

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

Fall 2022 SSC 2020

Instructor: Michelle Hamilton

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

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 online

Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 2216

Email: mhamilt3@uwo.ca

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

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic: The intent is for this course to be delivered in-person but should the COVID-19 landscape shift, the course will be delivered on-line asynchronously. The grading scheme will not change. The course will return to an in-person mode of delivery when the University and local health authorities deem it safe to do so.

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/decolonization; 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 2nd year courses are here:

https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_information/expectations_outcomes.html

Course Materials: Most readings are online through the library catalogue or through OWL, as noted below. 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: February 8, 2023
Research Essay	33%	Due: March 15, 2023
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, plus bibliography, with use of a minimum of 12 academic books and/or journal articles. If you are unsure if a source is academic, please contact me.

Encyclopedia articles, textbooks, or lectures cannot be used. Good sources for research have arguments rather than being simply descriptive or exploratory.

This research paper topic should be focused. Topics can be refined by narrowing down the time period, the geographical area, the themes, case studies, or policies. Do not try to cover a topic in a whole country, or all developments of one time period.

A good historical research paper will have a specific thesis argument which is well supported by historical evidence. Historians start research with a set of related questions, not already decided-upon statements. Instead, they examine the historical evidence to find the answers to their questions, like a detective starts an investigation with questions solved by examining the evidence left behind. The answer to your question(s) is your thesis. Thesis arguments are not personal opinions or ethical statements about what “should” be. They are also written argumentatively, not descriptively.

Structurally, the paper should include an introductory paragraph with a thesis argument (1 paragraph); background information that the reader needs to understand your research (max. 1 page); a detailed exploration of the historical evidence that supports your argument (8-10 pages); a conclusion which re-asserts your thesis (1 paragraph).

Common essay writing mistakes: choosing too large of a topic for page length; writing in the passive voice not active voice; beginning with broad sweeping generalizations; and not following Chicago style manual. Quoting should be rare and only then from primary, not secondary, sources unless extremely eloquent. Quotes are not ‘proof’ of your argument; historical evidence and examples are proof. Always write in the past tense.

As your papers may be about museum exhibits or material culture, you may include photographs in your paper. However, pictures are additional; you still must write 10-12 pages of text for the essay.

Footnotes and bibliography should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* format. See <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>. Bibliography should be divided into primary and secondary sources, if relevant.

Please use your last name as part of the file name of your document. Submit your essay as an MS Word document via OWL.

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 March 15, 2023 by 5pm.

If there a question about plagiarism in essays, students will be asked at any time to produce research notes made during the research process. 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 **February 8, 2023**. 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, 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:

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.

For in-person classes, make-up tests will be written at one of the Department of History make-up midterms. Dates for the make-ups will be listed on the Department of History website under [Important Dates](#).

IMPORTANT: In the event the University moves to online learning make-up tests will take place online via OWL. The date for the make-up may differ from the date listed above.

No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by Academic Counselling. Students who fail to write a make-up test in a designated time slot will receive a grade of zero on that assessment.

Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up test slots.

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 11, 2023

Introduction: Syllabus review.

Week 1: January 13, 2023

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? We will explore these questions all term through various methods.

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

Week 2: January 18, 2023

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: January 20, 2023

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, 2023

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: January 27, 2023

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, 2023

Medical and Anatomical Museums

Museum Visit TBA

Week 4: February 3, 2023

Exam Review

What are the themes that can be examined across weekly topics? What are the turning points in the history of museums? Who are the important people and what are the important events in the history of museums? What do you think material culture/museums are *now*, and/or what *should* they be?

Week 5: February 8, 2023

Midterm Exam IN CLASS

Week 5: February 10, 2023

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: February 15, 2023

Museum Visit TBA

Week 6: February 17, 2023

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: READING WEEK

Week 8: March 1, 2023

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) Cost: \$5.25. This material will be on the exam.

Week 8: March 3, 2023

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, 2023

Making the Met: 1870-2020

"Visit" 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 9: March 10, 2023

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? Are memorial museums a new kind of museum?

Williams, Paul. "The Personalization of Loss in Memorial Museums." In *Oxford Handbook of Public History*. Ed. James B. Gardner and Paula Hamilton. Oxford, 2017. (LC)

Week 10: March 15, 2023

Looting

We watch *Shattered Heritage*. Al Jazeera. 2014. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-7VHYG0txE>)
FREE. This material will be on the exam.

Essay Due. Submit via OWL.

Week 10: March 17, 2023

Social Justice and Museums

What are international sites of conscience? Can museums promote human rights? How do we/should 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: March 22, 2023

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: March 24, 2023

Museum Visit TBA

Week 12: March 29, 2023

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: March 31, 2023

Repatriation II

We watch 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/) FREE. This material will be on the exam.

Week 13: April 5, 2023

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” and the “dialogic museum”?

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

Exam Review IN CLASS. What are the themes that can be examined across weekly topics? What are the turning points in the history of museums? Who are the important people and what are the important events in the history of museums? What do you think material culture/museums are *now*, and/or what *should* they be?

Week 13: April 7, 2023

No class. Good Friday.

Final Exam Period: April 13-30, 2023

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