



Ethnohistory of the Native Northeast

Prospectus

Anthropology 2308 Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30 to 5 pm

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Course Description:

Ethnohistory is a multi-disciplinary approach that incorporates ethnographic study and documentary research from both anthropological and historical perspectives. The discipline came into being during the mid-20th century as a means to authoritatively document and mediate Native American land claims, federal recognition cases, cultural encounters, and conflicts. The spring 2023 course will focus on Native American people in Philadelphia and the greater northeast, including investigations of memorial statuary, monuments, and other representations designed to shape public memory. We will examine the resonance of colonial perspectives and encounters in public understandings of Indigenous people today.

Topics include: the foundations of ethnohistory as a discipline; Indigenous oral traditions; wampum diplomacy; historical contexts of monument-building; and the history of the Algonquin Indian Council of New England, among others. We will engage in critical studies of documents, material objects, historical monuments, photographs, news articles, and scholarly blogs. Students will also participate in virtual visits to archives and museum collections, and work on developing the exhibition “Mapping Lenapehoking.” Students will develop critical skills and strategies for interpreting primary and secondary sources, and for better understanding and contextualizing the social, political, and cultural conflicts that surround historical sites and monuments focusing on Indigenous histories in the greater northeast.

Class Structure:

This course will be conducted in-person. Guest speakers will be hosted in-person and/or remotely. We will meet during the scheduled class time twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 - 5:00 pm (Eastern Standard Time). In general, Tuesdays will feature inter-active lectures on specific topics, and Thursdays will feature class discussions.

Schedule for a Typical Week:

- Anytime between Thursday and Tuesday: Read and take notes on the required readings.
- Every Tuesday before 12 noon: Submit brief written reflections on the assigned readings to Canvas.
- Tuesday from 3:30 to 5 pm: Attend lecture session during scheduled class time.
- Once a month, on a specified Thursday before 12 noon: Submit a longer Response Paper to Canvas.
- Thursday from 3:30 to 5 pm: Attend discussion session during scheduled class time.

Assignments & Assessments:

Students will be expected to complete weekly asynchronous written assignments on Canvas, including at least one of the following each week (specific assignments will vary): reading reflection in response to prompt questions; transcription of archival document; description of material object; critique of museum display; analysis of media reporting; summary of scholarly writing on a specific topic. In addition to select readings from course textbooks, students will be assigned to read relevant scholarly blogs, watch relevant video recordings, and track emerging discussions around Indigenous representations, historical statues, and sites of memory in specific locations in the northeastern US. Students should set aside a dedicated block of time – at least three hours each week, sometime between Thursday and Tuesday – to complete each week's reading assignments. The time spent on writing assignments will vary from week to week, depending on the topic and the amount of independent research required.

In general, students will be graded and assessed on class activities as follows:

- Quality of written assignments (40%)
- Participation in class discussions (20%)
- Transcriptions and interpretations of colonial documents and material objects (10%)
- Independent analyses of media reports and historical sites (10%)
- Summaries and bibliographies of relevant writings on assigned topics (10%)
- Independent research and final project (10%)

Required Textbooks & Readings:

Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury, eds. *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*. Boston, MA: Colonial Society of Massachusetts 2003.

Andrew Newman. *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists, and the Media of History and Memory*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press 2012.

Jean M. O'Brien. *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press 2010.

Reading assignments will also include a series of articles, available as PDFs on the course Canvas site.

Note: The required textbooks can be purchased from the Penn bookstore, or through on-line sellers (such as *Amazon.com*). Wherever possible, chapters from textbooks will be available on-line as e-books through Penn Libraries. Some portions of the textbooks are available for free on-line via *Google Books*.

Scheduling details are in progress; the complete syllabus will be available in mid-January 2023.