

Draft Syllabus

A final version of the syllabus will be available on the first day of class.

Cultural Heritage, Identity, and Power: Museums and Monuments in the Nation's Capital

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Course Description:

Physical artifacts, buildings and historic places are important markers of cultural heritage. Their meanings and associations inform viewers' perceptions of the world, while their materiality draws people in, giving them a way of touching the past. When displayed publicly, these markers provide a concrete basis for historical narratives, and can serve to validate ideas about contemporary society and to shape ideas about the future. Museums and monuments take on particular significance in the nation's capital, seat of political power and figurative heart of the nation. On the National Mall, grand monuments to historic figures and events and the stately buildings of the Smithsonian Institution bespeak power and grandeur. A more detailed examination of the city's collections and cultural landmarks reveals diverse, and sometimes conflicting or contradictory narratives about the nation. This course will examine how cultural heritage is deployed in Washington, DC, how various constituencies are represented, and how the cultural landscape of the nation's capital is informed by discourses of power, knowledge, memory, and identity.

Students in this course will visit museums and monuments, and complete assigned readings weekly. Seminar meetings will be dedicated to lecture (including occasional guest lectures) and discussion.

Course Instructor:

I am an anthropologist, archaeologist, and museum curator with extensive experience working in and on museums. I have worked with ethnographic and archaeological collections at several museums in the United States and Latin America, and led visitor engagement initiatives at historic house museums. I oversaw the Pre-Columbian collection at Harvard University's Dumbarton Oaks Museum for a decade, where I curated a permanent reinstallation of the collection (2008), as well as a variety of temporary exhibitions including *Flights of Fancy: Birds in Pre-Columbian Art* (2009), *Lasting Impressions: Body Art in the Ancient Americas* (2011), and *Inspiring Art: The Dumbarton Oaks Birthing Figure* (2013). I have published articles on topics in archaeology and museum studies, and co-edited the award-winning book *Ancient Maya Art at Dumbarton Oaks* (2012, by Joanne Pillsbury, Miriam Doutriaux, Reiko Ishihara-Brito, and Alexandre Tokovinine). I received my Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley.

Learning Objectives:

- (1) Students will become knowledgeable about the museums, collections, monuments, and memorials that form the cultural core of the nation's capital, through weekly in-person visits and in-class discussions.
- (2) Students will learn to think critically about the politics of display, collecting, preservation, and repatriation; to evaluate competing historical and cultural arguments; and to connect facts seen in exhibits with broader theoretical concepts introduced in readings and discussed in class.
- (3) Students will communicate persuasively orally and in writing: They will be responsible for weekly readings of scholarly material, participating in and leading in-class discussions, writing two opinion papers, and doing a formal in-class presentation.

Course Materials and Accessibility:

The syllabus, assignment guidelines, and any announcements, will be posted on the course BlackBoard site.

Readings for the course will be available as pdf files in BlackBoard or as url links to websites and other resources. Note that I reserve the right to make changes to the course materials as the term progresses. This includes, but is not limited to, adding or removing articles or other readings.

Course Requirements:

Attendance: Students are expected to attend *all* class meetings, which will include lectures, guest lectures, films, and class discussions. Only absences for extraordinary events such as personal illness, the death of a family member, or a major religious holiday recognized by the UCDC calendar will be excused. You will be required to provide written documentation, if possible at least one week ahead of the absence. On occasion, and with at least 48 hours notice, you may request to be excused from class in order to attend a special internship-related or other DC event. If your request is granted, you may be asked to report on your experience in class. For information about missed or late assignments see below. For each unexcused absence, your final course grade will be reduced to the next lower grade (e.g. from A- to B+).

Participation: Participation is very important, and everyone will be expected to contribute in a substantively meaningful way to the class discussion. All students will share their experience of site visits to museums and monuments. With advance warning, you may be asked to help lead discussion of the weekly readings, review the previous week's lecture, present relevant current events, provide an update on your research project, among other things. Without warning, you may be asked for your input on any and all things we discuss in class, or to take a pop quiz.

Readings: Students will complete all assigned readings *before* class. You should be ready to discuss readings in class, and to use the readings for your

assignments (if relevant) *even if* we do not discuss them in class. Moreover: Individual students will be assigned to present a reading and lead in-class discussion, on a rotating basis. This will include providing a written synopsis of the reading to be distributed to all students in the class. I reserve the right to change the readings and the schedule if necessary as the term progresses. See the weekly schedule for dates and assignments.

Site visits and Social Media: Students will visit a Washington, D.C. museum and/or monument every week. They will be able to choose one from a selection of museums assigned each week, and will be asked to consider a particular question or theme during their visit. Students will tweet (or instagram, tbd) photos and observations made during their site visits, and be prepared to discuss their ideas and impressions during class discussions, with possible reference to their social media posts.

Opinion Papers & Presentation: Students will write 2 short 4-5 page opinion papers due in class during Weeks 5 and 8 of the course. These papers will comment on a topic related to the course, and be based on class readings, site visits, and any relevant additional material. You are encouraged to use the Purdue University OWL site for very accessible and useful information about writing styles and rules. Finally, students will also prepare a brief illustrated presentation, due in Week 9 of the course.

Evaluation:

The final course grade will include:

Site visits & tweets 20%

In-class participation (including presenting readings and leading discussion) 30%

Opinion papers based on readings & visits (2 papers) 40%

Oral presentation 10%

Assignments in this course will be worth various points and converted to a 100-point scale such that an A=93-100%, A-=90-92%, B+=87-89%, B=83-86%, B-=80-82%, etc. You should understand that only excellent work will earn an A. If the work is good, it will earn a B, and satisfactory work will earn a C. Work that is less than satisfactory or of poor quality will earn D or F. A grade of Incomplete will only be allowed under the most exceptional circumstances.

Course Communication Tools

I will use Blackboard, Turnitin, and email for communicating with you this term. Unless you tell me otherwise, I will use the address you included as your primary address when you enrolled for classes. You are responsible for checking email, Blackboard, and Turnitin regularly for messages and feedback. You should also let me know if you change your email address.

Blackboard is my primary communication method. I will post announcements, assignments, and send emails through Blackboard. Whenever possible, I will have Blackboard send an email when I've made a post, but it is your responsibility to check the class page frequently.

Turnitin will be used for submitting and returning graded written assignments. We will discuss in class how to create an account, and how to use the software.

Policy on Missed and Late Assignments

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the appointed day, even if I don't formally ask for them until later in the class, or if they are due through Turnitin. Assignment deadlines are firm, as the content of the assignments relates to in-class discussion. You may submit assignments early, but I cannot guarantee early feedback.

Late Assignments: Assignments submitted after the time and date when they are due, and that are not accompanied by an acceptable excuse, will be addressed as follows. For every 24 hour period after the due date/time (including weekends), the grade will be lowered by two parts of a grade. For example, if you turn in an A quality assignment by 11 am on Friday, after it was due at 11 am on Wednesday, you will earn a B- on that assignment.

Missed assignments: Assignments can be made up only for excused absences (see 'Course Requirements,' above). Note that you may be asked to turn in a written assignment *before* the deadline. If there is some other reason for you to miss an assignment, it is your responsibility to inform me within the first week of classes to be considered eligible to make up the assignment. If you do not meet these conditions, you will receive a zero for the assignment. Important: You should discuss make-up assignments with me as soon as you are aware of them, by email or appointment. I will not discuss these arrangements in class.

Statement on Weather Emergencies

In the event of a weather emergency, UCDC follows the federal government's decisions about delays and closures.

Policy on Academic Misconduct

UCDC has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of dishonesty. Students should refer to their home campus Student Code of Conduct for the regulations that apply to them. The burden is on each student to know what behaviors constitute cheating and plagiarism. Ignorance of these behaviors is not an adequate defense.

Policy on Classroom Conduct

It goes without saying that we all must treat others in class with respect. We do not have to agree, but being polite and thoughtful in our interactions with each other is absolutely required. Also, please observe the following rules: (1) DO set

your cell phones to silent and answer them only in an emergency. (2) DO NOT arrive late to class unless you have advance approval; you may arrive during the break for the second part of class. (3) DO NOT use a laptop computer, other electronic device, or audio taping equipment unless you have approval from me.

Statement on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

The University of California is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Every member of the community should be aware that the University prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence, and that such behavior violates both law and University policy. The University will respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and will take appropriate action to prevent, to correct, and when necessary to discipline behavior that violates this Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence.

Students who wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct should contact UCDC's Counseling Services at UCDCCounseling@gmail.com. To report sexual misconduct, to ask questions about UCDC policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, please contact the UCDC Title IX administrator, Josh Brimmeier (202-974-6214 or josh.brimmeier@ucdc.edu). Because the University of California is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, the confidentiality of reported misconduct cannot be guaranteed.

Statement of Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

In compliance with the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Public Law 93-112) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336), University of California policy prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability in its programs, services, and activities.

If you require accommodation for class, please let me know at our first meeting (if not earlier) so the necessary arrangements can be made.

Weekly Schedule:

Week 1. Introduction- Culture, Heritage, Museums and Monuments

- Svetlana Alpers, 1991. "The Museum as a Way of Seeing," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press: 25-32.
- Steven Greenblatt, "Resonance and Wonder," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991, 42-56.

- Joshua A. Bell 2012. Museums as Relational Entities: The Politics and Poetics of Heritage, *Reviews in Anthropology* 41: 70-92.
- UNESCO <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

Week 2: Displaying National Heritage and Identity

[Visit National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum]

- M. Elizabeth Weiser 2014, National Identity within the National Museum: Subjectification within Socialization, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 34 (4): 385-402.
- MacDonald, S. (2007). Exhibitions of Power and Powers of Exhibition: An Introduction to the Politics of Display. In S. Watson (Ed.), *Museums and their Communities* (pp 176-196). London: Routledge.
- Carol Duncan, 1995. "The Art Museum as Ritual," in *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, London: Routledge, 7-20.
- Sharon J. Macdonald, 2003. "Museums, national, postnational and transcultural identities," *Museum and Society* 1/1: 1-16.

Week 3: Cultural Landscape & Memory:

[Visit U.S. Capitol grounds, Library of Congress, monuments on the National Mall]

- Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman, 1987. "The Statue Near the Wall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Art of Remembering," *Smithsonian Studies in American Art*, 1 (1): 4-29.
- Michael Herzfeld, 2006. Spatial Cleansing: Monumental Vacuity and the Idea of the West, *Journal of Material Culture*, 11 (1/2): 127-149.
- Kirk Savage, 2009. *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*, University of California Press, Berkeley. (section)
- Jack Weatherford, 2012 (1988). The Founding Indian Fathers, in James Spradley and David McCurdy eds., *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, Fourteenth Edition, Pearson Ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ, 246-254.

Week 4: The Challenge of Universal Museums

[Visit Freer Sackler Gallery, National Museum of African Art, NMAI]

- Steven Conn, 2000. "Where is the East? Asian Objects in American Museums, from Nathan Dunn to Charles Freer," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 35 (2-3): 157-173.
- "Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums: "Museums Serve Every Nation", reprinted in *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, 2006. ed. Ivan Karp et al, Durham: Duke University Press.
- James Cuno, 2008. "Identity Matters," in his *Who Owns Antiquity?*, Princeton University Press, 122-45.
- Bauer, Alexander. 2015. The *Kula* of Long-Term Loans: Cultural Object Itineraries and the Promise of the Postcolonial "Universal" Museum. In *Things in Motion*, edited by Rosemary A. Joyce and Susan D. Gillespie, pp. 147-160. School for Advanced Research Press, Santa Fe, NM.
- O'Neill, Mark. 2004. Enlightenment Museums: Universal or Merely Global? *Museum and Society* 2 (3):190-202.

Week 5. Cultural Heritage and Identity: Whose culture? Whose heritage?

[First Opinion Paper DUE]

- Prott, Lyndel, and Patrick O'Keefe. 1992. "Cultural Heritage" or "Cultural Property"? *International Journal of Cultural Property* 1: 307-320.
- Luke, Christina 2012. U.S. Policy, Cultural Heritage, and U.S. Borders. *International Journal of Cultural Property* 19: 175-196.
- Nicole Klug 2010. Protecting Antiquities and Saving the Universal Museum: a Necessary Compromise Between the Conflicting Ideologies of Cultural Property, *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*, 42 (1/2): 711-738.
- William Walker 2013. *A Living Exhibition: The Smithsonian and the Transformation of the Universal Museum*. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst. (sections)

Week 6: Ethnic Minorities and the politics of display

[Visit Smithsonian National Museum of American History; Smithsonian Latino Center website; Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture website; National Portrait Gallery]

- Fath Ruffins 1997. Culture Wars Won and Lost: Ethnic Museums on the Mall, Part I: The National Holocaust Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian, *Radical History Review*, 68: 79-100.
- Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Carl Grodach, 2004. Displaying and Celebrating the 'Other': A Study of the Mission, Scope, and Roles of Ethnic Museums in Los Angeles, *The Public Historian*, 26 (4): 49-71.
- Cristina Castellano 2011. "African, Chinese and Mexican National Museums in the United States – Did You Say 'National'?" in *Human*

Architecture 9.4: 35-48.

- Yzaguirre, Raul, and Mari Carmen Aponte, 1994. Willful Neglect: The Smithsonian Institution and U.S. Latinos, Report of the Smithsonian Institution Task Force on Latino Issues.
- Jamaal Abdul-Alim 2012. Luminaries Celebrate Groundbreaking of Smithsonian's African American History Museum, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 29 (3): 8.

Week 7: Indigenous Perspective

[Visit Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian]

- Arieff, A. 1995. 'A different sort of (p)reservation: some thoughts on the NMAI', *Museum Anthropology*, 19 (2): 78-90.
- Janet Catherine Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips, 1995. "Our (Museum) World Turned Upside Down: Re-presenting Native American Arts," *The Art Bulletin*, 77 (1): 6-23.
- Nelson H. Graburn, 2004. Authentic Inuit Art: Creation and Exclusion in the Canadian North, *Journal of Material Culture* 9 (2): 141-159.
- Ira Jacknis, 2006. A New Thing? The NMAI in Historical and Institutional Perspective. *American Indian Quarterly* 30 (3&4): 511-542.
- Kristin Ronon, 2014. "Native Empowerment, the New Museology, and the National Museum of the American Indian," *Museum & Society* 12/1: 132-147.

Week 8: Collections Access & Ownership (Repatriation)

[Second Opinion Paper DUE]

- Besterman, T. (2009). Returning a stolen generation. *Museum International*, 61(1/2), 107-111.
- Isaac, Gwyneira. 2011. Whose Idea Was This? *Current Anthropology* 52 (2):211-233.
- Steven Conn, "Whose Objects? Whose Culture? The Contexts of Repatriation," in *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 58-85.
- Neil G. W. Curtis, 2012. "Universal Museums, Museum Objects and Repatriation: The Tangled Stories of Things," in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, ed. Bettina M. Carbonell, Blackwell, Oxford, 73-81.
- Michelle Crouch 2010. Digitization as Repatriation? The National Museum of the American Indian's Fourth Museum Project, *Journal of Information Ethics* 19 (1): 45-56.

Week 9: Student Presentations

[Student Presentations DUE]

Week 10: Cultural Heritage in the Future

- Stephen E. Weil, 'From Being About Something to Being For Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum, in *Making Museums Matter*, Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 2002, pp. 28-52.
- Saskia Vermeylen and Jeremy Pilcher 2009. Let the objects speak: online museums and indigenous cultural heritage, *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* 4: 60-78.
- Steven Conn, 2010. Do Museums Still Need Objects, in *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 20-57.