

HIST 2712
Public History: Doing History Beyond the Classroom
Monday, 10.15-1.14
McNeil Center Classroom (and site visits)

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As recent public debates have indicated, the historical interpretation of archives, objects, monuments, and sites is not fixed or static but the result of social, political, and cultural contexts and decisions about what to communicate to a variety of audiences. Throughout this course we will be thinking about history as a collection of stories about the past. These stories require narrative choices by their tellers, and they are connected to a range of sites, practices, and scholars beyond the confines of university history departments. Our big questions will include: Who is history for/who is excluded? Which stories are being told? Why is the past of interest to the 'public'?

While many sessions will focus on discussion of these concepts through course readings, the class will also involve learning about methods and practices in different fields of public history through visits to museums, libraries, and other historical sites. These visits will take place at Penn, wider Philadelphia, and (virtually) across the Atlantic. All will involve interactions with public history professionals whose insights into the field will contribute to students' understanding of the many ways in which people can 'do history' and some of the varied career opportunities outside the traditional focus of the PhD and professoriate.

Readings

Course readings will either be available through Franklin as e-books or articles or will be uploaded to our Canvas page. There is no textbook for this course, but a couple of general texts which you may wish to consult if you are looking for further ideas/readings are:

- Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner, *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).
- Thomas Cauvin, *Public History: A Textbook of Practice*, (Routledge, 2022).

Assignments:

All assignments are due **Friday at 5pm** unless otherwise noted.

20% **Participation** - attendance and active involvement are expected for both discussion sessions in the classroom and site visits. This involvement should include reading and being prepared to talk about texts as a class as well as active discussions with/questions for our guests/those hosting us at their places of work. **Weekly.**

15% **Film assignment** – 1000-1500 words (3-5 pages) analysing a historical film of your choice (I will circulate a list of suggestions but if you choose a film which is not on the list please

e-mail/speak to me to confirm that your film will work for this assignment). The idea here is *not* to talk just about whether your film is historically accurate, or to detail its plot, but to discuss how the narrative (which, remember, is a choice made by the screenwriters, director, etc.) shapes the audience's understanding of the past. The assignment will reckon with the fact that film is often our first introduction to 'history' and viewers can come away with particular ideas about real historical events and people which then become entrenched into popular culture. **Due Friday the 9th of February.**

20% **Biography of a monument**, 1500-2000 words (5-7 pages). In this assignment you will choose a monument (from the past or still standing) and research and write about it as an example of public history. I am asking you to identify and research a monument of interest to you, to analyse it as a physical object and as having a narrative and message, to consider how and why it was erected, and to discuss what has happened to it since then. This assignment will require a certain amount of original research, research which will help you to analyse your chosen monument in light of our major themes – whose story is being told? Who wanted to tell it? What is that story? Has it changed over time? Does the monument still have a place in our present? **Due Friday the 1st of March.**

20% **Exhibition labels** – for this assignment you will curate a small imaginary exhibition on a subject of your choice and write the text for it. This exhibition should include 6-8 items, each item (or pair if that makes sense) having an individual label of 100-150 words as well as a photograph or digital version of the item. The challenge here is to write concisely while also communicating something interesting about the item to a general audience. The text should also include a general introduction of 1-2 paragraphs which ties the individual labels together and unpacks the themes of your exhibition, again for a general audience. We will read about and look at labels in class time and will speak to professionals who regularly write such labels in order to prepare for this assignment. **Due SATURDAY the 30th of March**

25% **Final Assignment** – you will choose a historic site, ideally one you are able to visit during this semester, and write a report on its past, present, and possible futures. For this assignment you should conduct independent research into the site, as well as making use of the readings, discussions, and visits we have undertaken throughout the course to frame your analysis of the site for an audience of public historians. While some of our assignments ask you to write for an audience of the general public, this one asks you to make the case for the importance and preservation of a site to colleagues like those we have spoken to throughout the semester. The assessment will take place in two parts:

5% **Presentation** – in class in week 13 you will speak for five (5) minutes on the site and your research on it before an audience of your fellow students. There will then be time for a couple of minutes of questions. This part of the assignment will allow me to check in on your progress, while also offering an opportunity to practice public speaking, another essential skill for public historians. **In class, the 15th of April.**

- 20% Written report – a 2000-2500-word report on your site, detailing its historical significance, state of preservation, and the reasons for continued public interest in it in the present and future. You may choose to write this as a traditional essay, but you may also present your research as a more typical historic preservation report (we will look at examples of these) with headings, sub-headings, images, and proposals for development. Your response should situate the site in scholarship and practices of public history from our classwork and visits while also demonstrating your own research. **Due MONDAY the 13th of May.**

Policies:

Attendance

Attendance is expected for all classes, but if you are not feeling well, please remain at home and let me know and we will arrange a virtual option where possible. No documentation is required for absence related to illness. Please arrive on time so that you don't miss anything, especially on days when we will be visiting another site either at Penn or elsewhere in Philadelphia.

Respect and Class Contributions

Everyone has the right to be heard in the classroom, and all viewpoints are welcome. All I ask is that you present your ideas respectfully to the class, and that in responding to one another you do so based on how you would like others to speak to you. To help with this, I do ask that you raise your hand if you have a contribution to make, and I will make sure we hear from you. If you have a point which is an immediate follow-up to what someone else has just said and which should be made before we move in a different direction, please make some other gesture and I will try to get your comment in quickly.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to comply with the Penn Code of Academic Integrity (<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>). I have a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism and it will be treated as a failure to complete the assignment and thus the course.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

In this course, you may use AI for *proofreading and formatting*.

However, use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) programmes like ChatGPT to *produce text* for written assignments will be treated in the same way as plagiarism as it consists of using the work of others (whether scraped from the internet by the AI or produced by it) and passing it off as your own.

In general, it is worth being aware that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. These tools have a tendency to ‘hallucinate’ references (present seemingly plausible accounts as real when they are entirely fictitious). They are particularly bad at working with academic writing or sources because they were trained on the open-access parts of the internet. As a general rule, distrust any fact produced by an GenAI source until it is cross-referenced with a reliable source.

SDS/ADA Accommodations

The University of Pennsylvania provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and received approval from the Office of Student Disabilities Services (SDS). If SDS has approved your request for accommodations, please make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible in order to discuss the arrangements for your accommodations.

If you have not yet contacted Student Disabilities Services, and would like to request accommodations or have questions, you can make an appointment by calling (215) 573-9235. The office is located in the Weingarten Learning Resources Center at Stouffer Commons, 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300. Please visit the SDS website at <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/index.php>.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity/neurodivergence means that we don’t all think the same way and I am happy to accommodate the different ways in which we all learn in the classroom. Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to help with any concerns or needs you have in this regard. In general, we should all try to be respectful of the fact that not everyone learns the same way and to consider that neurodiverse perspectives are beneficial to all of us as we learn together.

Technologies

I do ask that while in class you do not make use of electronic devices (especially phones) other than for taking notes and looking at readings or sources. This is not intended to be a hardship nor a punishment, but to help facilitate our discussions and to allow all of us to be present in the classroom. Technologies are fantastically useful and very important to our lives, but they can be distracting to you and to others in the room, so please only use them for class purposes.

Marks Family Writing Center

You are welcome (and encouraged) to consult the Writing Center for help with any and all assignments. See their introduction below.

The Marks Family Writing Center was established in 2003 to provide writing support to Penn students and faculty across the disciplines. Thanks to the generous support of **Howard Marks**,

the Center is open to Penn students 6 days a week. In addition to providing individual writing guidance and feedback to our students, the Marks Family Writing Center also presents writing workshops across campus, consults with faculty and assists them with designing and responding to writing assignments, and engages in community outreach.

<https://writing.upenn.edu/critical/wc/>

Self-care

University is supposed to be challenging, not overwhelming. I'm sure you've been directed to campus resources many times, but just to keep them to hand here are the quick links to wellness services.

Where to Find Help & Support

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Same-Day Drop-In Counseling | Someone To Talk To 24/7 | Same-Day Drop-In Counseling | Mindfulness and Self-Care Tools |
|  |  |  |  |
| Let's Talk Program Various Campus Locations | 215-746-WELL 215-746-9355 24/7 Support | Student Health and Counseling 3624 Market Street | Wellbeing Initiatives |



Schedule

Each week's description indicates a location, please check and make sure you are in the right place.

Readings include a note of where to find them – 'Franklin' (via the catalogue), 'Canvas' (our course page), or 'Online' (a website). Please let me know if you have trouble gaining access to any readings.

Week 1 – NO CLASS – Classes start on Thursday of this week

Week 2 – 22nd of January

What is Public History?

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

- 'Editor's note' and look at the contents of, *The 1619 Project*, 4-7 (**Canvas**).
- 'Introduction' and look at the contents of, *The 1776 Report*, 1-2 (**Canvas**).
- Stuart MacIntyre and Anna Clark, *The History Wars*, chapter 1, 'History Under Fire', 1-13 (**Canvas**). (I know you won't know anything about Australian politics in the 1990s or Australian history in general, and you can ignore the references you don't understand. I just want you to think about parallels to other places and periods.)
- Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, chapter 1, 'The Power in the Story', 1-30 (**Franklin**).

Week 3 – 29th of January

Whose story is being told? Who is public history for?

Kislak Center for Special Collections... MEET AT 6th FLOOR OF VAN PELT

Readings:

- Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), Introduction, 1-16 (**Canvas**).
- L. Chardé Reid, "'It's Not About Us": Exploring White-Public Heritage Space, Community, and Commemoration on Jamestown Island, Virginia', *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, (February, 2021) (**Franklin**).
- Barbara Franco, 'Decentralizing Culture: Public History and Communities', in Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner, *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), Chapter 3 (**Franklin**).

Week 4 – 5th of February

Institutional memory

Visit from **Kathleen Brown and the Penn & Slavery Project**
McNeil Center Classroom and UPenn Campus

Readings:

- Craig Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities*, (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014), Chapter 4, 'Ebony and Ivy', 81-104 (**Franklin**).

NB: this chapter uses the n-word in quoting from historical sources, from the bottom of page 102. Please feel free to stop reading at page 101 if you find this usage triggering.

- Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, 2006, Introduction, Concluding Thoughts, and Recommendations, 3-6, 80-87 (**online**) <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/resources-initiatives/slavery-justice-report>.
- 'Summary Report', *The Lemon Project: A Journey of Reconciliation: Report of the First Eight Years*, 5-11 (**online**) <https://www.wm.edu/sites/lemonproject/the-report/>.
- Choose ONE of the Student Reports from the Penn & Slavery Project to read (**online**) (<https://pennandslaveryproject.org/>)

FILM ASSIGNMENT DUE FRIDAY THE 9th AT 5pm

Week 5 – 12th of February

Historic preservation

Visit to **Laura Keim, faculty in the MA programme in Historic Preservation and Curator of Stenton** (<https://www.stenton.org/about>)
Stenton – MEET AT MCNEIL CENTRE

Readings:

- Anders Greenspan, *Creating Colonial Williamsburg: The Restoration of Virginia's Eighteenth-Century Capital*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), Introduction and chapter 1, 'The Birth of a Dream', 1-39 (**Canvas**).
- Clint Smith, *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery across America*, chapter 6, 'New York City', 207-38 (**Canvas**).
- Laura Keim, 'Why do furnishings matter? The power of furnishings in historic house museums', in Kenneth C. Turino and Max van Balgooy, eds, *Reimagining Historic House Museums*, (Rowman and Littlefield, 2019), 207-16 (**Franklin**).

Week 6 – 19th of February

Monuments

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

- Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), chapter 1, 'Journey into the Lost Cause', 1-7 (**Franklin**).
- Dell Upton, *What Can and Can't be Said*, 'Introduction', 1-25 (**Franklin**).
- Jessica Moody, *The Persistence of Memory: Remembering Slavery in Liverpool, 'slaving capital of the world'*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), Chapter 7, 'Sites of Memory: Bodies and the Cityscape', 217-56 (**Franklin**).
- Paul M. Farber, 'How to Build a Monument', in Farber and Ken Lum, eds, *Monument Lab: Creative Speculations for Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2019), 2-15 (**Canvas**).

Week 7 – 26th of February

Historic sites and international memory

Virtual visit from **Gérard Chouin, Ghana Museums and Monuments Board**

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

- Todd Cleveland, *A History of Tourism in Africa: Exoticization, Exploitation, and Enrichment*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2021), chapter 6, 'Going Home; The diasporic quest for belonging through "Roots" tourism', 130-151 (**Franklin**).
- Brempong Osei-Tutu, 'Cape Coast Castle and Rituals of Memory', in Ogundiran and Paula Saunders, eds, *Materialities of Ritual in the Black Atlantic*, (Indianapolis: 2014), 317-37, (**Franklin**).
- Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), chapter 1, 'Wake', 1-22 (**Franklin**).

BIOGRAPHY OF A MONUMENT DUE FRIDAY THE 1st OF MARCH AT 5pm

4th-8th of March SPRING BREAK

Week 8 – 11th of March

Libraries, learning, and exhibitions

Visiting **John Pollack and Alicia Meyer, Kislak Center**

Kislak Center for Special Collections... MEET AT 6th FLOOR OF VAN PELT

Readings:

- James Raven, *What is the History of the Book?*, Chapter 1, ‘The Scope of Book History’, 1-16 (**Canvas**).
- Sarah Werner, *Studying Early Printed Books, 1450-1800*, (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2019), Part 5, ‘The Afterlives of Books’, 118-48 (**Canvas**).
- Robert Darnton, ‘The Library in the New Age’, *The New York Review of Books*, 12th of June, 2008, 1-7 (**Canvas**).
- Luise Reitstätter, Karolin Galter, Flora Bakondi, ‘Looking to Read: How Visitors Use Labels in the Art Museum’, *Visitor Studies*, 25: 2, (2022), 127-50 (**Franklin**)
(this is a bit dense, just focus on the *intro, discussion, and conclusion*).

Week 9 – 18th of March

Museums, learning, and exhibitions

Visiting **Elizabeth Pamblanco, Megan Kassabaum, Sarah Linn, Penn Museum/Heritage West**

The Penn Museum – MEET AT THE MUSEUM

Readings:

- James Delbourgo, *Collecting the World: Hans Sloane and the Origins of the British Museum*, (Cambridge, Mass: 2017), chapter 7, ‘Creating the Public’s Museum’, 303-42 (**Franklin**).
- Barnaby Phillips, *Loot: Britain and the Benin Bronzes*, (London: Oneworld, 2021), Preface and chapter 18, ‘How do you think your ancestors got these?’, xix-xxv, 262-79 (**Canvas**).
- Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), Introduction, 19-42 (**Franklin**).

Week 10 – 25th of March

Museums and historic sites: reckoning with the past

Virtual visit from **Rupert Goulding, Lead Curator for the National Trust for England and Wales**

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

- Sally-Anne Huxtable, et al. *Interim Report on the Connections between Colonialism and Properties now in the Care of the National Trust, Including Links with Historic Slavery*, (Swindon: 2020), (**Online**) <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/addressing-the-histories-of-slavery-and-colonialism-at-the-national-trust>, read *Foreword, Introduction, and chose two other chapters*.
- Tom Pyman, ‘National Trust “woke” colonialism review WILL continue despite fury: Boss vows to continue scheme that linked country homes to slavery “property by property”’, *Daily Mail*, 4th of January, 2022, (**online**) <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10367581/National-Trust-woke-colonialism-review-continue-despite-fury.html>
- Harriet Sherwood, ‘National Trust boss says she received death threats amid “woke” row’, *Guardian*, 4th of January, 2022, (**online**) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jan/03/national-trust-boss-says-she-received-death-threats-woke-row>
- Phillip Emanuel and Rupert Goulding, “‘The whole story of the cocoa’: Dyrham Park and the painting and planting of chocolate in Jamaica’, *National Trust Arts, Buildings, and Collections Bulletin*, Oct. 2021 (**online**) <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/art-and-collections-publications>

EXHIBITION LABELS DUE SATURDAY THE 30th OF MARCH AT 5pm

Week 11 – 1st of April

Historic sites and national memory

Visiting **National Parks Service staff**

Independence Hall National Historical Park – MEET AT MCNEIL CENTER

Readings:

- Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory*, Introduction and chapters 2 (‘Workshop’), 5 (‘Legacy’), and 10 (‘Memory’), vii-xviii, 31-56, 114-46, 268-79 (**Franklin**)
- Cristina Lleras, ‘National Museums, National Narratives, and Identity Politics, in Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner, *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), Chapter 19 (**Franklin**).

Week 12 – 8th of April

The city and the archives – tracing and preserving public history

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

- Kevin Murphy, et al. ‘Sexuality and the Cities: Interdisciplinarity and the Politics of Queer Public History, in Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner, *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), Chapter 9 (**Franklin**).
- Dienke Hondius, et al. *Gids Slavernijverleden Amsterdam/Slavery Heritage Guide*, (Volendam: LM Publishers, 2018), Preface and Introduction, v-18 (**Canvas**).
(don’t worry – the book is in both Dutch and English, you will be able to read it, the English follows the Dutch)
- Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape*, chapter 4, ‘Nazi Berlin’, 127-73 (**Franklin**).
- Jennifer Rankin, ‘Amsterdam ‘stumbling stones’ commemorate gay victims of Nazis’, *The Guardian*, 7th of August, 2021, (**online**)
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/06/amsterdam-stumbling-stones-commemorate-gay-victims-of-nazis>

Week 13 15th of April

McNeil Center Classroom

IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS

See instructions above under ‘Assignments’

Week 14 – 22nd of April

History as a business

Virtual visit from **Katherine Cartwright, Researcher, American Girl**

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

- Brian Martin, ‘The Business of History: Customers, Professionals, and Money, in Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner, *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), Chapter 6 (**Franklin**).
- Thomas Cauvin, *Public History: A Textbook of Practice*, (Routledge, 2022), Chapter 18, ‘Business, Policy, Justice: Consulting and Service’ (**Canvas**).
- Robert Lacey, *Sotheby’s: Bidding for Class*, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co. 1998), ‘Prologue: Property of a Lady’, 3-16 (**Canvas**).

Week 15 – 29th of April

What is Public History?

McNeil Center Classroom

Readings:

TBC

Wednesday the 1st, **LAST DAY OF CLASSES**

FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE MONDAY THE 13th OF MAY AT 5pm