

HIST 691: 001 Museum Studies

Spring 2017

Professor Spencer R. Crew

East Building Room 207B

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Time and Place: Tuesday 7:20 -10:00 PM, East Building 122

Office Hours: Tuesday 6:15-7:15 PM and 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, surviving 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 museums 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, prepare assignments on time, write a two to three page exhibition proposal, prepare a 10 page research paper based on the proposal, prepare a poster presentation of your exhibition idea, 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 (15%); proposal and research paper (35%); poster presentation (10%), exhibition grant proposal (40%). **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.

Drop/Add deadlines:

Last Day to Add: Monday, January 30

Last Day to Drop: Friday, February 24

Selective Withdrawal Period: Monday, February 27 – Friday, March 21

Texts:

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

Leslie Bedford *The Art of Museum Exhibitions*

Andrea Burns *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement*

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

Herman Din and Phyllis Hecht, *The Digital Museum: A Think Guide*

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

Mathew Pinsker, *Lincoln's Sanctuary Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers' Home*

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels An Interpretative Approach*

National Endowment for the Humanities, <http://www.neh.gov/>

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.

24 Jan. **Introduction – *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence***, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13

AAM Code of Ethics (blackboard)

31 Jan. **History and Memory**

“Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire” by Pierre Nora, *Representation* 26, (Spring 1989), 7-24; “Memory and American History,” David Thelen, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No 4 (March 1989) 1117-1129, “Public History and the Study of Memory,” David Glassberg, *The Public Historian*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring 1996) 7-23; Susan Crane, “Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum,” *History and Theory*, Vol. 36, No. 4, Theme Issue 36: Producing the Past: Making Histories Inside and Outside the Academy (Dec., 1997), pp. 44-63. Stable

URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2505574>

7 Feb. **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; “Excursions into the Remembered Past: What People Want from Visits to Historical Sites” by Catherine M. Cameron and John B. Gatewood, *The Public Historian*, Vol. 22, No. 3, (Summer 2000) 107-127; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "The museum as catalyst." *Museums 2000: Confirmation or Challenge* (2000): 55-66. (Blackboard)

- 14 Feb. **Museums, Conscience and Controversy**
The Idea of a Human Rights Museum
“Kitchen Conversations: Democracy in Action at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum,” by Ruth J. Abram, *The Public Historian*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 2007), pp. 59-76; look at the webpage for the *International Coalition of Sites of Conscience*, <http://www.sitesofconscience.org>
- 21 Feb. **Museums and Learning**
The Museum Experience Revisited
Selection of project topics (2-3 page proposal due)
- 28 Feb. **Museum Education and Exhibitions**
The Art of Museum Exhibitions
- 7 March **Writing Museum Labels**
Exhibition Labels
- 14 March **SPRING BREAK**
- 21 March **African American Museums into the 21st Century**

From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement

“Embracing Ambiguity: The Challenge of Interpreting African American History in Museums,” Lonnie G. Bunch III (on blackboard)

28 March

Digital Museum

The Digital Museum: A Think Guide

“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>

“Chasing the Frontiers of Digital Technology Public History Meets the Digital Divide,” Andrew Hurley, The Public Historian, Vol. 38 No. 1, February 2016 pp. 69-88

<http://tph.ucpress.edu.mutex.gmu.edu/content/38/1>

4 April

Lincoln’s Sanctuary

“Rethinking the Rembrandt Rule,” James Vaughn (blackboard)

Visit Lincoln Cottage in Washington, D.C

11 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*)

18 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); “From Cash to Accrual Accounting: A Model to Evaluate the

Performance of Public Museums, “ Elena Gori and Silvia Fissi
(blackboard)

25 April **Project Poster Presentations**

2 May **Bring completed draft of Grant Proposal for in class
evaluation**

9 May **Final NEH Grant Proposal due**