

The banner features a dark blue background with a repeating pattern of the Lincoln Memorial. Overlaid on this is the text 'NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES' in a large, white, serif font. Above the main title, a smaller line of text reads 'HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE'.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Instructor: C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa

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Office Hours: 12:00-1:00 T&R, and by appointment

Description

This class explores the role of historical memory in shaping our understanding of the past by examining the history of museums in the United States, the role of movies in shaping public conceptions of American history, and the influence of celebrations, commemorations, and monuments in creating usable pasts. We will start by examining the role of museums and public performances, such as pageants and parades, in American society and try to come to a better understanding of how places of public celebration and ceremony influence the telling of America's past. We will focus especially on the forty-year span between the 1880s and the 1920s when many of the United States' best known museums and monuments were created. Students in the class will take trips to local museums, meet with museum professionals, and explore parts of Washington for sites of adaptive reuse. In the end, we will examine the role of museums in shaping our understanding of an increasingly diverse American population.

Goals

In this course, students will:

- Enhance their knowledge of public history in the United States.
- Explore the connections between broader United States historiography and the historiography in the field of public history.
- Practice critical reading and analysis of recent scholarship.
- Consider how interdisciplinarity shapes this subfield of United States history

Required Texts

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (1995)

Rosenzweig and Thelen. *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (2000)

Wallace, Mike. *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays* (1996)

Ferguson, Andrew. *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America* (2007)

Horton, James Oliver and Lois E. Horton. *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory* (2008)

Meringolo, Denise. *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New Genealogy of Public History* (2012)

Burns, Andrea. *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement* (2013)

Conn, Steven. *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (2000)

Lonetree, Amy. Decolonizing Museums (2012)
 Savage, Kirk. Monument Wars: Washington DC, the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape (2009)
 Sturken, Marita. Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero (2007)
 Kelman, Ari. A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek (2013)
 Handler, Richard and Eric Gable. The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg. 1997.
 Bergman, Teresa. Exhibiting Patriotism: Creating and Contesting Interpretations of American Historic Sites (2012)
 Hurst, Andrew. Beyond Preservation: Using Public History to Revitalize Inner Cities (2010)

Grading Scale:

500-470 = A	384-365 = C
469-450 = A-	364-350 = C-
449-435 = B+	349-335 = D+
434-415 = B	334-315 = D
414-400 = B-	314-300 = D-
399-385 = C+	299-000 = F

In addition, we will read articles and book chapters throughout the semester. These will be available on Blackboard.

Assignments

50 points - Class Discussion Leader	60 points - Critical Essay #3
60 points - Weekly Responses	60 points - Critical Essay #4
60 points - Critical Essay #1	150 points - Final Paper
60 points - Critical Essay #2	500 points - TOTAL
** - You must complete all graded work in the class.	

Attendance and Participation

Because this is a discussion-based course, attendance and active participation are crucial to its success. I expect you to attend class regularly and promptly. Please let me know in advance if you will not be able to attend a session. You are expected to participate actively in class discussions, posing questions to your classmates and asking for their thoughts on challenging portions of the reading. Since I expect these things of every student, I will not grade participation separately. Only if your contributions are deficient will I factor that into your final course grade.

Class Discussion Leader

Each student will lead a portion of class discussion during one class meeting this semester. The discussion leader should prepare 5-10 specific and/or open-ended questions to stimulate discussion and should be ready to provide follow-up questions as the discussion evolves. Prior to the class session, the discussion leader should meet with Dr. GP to help prepare. After the class session, the student should write a one-page reflection, summarizing his/her thoughts on the discussion. The grade for this assignment is based upon the questions, the written summary/reflection, and the discussion leader's preparedness/professionalism.

Weekly Responses

Each week, students are required to write a brief response to the weekly reading and submit them to the Discussion section of Blackboard by 2pm on Thursdays when our class meets. The responses are designed to help you prepare for the class discussions, read actively, think critically about the readings, and write critically, but respectfully about scholarly work.

- The responses should:

- 1) Summarize the thesis of the book or of a particular chapter in the book.
- 2) What kinds of primary sources does the author engage?
- 3) What are the three most important secondary sources the author engages?
State briefly how s/he engages these works i.e., draws on them for support, refutes existing arguments/ paradigms, borrows a theoretical model, etc.
- 4) What questions does the work leave unanswered or raise for future study?
(Note: this is not a place to critique the author's style or tone unless it is germane to the questions raised by the book.)

Critical Response Essays

Students will write four critical essays throughout the semester. As this class is designed upon the graduate reading seminar model, this is most appropriate form of assessment. Students will be provided with a writing prompt that might ask them to compare readings, or focus on a specific reading only. You will only need to use course materials to complete the assignment. Each essay will vary in page-length.

Final Project Site and/or Exhibit Review

At some point during the semester, please visit a public history site in or around Washington D.C., and write a site/exhibit review of approximately 3000-4000 words. (If you are not familiar with exhibit reviews, please use our library databases to search for reviews in both popular periodicals and scholarly journals.)

Your review should be informed by our reading of the critical literature on the development of public history sites and institutions, past and current goals for curators/directors/artists/etc., as well as an understanding of the development of public history sites in history of the United States. Please read and cite the work of at least three scholars, beyond those sources we've read for class, in your review. At our final class meeting, each student will present a summary (5-7 minutes in length) of his/ her exhibit review. I'm intentionally leaving this assignment wide open, but I would prefer students meet with me early in the semester to talk over ideas.

This assignment should be fun while simultaneously giving you experience with public presentation, allow you to write critically but respectfully about the work of public historians, and help you consider the relationship between scholarly and public history.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

UNIT ONE: FOUNDATIONS

Week 1 (Sept. 1): Course Introduction

Class Introduction

Readings:

- Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*

Week 2 (Sept. 8): Mickey Mouse History

Readings: Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays*

Week 3 (Sept. 15): Popular Uses of History

Readings:

- Rosenzweig and Thelen, *The Presence of the Past*

Week 4 (Sept. 22): New Public History

Readings:

- Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks*

Critical Essay #1 -- DUE

UNIT TWO: MUSEUMS AND AMERICAN MEMORY

Week 5 (Sept. 29): Producing History in 19th-Century Museums — No Class Meeting

Readings:

- Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926*

Week 6 (Oct. 6): The Tough Stuff of American Memory

Readings:

- Horton and Horton, eds., *Slavery and Public History*

Week 7 (Oct. 13): Museums and African American History

Readings:

- Burns, *From Storefront to Monument*

Week 8 (Oct. 20): Museums as Settler Colonialism

Readings:

- Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums*

Critical Essay #2 -- DUE

UNIT THREE: MONUMENTS AND MARKING HISTORY

Week 9 (Oct. 27): Monument Wars!

Readings:

- Savage, *Monument Wars*

Week 10 (Nov. 3): Kitsch and Consuming History

Readings:

- Sturken, *Tourists of History*

Week 11 (Nov. 10): Lying to Ourselves about Honest Abe

Readings:

- Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln*

Critical Essay #3 -- DUE

UNIT FOUR: LIVING HISTORY

Week 12 (Nov. 17): Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg and Elsewhere

Readings:

- Handler and Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum*

- Bergman, *Exhibiting Patriotism*

Week 13 (Nov. 24): Class Cancelled — Thanksgiving Break

Readings: Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*

Week 14 (Dec. 1): Public History and Urban Spaces

Readings:

- Hurst, *Beyond Preservation*

Critical Essay #4 -- DUE**Week 15 (Dec. 8): Presentations**

**** Final Project Essay DUE during Final Exam Week**

Disability Accommodations

If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to furnish appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. In addition to providing your professors with the appropriate form, please take the initiative to discuss accommodation with them at the beginning of the semester and as needed during the term. Because of the range of learning differences, faculty members need to learn from you the most effective ways to assist you. If you have contacted the Office of Disability Services and are waiting to hear from a counselor, please tell me.

A Note about Communication

Student privacy is governed by the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** and is an essential aspect of any course. Email is a necessary part of life in the digital age. I will communicate with you via email throughout the semester and will use your Masonlive. I do not accept "I did not check my email" as a valid excuse. I check my email frequently and will strive always to respond to your questions and concerns as soon as possible. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

A Note about Academic Integrity:

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely.

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

