

HIST 691: 001 Museum Studies

Spring 2024

Professor Spencer R. Crew

East Building Room 207B

srcrew@gmu.edu

Class location: East Building Room 121

Time and Place: Tuesday 7:20 -10:00 PM

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Objectives: This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the theory and practice of museums with an emphasis on history institutions. We will examine the origins of museums and the leaders who helped shape the field, history and memory, navigating controversy, the changing role of museums, museum learning, creating exhibitions, the future of museums, as well as museums and innovation are among the issues which will be covered. In the process the class will acquire an understanding of the numerous challenges facing museum professionals as well as the process of proposing, researching, and executing an exhibition planning grant.

Course Requirements: As a member of this class you are expected to attend class regularly, read assigned materials, actively participate in class discussions, lead one class discussion session, prepare assignments on time, write a two to three-page exhibition proposal, prepare a 10-page research paper based on the proposal, and write a NEH planning grant proposal to seek funding to create your exhibition.

Evaluation: Class attendance, preparation as a discussion facilitator, and contribution to class discussions (20%); proposal and research paper (35%); and exhibition grant proposal (45%). LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNLESS DISCUSSED AND APPROVED IN ADVANCE.

All plagiarism cases will be automatically submitted to GMU's honor committee. According to GMU's honor code, plagiarism includes the following: 1. Presenting as one's own words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. 2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Last Day to Add: Tuesday, January 23
Last Day to Drop: Tuesday, January 30
Selective Withdrawal Period: Wednesday, Feb.21 – Monday, March 25

Texts:

Edward P. Alexander, *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence*

Busby, Muller, and Woolford *The Idea of a Human Rights Museum*

John Falk and Lynn Dierking, *The Museum Experience Revisited*

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels An Interpretative Approach*

Nina Simon, *The Participatory Museum*

Lonnie Bunch III, *A Fool's Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture*

National Endowment for the Humanities, <https://www.neh.gov/grants/public/public-humanities-projects>

Optional reading:

Mim Carlson and Tori O'Neal-McElrath, *Winning Grants Step by Step*

The articles for reading can be found on Jstor or on the course's blackboard page.

16 Jan. **Introduction**

Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13

AAM Code of Ethics (blackboard)

From History Museum to History Attraction by Jessie Swagger, in "History Is Bunk": Assembling the Past at Henry Ford's Greenfield Village (pp. 169-182). Amherst; Boston: University of Massachusetts Press (2014) Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vk0x6.12> (blackboard)

23 Jan. **History and Memory**

"Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire" by Pierre Nora, *Representation* 26, (Spring 1989), 7-24; "Public History and the Study of Memory," David Glassberg, *The Public Historian*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring 1996) 7-23; Jay Winter, "Sites of Memory," Fordham University(2010), Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1c999bq.25> (blackboard), Black, Graham. (2011). *Museums, Memory*

and History. Cultural and Social History. 8. 415-427.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275820607_Museums_Memory_and_History, David Lowenthal, History and Memory, *The Public Historian*, Spring, 1997, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Spring, 1997), pp. 30-39 Published by: University of California Press on behalf of the National Council on Public History, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/3379138>

30 Jan. **Roles and responsibilities of museums**

Essentialism, Adaptation and Justice: Towards a New Epistemology of Museums” by Mark O’Neill, *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 21 (2006) 95-116; “Contentiousness and shifting knowledge paradigms: The roles of history and science museums in contemporary societies,” Fiona Cameron, *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 20 (2005) 213-233; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "The museum as catalyst." *Museums 2000: Confirmation or Challenge* (2000): 55-66. (Blackboard); “Definition of the Museum through its Social Role,” Karen Brown and Francois Mairesse (Blackboard) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328569337_The_definition_of_the_museum_through_its_social_role,

Why a Plan to Redefine the Meaning of 'Museum' Is Stirring Up Controversy (blackboard) <https://time.com/5670807/museums-definition-debate/>

6 Feb. **Museums and Controversy**

“A Brief History of Exhibition Controversy”, Caitlin Stacy; Museum-Controversy Best-Practices-2019 (blackboard);

“Shocking museum exhibitions: courting controversy or tackling important issues?”, Charlotte Coates, <https://blooloop.com/museum/in-depth/shocking-museum-exhibitions/>

“Museums and Controversy: Some Introductory Reflections,” Neil Harris, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Dec., 1995), pp. 1102-1110 ,URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2945115>;

“History after the Enola Gay Controversy: An Introduction”, David Thelen, *Journal of American History*, Volume 82, Issue 3, December 1995, Pages 1029–1035, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2945110>

Ken Yellis, “Examining The Social Responsibility of Museums in a Changing World”, (blackboard) *Public Historian*

“Should museums remove or cover up controversial displays and links to history?” Nat Edwards, <https://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/news/museums-remove-cover-controversial-displays-links-history/>

Decolonizing Museums, Memorials, and Monuments, Amy Lonetree, *The Public Historian* (2021) 43 (4): 21–27. <https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2021.43.4.21>

National Coalition Against Censorship, “Museum Best Practices for Managing Controversy,” <https://ncac.org/resource/museum-best-practices-for-managing-controversy> (blackboard)

13 Feb. **Museums and Learning**

The Museum Experience Revisited

Selection of project topics (2 to 3-page proposal due)

20 Feb. **Human Rights Museums**

The Idea of a Human Rights Museum

Look at the webpage for the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience,
<http://www.sitesofconscience.org>

27 Feb. **Writing Museum Labels**

Exhibition Labels

5 March **Spring Break**

12 March **Culturally Specific Museums in the 21st Century ?**

A Fool's Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture

What is the role of a Culturally specific Museum? <https://museumquestions.com/2017/09/11/what-is-the-job-of-a-culturally-specific-museum/>

Interview with W. Richard West, Director, National Museum of the American Indian, *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 3/4, Special Issue: The National Museum of the American Indian (Summer - Autumn, 2005), pp. 517-537 (blackboard)

19 March **New ways of engaging visitors**

The Participatory Museum

"VirtualTourist: Embracing Our Audience through Public History Web Experience," Anne Lindsay

The Public Historian, Vol. 35, No. 1 (February 2013), pp. 67-86 Published by: University of California Press on behalf of the National Council on Public History Stable URL:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/tph.2013.35.1.67>

26 March **Lincoln's Sanctuary**

"Rethinking the Rembrandt Rule," James Vaughn (blackboard)

"Rethinking the Modern House Museum"

<https://archive.curbed.com/2018/10/12/17967794/museum-home-wright-historic-preservation>

"Do Something Transformative", by Callie Hawkins and Erin Carlson Mast (blackboard)

"Lincoln's Refuge" <https://www.historynet.com/abraham-lincolns-refuge.htm>

Visit Lincoln Cottage in Washington, D.C

2 April Turn in research paper and individual discussions with the professor concerning exhibition grant proposals.

(You may want to look through Winning Grants Step by Step)

9 April **Mission, Market, and Money**

"Some Observations on Financial Stability," Elizabeth Merritt, in *Museum News* September/October 2006.; "New Ways of Experiencing Culture: the Role of Museums and Marketing Implications," Neil Kotler, in *Museum Management and Curatorship*, (2001)19:4, 417-425; *Breaking Free: Museums Admission and New Audiences*, Emilie S. Arnold (blackboard); "History, tourism, and museum marketing ideas" (blackboard); "Five things Corporate Sponsors Want" (blackboard), 16 Creative Marketing Ideas to Attract Museum Visitors, <https://www.webfx.com/industries/tourism-hospitality/museums/marketing-ideas.html>

A Travel Marketer's Guide to User-Generated Content Rights:

<file:///C:/Users/srcrow/Documents/Hist%20691B/guide-to-ugc-marketing-for-museums-ebook.pdf>

16 April Research and preparation of Grant NEH Proposal (visit to The Spy Museum or the National Postal Museum)

23 April Prepare completed draft of Grant Proposal for in class evaluation

30 April

Final NEH Grant Proposal due