

HISTORY 2886 F/G
Fakes, Frauds & Fairs: The History of Museums
Winter 2021 (January 11-April 12, 2021)
Instructor: Michelle Hamilton
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 via Zoom
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Course Description: This course examines the history and development of museums and their changing role in society across the globe from the ancient world to the 21st century.

Antirequisite(s): MCS 2610F/G

Course Syllabus: Themes include the rise of anthropology and natural sciences; looting; repatriation; professionalization; colonialism; representation of the 'other'; museums as political and cultural tools.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

- be familiar with thematic issues in the social, cultural, and political history of museums
- have conducted historical research
- have practised formulating and communicating an effective argument, demonstrating good research and writing skills
- be able to evaluate objects through material culture theory
- be able to critically evaluate exhibitions as historical sources

Lectures: There will be two recorded lectures with accompanying Powerpoint presentations each week.

Office Hours: I will have a standing Zoom call each Tuesday from 1:30-3:30. Students will be kept in the waiting room until the instructor is free. **See OWL Resources for the Zoom link and passcode.**

Course Materials: Textbooks are available at the bookstore. Also available at Weldon or on OWL. Links are provided to other readings, as listed below.

Alexander, Edward P., Mary Alexander and Juilee Decker. *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*. 3rd Edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017. **(Online library catalogue)**

Macdonald, Sharon, ed. *A Companion to Museum Studies*. Malden, MA: Oxford, 2006 or 2011. **(Online library catalogue)**

Simmons, John E. *Museums: A History*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016. **(OWL)**

Methods of Evaluation:

Midterm Exam	33%	Due: February 8-10, 2021
Essay	33%	Due: March 15, 2021 5pm
Final Exam	34%	Due: Final Exam period

Research Essay: Students will write a research essay on a topic of their choice in the history of museums of 10-12 double spaced pages in length with use of a minimum of 12 books and/or journal articles. Footnotes and bibliography should strictly follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* format. See <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>. **Students will upload essays in the Assignments tab in OWL (including Turn-it-in) on March 15th before 5pm. Students may be asked at any time to produce research notes made during the research process for essays.**

Exams: Students will write a midterm and final exam. Both exams will draw from lectures, readings, films, and websites. Questions will be of two types: identification/significance questions, and essays. Students will be given 48 hours to write the midterm exam. It is open book and will be submitted through the Assignments tab in OWL (including Turn-it-in). **The midterm will be written from February 8, 9:00am- February 10, 9:00am. The final exam will be written during the final exam period.**

Due Dates and Late Penalties: Assignments are due on the date and time specified above. Penalty for late assignments is 2% each day (including Saturdays and Sundays). Extensions may be granted if legitimate circumstances are presented by the student to the instructor well in advance of the due date. Poor work planning (such as “I have XX other work due”) is not grounds for an extension. There will be no exceptions unless students provide medical documentation. For all medical and non-medical issues that might warrant accommodation, including all assignments, exams, tests, presentations, and class attendance, please go to academic counselling.

Accommodation for missed midterms with a Self-Reported Absence:

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a makeup test on one of the two time slots available in each term:

Winter Term

- Tests scheduled before February 13 – the makeup will take place Monday, February 22, 9:30am. No other make-up opportunities will be provided. Students who fail to write a makeup test in the designated time slots will receive a grade of zero. Students in online courses will write the make-up test through OWL over a 24-hour period beginning at the time noted above. Students should be aware that course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup test slots.

Accommodation for missed assignment deadlines with a Self-Reported Absence:

If a student reports a SRA for an assignment (i.e. an essay) the new due date will be 48 hours after the SRA was submitted. For example, if you complete a SRA on March 19 at 3pm, your new due date will be March 21 at 3pm.

Use of Electronic Devices:

Use of computers and phones are permitted during exams. **However, ONLY material covered by our course will be accepted on the exam. Students should not consult the internet to write the exam. Material derived from the internet will not be marked.**

Additional Statements:

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document, <https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>, for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 11-15, 2021

Introduction: Syllabus review.

What is a Museum?

What is a museum? What is its purpose? What did early museums contain? Why do humans collect? What is material culture?

Alexander et al., Chapter 1: What is a Museum? pp. 1-22.

Week 2: January 18-22, 2021

The Ancient World, Greece, and Rome

We look at temple treasuries, *pinakothekai*, and other forms of museums and exhibitions in Greek and Roman culture.

Simmons, Chapter 2: Hoards and Tombs: Collections in the Ancient World (to 700 BCE), pp. 11-28.

Simmons, Chapter 3: Temple of the Muses: The Conjunction of Objects and Knowledge (classical antiquity, 700 BCE-CE 400), pp. 29-43.

Medieval Collecting

What was the influence of the church on collections? Why was there a link between the Crusades and collecting? What were the spiritual implications of objects?

Simmons, Chapter 4: The Power of Objects: Medieval Collections (400-1400), pp. 45-58.

Week 3: January 25-29, 2021

Renaissance and Enlightenment Museums

Why did private and princely cabinets of curiosity develop? What was the influence of Greek and Roman culture on collecting? How did a new scientific spirit change museums? How is the natural world curated? Why were cabinets of curiosity status symbols? What was the influence on the Enlightenment on museums? What was the role of zoos and medical museums?

Alexander et al., Chapter 3: Natural History and Anthropology Museums, pp. 59-73.

Alexander et al., Chapter 6: Botanical Gardens and Zoos, pp. 149-76.

Simmons, Chapter 5: Of Cabinets and Kings: Renaissance Collections (1400-1600), pp. 59-91.

Simmons, Chapter 6: Museum Enlightened, pp. 93-138.

Colonialism and Collecting

Why, as European countries expanded into the Americas, did museums believe they needed to collect artifacts from “primitive” peoples who were on the supposed verge of “extinction”? What power relations were inherent in collecting objects from Indigenous peoples? Were there Indigenous collectors?

Alexander et al., Chapter 3: Natural History and Anthropology Museums, pp. 73-89.

Macdonald, ed., Chapter 5: Museums and Anthropologies, pp. 64-80.

Week 4: February 1-5, 2021

Medical and Anatomical Museums

“Visit” the Surgeons’ Hall Museums in Edinburgh through these blog posts and online collections.

<https://surgeonshallmuseums.wordpress.com/2020/01/23/a-model-education/>

<https://surgeonshallmuseums.wordpress.com/2020/06/05/ziegler-waxes-visualising-the-embryo/>

<https://surgeonshallmuseums.wordpress.com/2018/09/07/flesh-for-the-wise/>

<https://surgeonshallmuseums.wordpress.com/2017/01/23/pathology-spotlight-fergusson-burke-hare/>

<https://surgeonshallmuseums.wordpress.com/2016/01/25/burke-and-hare/>

Browse collections here: <https://museum.rcsed.ac.uk/the-collection/key-collections>

Midterm Exam Review

Week 5: February 8-12, 2021

Midterm Exam: February 8, 9:00am- February 10, 9:00am

Week 6: Reading Week: February 15-19, 2021

Week 7: February 22-26, 2021

World's Fairs and Wild West Shows

What was the influence of Darwinism on collecting? How did these exhibitions legitimize racial exploitation both globally and domestically? Why did Indigenous people participate in these exhibitions? How did World's Fairs relate to ideas of nation building, colonialism, and manifest destiny? Why did Indigenous people participate in these exhibitions? How did these shows display race and other theories?

Macdonald, ed., Chapter 9: Worlds' Fairs and Museums, pp. 135-49.

Race, Gender, and Exhibitions

We watch *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman: "The Hottentot Venus"*. Icarus Films. 1998.

(<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/sarabaartman> or at Weldon/Huron)

Week 8: March 1-5, 2021

Fakes, Frauds, and Popular Museums

Why did museums transition from private to public institutions? What was the role of the 'nation'? What was a dime museum? What did the public want to see and how did that reflect society and culture?

Macdonald, ed., Chapter 8: The Origins of the Public Museum, pp. 115-34.

Tour Barnum's "Lost Museum" virtual exhibit <https://lostmuseum.cuny.edu/#>

The Outdoor Museum

We consider the development of pioneer villages, military forts, ecomuseums, and open air museums.

MacLean, Terry. "The Making of Public History: A Comparative Study of Skansen Open Air Museum, Sweden, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, and the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, Nova Scotia." *Material History Review* 47 (1998), 21-32. (OWL)

Week 9: March 8-12, 2021

Making the Met: 1870-2020

"Visit" the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City through this podcast.

(<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2020/making-the-met-1870-to-2020/audio-guide>)

War and Museums

Wars have caused looting and destruction of cultural heritage and yet also built some of the world's best collections. We examine this tension as well as how war is represented within museums. How do we represent the winners and losers of war? Do we represent war or peace?

Williams, Paul. Chapter 1: A Very Different Proposition: Introducing the Memorial Museum, *Memorial Museums: the Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*. Oxford: Berg, 2007, pp 1-24. (OWL)

Week 10: March 15-19, 2021

Essay Due: March 15, 5pm.

Looting

We watch *Shattered Heritage*. Al Jazeera. 2014. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-7VHYG0txE>)

Week 11: March 22-26, 2021

Social Justice and Museums

What are international sites of conscience? Can museums promote human rights? How do we remember global atrocities?

Ševčenko, Liz. "Sites of Conscience: Heritage of and for Human Rights." *Heritage, Memory & Identity*. Ed. Helmut Anheier and Yudhishtir Raj Isar. London: SAGE, 2011. (online library catalogue)

Representation

What are "culture wars"? How is the museum a contact zone? Can we ethically represent other cultures?

Macdonald, ed., Chapter 29: Incivilities in Civil-(ized) Places: "Culture Wars" in Comparative Perspective, pp. 477-93.

Macdonald, ed., Chapter 30: Science Museums and the Culture Wars, pp. 494-508.

Week 12: March 29-April 2, 2021

Repatriation

Is repatriation the answer to the problems and controversies in representation? Do we mean physical, virtual or intellectual repatriation? Should human remains be treated differently than historical artifacts?

Curtis, Neil G.W. "Universal Museums, Museum Objects and Repatriation: The Tangled Stories of Things. *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*. Ed. B.M. Carbonell. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. Pp. 73-81. (OWL)

Repatriation

Cardinal, Gil. *Totem: The Return of the G'psgolox Pole*. NFB Films. 2003.
(https://www.nfb.ca/film/totem_the_return_of_the_gpsgolox_pole/)

Week 13: April 5-9, 2021

The Future of Museums

Why are museums one of the most trusted type of historical institutions in North America? What is the role of the public in contemporary museums? Do we need artifacts anymore? What is the participatory museum? What is the significance of “new museology”?

Macdonald, ed., Chapter 33: The Future of the Museum, pp. 543-54.

Exam Review

Week 14: April 12, 2021 No class.