.brown.edu/mln/cswn/csc/ Legacies: Collecting America's History at the Smithsonian: http://www.smithsonianlegacies.si.edu Harriet Baskas, Hidden Treasures Radio Project, at http://tinyurl.com/8puk4y <u>9/11 Collecting</u> James B. Gardner, Sarah M. Henry, "September 11 and the Mourning After: Reflections on	Draft of assignment 1 due on 2/4 to writing fellows.

						Collecting and Interpreting the History of Tragedy,” <i>The Public Historian</i> August 2002. OCRA http://caliber.ucpress.net.revproxy.brown.edu/doi/abs/10.1525/tph.2002.24.3.37 Juliana Ochs, review of “Here is New York: Remembering 9/11” exhibit at New-York Historical Society, <i>The Public Historian</i>, *Objects and memories project: http://www.objectsandmemory.org/ *Collecting 9/11: http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11/	
4	2/9	Preserving culture, 2: Historic preservation and community memories. Oral history.	What’s saved, by whom, how, and why? The politics of historic preservation. Providence and Hong Kong case studies	Speaker: Annie Valk, Associate Director for Programs, John Nicholas Brown Center, on oral history and community memory	Discussion: Readings	*Patricia Mooney-Melvin, “Harnessing the Romance of the Past: Preservation, Tourism, and History,” <i>Public Historian</i> (Spring 1991). OCRA *Briann Greenfield, “Marketing the Past: Historic Preservation in Providence, RI,” in <i>Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States</i> ed. Max Page and Randall Mason. OCRA * Richard Longstreth, “Architectural History and the Practice of Historic Preservation in the United States,” <i>The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians</i>, Vol. 58, No. 3, 1999/2000. (Sep., 1999), pp. 326-333. OCRA Herbert Muschamp, “The Secret History of 2 Columbus Circle,” New York Times 1/9/2006 OCRA William E. Schmickle, <i>The Politics of Historic Districts: A Primer for Grassroots Preservation</i> * “How to apply the National Register Criteria for Nomination,” at http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/ Providence Preservation Society website: http://www.ppsri.org/ *Movie: “A Legacy of Change,” OCRA *Hong Kong: Official speeches: http://tinyurl.com/ayzy28 and http://tinyurl.com/848gv5 ; Hong Kong Community Museum Project: http://www.hkcmp.org/ *Linda Shope, <i>What Is Oral History?</i> OCRA	Final assignment 1 due 2/13. Start working on assignment 2. Due to writing fellows on 2/23.
5	2/16	Preserving culture, 3: Tangible and intangible cultural heritage	(no class)	Issues in cultural heritage.	Discussion: Planning the Fox Point exhibit. Speaker: Claire Andrade Watkins	UNESCO site: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=EN&pg=home *”Richard Kurin,” Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in the 2003 UNESCO Convention: a critical appraisal,” in <i>Museum International</i> 2004 Sita Reddy, “Making Heritage Legible: Who Owns Traditional Medical Knowledge?,” <i>International Journal of Cultural Property</i> (2006) 13:161–188 *Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “World Heritage and Cultural Economics” OCRA Steven Vincent, “Indian Givers,” in Kate Fitz Gibbon, <i>Who Owns the Past</i> OCRA Kirk Savage, “The Past in the Present; the life of memorials,” <i>Harvard Design Magazine</i>,	Revised assignment 1 due 2/16.

						Fall 1999, No. 9 OCRA UNESCO intangible heritage website: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00002 Richard Kurin, <i>Reflections of a Culture Broker</i> Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act http://www.cr.nps.gov/nagpra/MANDATES/25USC3001etseq.htm *Watch “Some Kind of Funny Porto Rican,” on OCRA	
6	2/23	Presenting, 1: History museums	History museum history Recent trends. Case studies: Historic houses, slavery, industrial history, transportation.	What makes a good exhibit? Choosing objects, writing exhibit scripts, thinking about presentation	Planning the Fox Point exhibit	*Richard Rabinowitz, “The Transformation of Cultural Practice.” OCRA *Margaret A. Lindauer, “From salad bars to vivid stories: four game plans for developing ‘educationally successful’ exhibitions.” OCRA *Jay Rounds, “Strategies for the Curiosity-Driven Museum Visitor.” OCRA *James B. Gardner, “Contested Terrain: History, Museums, and the Public,” <i>The Public Historian</i>, Fall 2004, Vol. 26, No. 4, Pages 11-21 OCRA Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Carl Grodach, “Displaying and Celebrating the Other”: A Study of the Mission, Scope, and Roles of Ethnic Museums in Los Angeles” <i>The Public Historian</i>, Vol. 26 No. 4. OCRA Steven Lubar, “Making <i>America on the Move</i>.” OCRA Spencer Crew and James Sims, “Locating Authenticity.” OCRA National Park Service, <i>Interp Guide: The Philosophy and Practice of Connecting People to Heritage</i>. OCRA Peter Liebhold, “Experiences from the Front Line,” OCRA	Assignment 2 due to writing fellows 2/23. Start work on Assignment 5, Fox Point exhibition research and labels. Group assignment.
7	3/2	Presenting, 2: Art Museums and Ethnographic Museums	Art museums and Ethnographic museums (Jenny SO)	Speaker: Erin Wells, Erin Wells Design, on exhibit design	Exhibition label writing	*Judith Tannenbaum, “C is for Contemporary Art Curator” OCRA *James Cuno, “The Object of Art Museums,” in Cuno, ed., <i>Whose Muse?: Art Museums and the Public Trust</i> OCRA *Stephen Greenblatt, “Resonance and Wonder,” OCRA Stephen T. Asma, <i>Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads: The Culture and Evolution of Natural History Museums</i> Beverly Serrell, <i>Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach</i> * Larry Borowsky, <i>Telling a Story in 100 Words: Effective Label Copy</i> OCRA Beverly Serrell, <i>Judging Exhibitions: A Framework for Assessing Excellence</i>	Revised assignment 2 due 3/5 Start working on Assignment 3.
8	3/9	Presenting, 3: Programs and	Thinking about visitors..	Speaker: Morgan Greffe, Director,	Discussion: Readings	*Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, “The Power of Museum Pedagogy,” in Hugh H. Genoways, ed., <i>Museum Philosophy</i> OCRA	Assignment 3 draft due to

		evaluation		Newell D. Goff Center for Education and Public Programs, Rhode Island Historical Society		*John H. Falk, "Museums as Institutions for Personal Learning," in <i>Daedalus</i> (Summer 1999) OCRA National Association for Museum Exhibition, "Standards for Museum Exhibitions and Indicators of Excellence" OCRA One or more of the visitor surveys at www.si.edu/opanda	writing fellows 3/11
9	3/16	Presenting, 4: Radio, television and the web: Virtual exhibitions	Media and interactives	Museums and the web community: Web 2.0	Discussion: readings	*Kevin Mattson, "Channeling History," <i>Dissent</i>, Fall 2005 OCRA *Brian Taves, "The History Channel and the Challenge of Historical Programming," in Gary R. Edgerton and Peter C. Rollins, ed., <i>Television histories: shaping collective memory in the media age</i>, pp. 261-281. OCRA *David Silver, "Interfacing American Culture: The Perils and Potentials of Virtual Exhibitions," <i>American Quarterly</i> 49.4 (1997) 825-850 http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v049/49.4er_folklore.html *Bill Ivey and Steven J. Tepper, "Cultural Renaissance or Cultural Divide?" in <i>Grantsmakers in the Arts Reader</i> 17:2 (Summer 2006), at http://www.giarts.org/library_additional/library_additional_show.htm?doc_id=418818 Watch some programs on the History Channel. Many are available at the Media Library on the top floor of the Science Library. Consider some exemplary websites: use examples from http://www.secondstory.com/collected.php?SubjectMask=0&CategoryMask=0 and linked from http://museum30.ning.com/. Brad Johnson, "Beyond On-Line Collections," at http://www.archimuse.com/mw2004/papers/johnson/johnson.html Cohen and Rosenzweig, "Digital History" http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory Fiona Cameron and Sarah Kenderdine, <i>Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage</i>	Assignment 3 revised due 3/20. Start thinking about Assignment 6, exhibition organizations, events, etc.
Spring Break – no class							
10	3/30	Civic Engagement, 1: Cultural tourism	What is culture good for?	Speaker: Bob Billington, President, Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, on heritage tourism	Fox Point Exhibition planning	*US Dept. of Commerce and President's Committee on Arts and Humanities, <i>White Paper on Cultural and Heritage Tourism</i>. OCRA *Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance, 1999 http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/tourism_e.htm The Ename Charter: www.enamecharter.org Cultural Heritage Tourism website: http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org -- especially http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/successStories/massachusettsSummary.htm	Assignment 5A, exhibition background paper, due 4/1 Assignment 5B, PowerPoint presentations: to class, 4/3
11	4/6	Civic Engagement, 2: Building community	What is culture good for?	Speaker: LZ Nunn, Director, Cultural Organization of Lowell		AAM, <i>Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums</i> *Ron Chew, "The Wing Luke Asian Museum." OCRA *Stephen E. Weil, "From Being <i>about</i> Something to Being <i>for</i> Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum, <i>Daedalus</i> (Summer 1999). OCRA	Assignment 5C: Section labels for Fox Point exhibit due 4/6 to teaching fellows

						Aaron Lansky, <i>Outwitting History: The Amazing Adventures of a Man Who Rescued a Million Yiddish Book</i>, or http://www.theconnection.org/shows/2004/10/20041018_b_main.asp Akemi Kikumura-Yano, ed., <i>Common Ground</i> Jack Tchen, "Towards a Dialogic Museum," in <i>Museums and Communities</i>, edited by Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press), 285-326. OCRA Amanda J. Cobb, "The National Museum of the American Indian as Cultural Sovereignty," <i>American Quarterly</i> 57:2 (2005) OCRA Americans for the Arts, <i>Arts and Economic Prosperity: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Institutions and their Audiences in Providence, RI</i>. OCRA	
12	4/13	Institutions, 1: Governance, trusteeship, and ethics	Governance and management.	Ethics	Discussion: Ethics bowl	Marie Malaro, <i>Museum Governance</i> *Kenneth Dayton, <i>Governance is Governance</i>. OCRA John Henry Merryman, "Museum Ethics" www.law.harvard.edu/faculty/martin/art_law/museum_ethics.html http://www.museumethics.org/ *Read public humanists' codes of ethics at http://icom.museum/ethics.html http://www.aamd.org/about/#Code http://www.ncph.org/ethics.html http://icom.museum/ethics.html http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/ethics/coe.cfm http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/ethics/indiv_support.cfm http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/ethics/bus_support.cfm http://www.saa.org/ABOUTSAA/COMMITTEES/ethics/principles.html http://www.independentsector.org/members/code_ethics.html http://www.afpnet.org/ka/print_content.cfm?folder_id=897&content_item_id=1068 Other codes of ethics at: http://ethics.iit.edu/codes/	Assignment 4, ethics questions, due 4/16 Assignment 5D: Final script and images for Fox Point exhibit due 4/15
13	4/20	Institutions, 2: Strategic Planning, fundraising, and measuring outcomes	Outputs and outcomes.	Speaker: Mary-Kim Arnold, Director, Rhode Island Council for the Humanities		Hugh H. Genoways, Lynne M. Ireland, <i>Museum Administration: An Introduction</i> *Stephen Weil, "Transformed from a Cemetery of Bric-a-Brac." OCRA *Maria-Rosario Jackson, et al., <i>Culture Counts in Communities: A Framework for Measurement</i>. OCRA The Foundation Center, <i>Proposal Writing Short Course</i>, http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/prop1_print Sally L. Bond, et al., <i>Taking Stock: A Practical Guide to Evaluating Your Own Programs</i>. OCRA	
14	4/27	Conclusions and review of exhibition	Review and conclusions	Final exhibition installation	Class review		Fox Point exhibition opens April 29

