

HISTORY 2886 F  
**Fakes, Frauds & Fairs: The History of Museums**

Fall 2021 SSC 2020

Instructor: Michelle Hamilton

Wednesdays and Fridays 12:30-1:30 in person

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30

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**This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.**

**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 21<sup>st</sup> 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, and demonstrating good research and writing skills
- be able to evaluate objects through material culture theory
- be able to critically evaluate exhibitions as historical sources

Recommended expectations and outcomes for 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses are here:

[https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_information/expectations\\_outcomes.html](https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_information/expectations_outcomes.html)

**Course Materials:** All readings are online through the library catalogue or through OWL, as noted below. There are some additional readings, one podcast, and several documentaries, all listed below. The weeks that are scheduled for the podcast, the documentaries, and the visit to McIntosh Gallery there will be no class; instead, students must complete the work on their own time that week. The main texts are:

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: October 8, 2021
Essay	33%	Due: November 10, 2021
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 academic books and/or journal articles. If you are unsure if a source is academic, please contact the instructor.

This research paper should have a specific thesis argument which is well supported by historical evidence. Footnotes and bibliography should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* format. See <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>. For more information, see the marking rubric document on OWL.

**Students will upload essays in the Assignments tab in OWL (including Turn-it-in) on November 10, 2021, by 5pm.**

**Students may be asked at any time to produce research notes made during the research process for essays. Please keep your notes and drafts of your paper.**

**Exams:** Students will write a midterm and final exam. Both exams will draw from lectures, readings, films, websites, podcasts and museum visits. Questions will be of two types: identification/significance questions, and essays. The midterm will be written during class time on **October 8, 2021**. The final exam will be written during the university's final exam period.

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Use of any electronic devices will not be allowed during the exams. In the midterm exam, students must leave their phone or other device in an area in the classroom away from the desks.

**Due Dates and Late Penalties:** Assignments are due on the date 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 tests/midterms, including Self Reported Absences (SRA):**

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a makeup test. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

In person classes have scheduled makeup tests scheduled at the following times:

## **Fall Term**

- Tests scheduled before November 1 – the makeup will take place November 8 at 9:30am.
- Tests scheduled between November 2 and December 7 – the makeup will take place December 8 at 9:30pm.

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.

Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup test slots.

Students should be aware that when they have submitted an SRA for one test, they are not permitted to write a test or complete an assignment for another course during the period covered by the SRA. Failure to observe this regulation will result in the cancellation of the SRA and the possible application of late penalties.

### **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.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1: September 8, 2021**

**Introduction:** Syllabus review.

### **Week 1: September 10, 2021**

#### **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?

Visit [www.museumsforme.ca](http://www.museumsforme.ca) and take the survey here <https://surveys.hkperspectives.com/s3/Museums-for-Me>. (15-30 minutes)

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

### **Week 2: September 15, 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.

## **Week 2: September 17, 2021**

### **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: September 22, 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.

## **Week 3: September 24, 2021**

### **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: September 29, 2021**

### **Medical and Anatomical Museums**

**NO Class.** On your own time, “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>

#### **Week 4: October 1, 2021**

##### **Exam Review**

#### **Week 5: October 6, 2021**

##### **Midterm Exam**

#### **Week 5: October 8, 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.

#### **Week 6: October 13, 2021**

##### **Race, Gender, and Exhibitions**

**NO class.** Watch on your own time *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman: "The Hottentot Venus"*. Icarus Films. 1998. (<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/sarabaartman> or at Weldon/Huron) Cost: \$5.25. This material will be on the exam.

#### **Week 6: October 15, 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/#>

## **Week 7: October 20, 2021**

### **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 7: October 22, 2021**

### ***Making the Met: 1870-2020***

**NO class.** "Visit" on your own time the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City through this illustrated podcast. (<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2020/making-the-met-1870-to-2020/audio-guide>) FREE. This material will be on the exam.

## **Week 8: October 27, 2021**

### **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 8: October 29, 2021**

### **Looting**

**No class.** On your own time, watch *Shattered Heritage*. Al Jazeera. 2014. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-7VHYG0txE>) FREE.

## **Week 9: Fall Study Break**

## **Week 10: November 10, 2021**

**No Class. Essay Due**

## **Week 10: November 12, 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**)

### **Week 11: November 17, 2021**

#### **Representation and Appropriation**

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 11: November 19, 2021**

**NO CLASS.** Visit the Museum of Ontario Archaeology on your own time. Please be aware they may be Covid protocols in place so plan accordingly. See <https://archaeologymuseum.ca/>. Cost: \$4. This material will be on the exam.

### **Week 12: November 24, 2021**

#### **Repatriation I**

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)

### **Week 12: November 26, 2021**

#### **Repatriation II**

**NO class.** Watch on your own time 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/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/totem_the_return_of_the_gpsgolox_pole/)) FREE. This material will be on the exam.

### **Week 13: December 1, 2021**

#### **The Future of Museums I**

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.

### **Week 13: December 3, 2021**

#### **The Future of Museum II**

**NO Class.** On your own time, visit *The Botanical Turn* exhibit at the McIntosh Gallery on campus. Please be aware that there may be Covid restrictions in place and be sure to plan accordingly. See <https://mcintoshgallery.ca/>. This material will be on the exam.

### **Week 14: December 8, 2021**

#### **Exam Review**

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#### **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