

Introduction to Public History

HIS 311/511

Fall 2018

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This course explores public history, or history crafted for—and often in collaboration with—the public. While the course focuses on the origins and evolution of the field in museums, historical societies, historic preservation, heritage tourism, oral history, popular culture, and community history projects, as well as best practices in digital public history, it seeks primarily to address *how* history, including challenging aspects of the past, is interpreted in public realms. It also examines the role of public memory in advancing certain historical interpretations and suppressing others in public history venues. Throughout the semester, you will read and comment on key scholarship in the field of public history.

The modern public historian must do more than understand history and how to make it compelling for diverse audiences. Public history often requires one to apply technology to collect, analyze, and present the past. Thus, digital history accounts for an increasing proportion of history-related careers. After this semester, you will possess a cache of career-applicable knowledge. In short, you will also learn public history by *doing* public history. Specifically, you'll develop new content for *Cleveland Historical*, a curated mobile app developed by the CSU Center for Public History + Digital Humanities that draws upon primary sources to tell stories about our region. You will create your story for the app by researching a topic in local and national context, collecting available historical images, and curating your own online exhibit.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the relationship between the academic study of history and public understandings of and interests in the past.
- Understand the transformation of the field of public history and the range of places that public historians work.
- Understand the challenges that go with reconciling differing interpretations of the past and how those challenges shape how history is presented publicly.
- Develop a public-facing “voice” by developing a public history exhibit.

Readings

Cox, Karen L. *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.

Lewis, Catherine. *The Changing Face of Public History: The Chicago Historical Society and the Transformation of an American Museum*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005.

Mires, Charlene. *Independence Hall in American Memory*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

Rymsza-Pawlowska, M. J. *History Comes Alive: Public History and Popular Culture in the 1970s*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

Whisnant, Anne Mitchell, Marla B. Miller, Gary B. Nash, and David Thelan. *Imperiled Promise: The State of History in the National Park Service*. Organization of American Historians, 2011.
<http://bit.ly/1jkHiiQ>.

Additional readings are available online or through CSU's Electronic Course Reserve (ECR) at <http://library.csuohio.edu>. The ECR password is [redacted].

COURSE POLICIES

Grading

I grade using the standard 100-point scale (100-93=A; 92-90=A-; 89-87=B+; 86-83=B; 82-80=B-; 79-77=C+; 76-70=C; 69-60=D; 59-0=F) with the weighting of each grade (percentage of final grade) indicated by assignment.

Reading Responses (20%). On eleven (11) occasions throughout the semester, I will ask you to write a short (approx. 200 to 300 words) response to assigned reading. These responses are intended to focus on your reaction to each reading (e.g., what are its most important arguments, what are the most notable insights you gained from the reading, etc.) that you will prepare before class. I will drop the lowest score, hence counting 10 responses at 2% each.

Research Prospectus (10%). Your first step is to make an initial choice of your top 3 potential project topics that you'll submit on Aug. 31. I will email each of you to start a discussion of your topic interests and help you choose and figure out how an approach. On Sept. 7, you will submit a preliminary prospectus (worth 3%) based on your topic selection. The preliminary prospectus should be about one paragraph at a minimum and include at least 2 pertinent scholarly books that may help provide broader historical context for the topic. Following my feedback and early research you'll do over the ensuing two weeks, on Sept. 21 you will submit a more detailed and refined research prospectus (worth 7%). It will be a statement of at least 300 words that explains your preliminary approach to your topic, accompanied by a bibliography in Chicago style. The prospectus must include *at least* 4 pertinent scholarly books (6 for graduate students)—or another pre-approved combination of books and journal articles/book chapters—and 20 or more newspaper article citations. This is just a starting point. A strong research project will require reading more than the minimum and then selecting the best evidence.

Research Essay (45%). A 3,000- to 4,000-word essay (5,000 to 6,000 words for graduate students) rooted in several weeks' research on your local topic(s) in the context of Cleveland *and* U.S. history. You must use your scholarly books/articles *and* primary sources. The essay will be done in two drafts with revisions expected following my assessment of the first draft. The first draft (due Nov. 5) will be weighted as 20% of your overall grade, while the final draft (due Nov. 19) will comprise 25%. Submission of both drafts must be hard copies in class.

Cleveland Historical Story (20%). A complete app story prepared according to project guidelines (to be distributed separately). A story includes a 750- to 1,000-word narrative distilled from your research essay with a general audience in mind, 6-12 historical images, each with a 2- to 3-sentence caption and appropriate credits, a references list, subject categories, tags, and map location. Submission of first draft: MS Word (.docx) or Apple Pages (.pages) document with title, optional subtitle, main narrative, and selected bibliography, submitted via email, *and* 6-9 JPEG (.jpg) images with title, caption, and (as available) creator and/or source and date—all uploaded on *Cleveland Historical* on Nov. 30. Following

revision, your final draft, along with subjects, tags, references, and map location, will be due Dec. 14 and will be added using the appropriate metadata fields on *Cleveland Historical*. Detailed instructions and training will be offered in RT 502 during class time on Nov. 21.

Participation (5%). In order to obtain the full 5% of your final grade, you must be regular and on time in attendance, attentive and engaged, active in reading discussions, and respectful in your interactions with everyone in the class. Unexcused absences will adversely affect this grade.

Other Policies

Please come to every class having read the reading(s) assigned for that day. Please be in your seat with all needed materials in hand *before* the start of class. Any prepared assignments for the day are due in hard copy (except when otherwise directed) at the start of class. Attendance is taken by sign-in sheet at the first of every class and lateness is noted. Please be respectful of me and your fellow students. Absences will be excused only with advance notice or with verifiable official documentation thereafter. Late submissions of assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day. Documented disabilities must be brought to my attention promptly in order to be properly accommodated. Plagiarism or cheating (misrepresenting others' ideas as your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally) will result in a "zero" on the assignment and will be handled according to guidelines in the Code of Student Conduct. Many former students ask me for letters of recommendation. I am happy to write such letters when the requester demonstrated excellence in written and verbal expression and was attentive to course policies.

COURSE SCHEDULE

* denotes Electronic Course Reserve (ECR) readings

Week 1: Building the Foundation

Mon. 8/27 Course Introduction & Expectations
Wed. 8/29 Project Introduction (Familiarize yourself with <https://clevelandhistorical.org>)
Fri. 8/31 "About the Field," <https://bit.ly/2bvnoFe>
Robert Kelly, "Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects," <https://bit.ly/2nKPFKD>
Heather Huyck, "Twenty-five Years of Public History" *
Rachel Donaldson, "Broadening Our Understanding of the Roots of Public History Education," <https://bit.ly/2P1ON07>
Initial Project Topic Submission Due in Class (Top 3 Choices)

Week 2: Building the Foundation

Mon. 9/3 Labor Day (No Class)
Wed. 9/5 Denise Meringolo, "Historic Sites and the Expansion of the National Park Service" *
Fri. 9/7 Refining Your Topic **Preliminary Prospectus Due in Class**

Week 3: Building the Foundation

Mon. 9/10 Developing Your Research Agenda
Wed. 9/12 Special Collections Research (Meet in Library Special Collections)
Fri. 9/14 Newspaper Research (Meet in Library Special Collections)

Week 4: Commemorative Battles: The "Lost Cause"

Mon. 9/17 Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, preface & chap. 1-4
Reading Response Due in Class

Wed. 9/19 Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, chap. 5-8 & epilogue

Reading Response Due in Class

Fri. 9/21 Ed Ayers with Kristin Szakos, "In Our Own Backyard," segment from *BackStory*,

<https://bit.ly/2OJNFxK>

Kevin Levin, "What Richmond Has Gotten Right...," <https://bit.ly/2wjBxf4>

Eric Foner, "Confederate Statues and 'Our' History," <https://nyti.ms/2KPMjz0>

Karen L. Cox, "Why Confederate Monuments Must Fall," <https://nyti.ms/2i3RDWo>

W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "I've Studied the History of Confederate Memorials. Here's What to Do About Them," <https://bit.ly/2vOX2nE>

Revised Prospectus Due in Class

Week 5: Displaying the Past: History Museums

Mon. 9/24 Gary Kulik, "Designing the Past" *

Wed. 9/26 Jessie Swigger, "From History Museum to History Attraction" *

Fri. 9/28 Ron Potvin, "House or Home?" <https://bit.ly/2vBEpo7>

Week 6: From Temple to Forum: The Evolution of a History Museum

Mon. 10/1 Catherine Lewis, *The Changing Face of Public History*, intro & chap. 1-3

Reading Response Due in Class

Wed. 10/3 Catherine Lewis, *The Changing Face of Public History*, chap. 4-6 & epilogue

Reading Response Due in Class

Fri. 10/5 Investiture of CSU President Harlan M. Sands (2:00)—No Class

Week 7: Saving the Places Where History Happened: Historic Preservation

Mon. 10/8 Norman Tyler, "The Preservation Movement in the United States" *

Liz Almlie, "An Uneasy Fit: History in Historic Preservation," <https://bit.ly/2w2nLgO>

Wed. 10/10 City of Houston Preservation Fundamentals, <https://bit.ly/2O8rJ3r>

Carroll West, "The Fifty-year Stumbling Block," <https://bit.ly/2MCJ7IU>

Fri. 10/12 Robert Hodder, "Savannah's Changing Past" *

Week 8: History Comes Alive: Public History and Popular Culture

Mon. 10/15 M. J. Rymysza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, chap. 1-3

Reading Response Due in Class

Wed. 10/17 M. J. Rymysza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, chap. 4-6

Reading Response Due in Class

Fri. 10/19 Research Day (Meet in Library Special Collections)

Week 9: A Shared Authority: Oral History

Mon. 10/22 Linda Shopes, "What is Oral History?" <https://bit.ly/2OZn1BP>

Wed. 10/24 Baylor Institute for Oral History, "Introduction to Oral History," <https://bit.ly/2MI2SI3>

Fri. 10/26 Sarah Nemeth, "Detroit Shoreway, Part 2," *Cleveland Voices Podcast*,
<https://clevelandvoices.org/items/show/2988>

Week 10: Shifting Symbol: Independence Hall from Shrine to Storyboard

Mon. 10/29 Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory*, ch. 1-3

Reading Response Due in Class

- Wed. 10/31 Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory*, ch. 4-6
Reading Response Due in Class
- Fri. 11/2 Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory*, ch. 7-10
Reading Response Due in Class

Week 11: Challenging History: Public History and Social Justice

- Mon. 11/5 *Ask A Slave: The Web Series*, <https://bit.ly/2KLntAn>
 Amy M. Tyson & Azie Mira Dungey, "'Ask a Slave' and Interpreting Race on Public History's Front Line" *
Research Essay Draft Due in Class
- Wed. 11/7 Shawn Halifax, "McLeod Plantation Historic Site" *
- Fri. 11/9 Evan Kutzler et al., "Revealing Slavery's Legacy at a Public University in South" (Parts 1, 2, 3), <https://bit.ly/2McvAMI> (follow links at end of each part to continue to the next)

Week 12: History in the National Parks

- Mon. 11/12 Veterans Day (No Class)
- Wed. 11/14 Anne M. Whisnant et al., *Imperiled Promise*, pp. 5-52, <https://bit.ly/2OqkG1I>
Reading Response Due in Class
- Fri. 11/16 Anne M. Whisnant et al., *Imperiled Promise*, pp. 53-122, <https://bit.ly/2OqkG1I>
Reading Response Due in Class

Week 13: Public History in the Digital Age

- Mon. 11/19 Jim Dubelko, "The Cleveland Union Stockyards," <https://bit.ly/2BbtasO>
 Sarah Nemeth, "Calvary Presbyterian Church," <https://bit.ly/2OyriS0>
Final Essay Due in Class
- Wed. 11/21 App Story Workshop (Meet in RT 502)
- Fri. 11/23 Thanksgiving (No Class)

Week 14: Public History in the Digital Age

- Mon. 11/26 Mark Souther, "Digital Storytelling and University-based Community Engagement in Cleveland" *
 Deborah Boyer, "Finding the Intersection of Technology and Public History,"
<https://bit.ly/230cmG1>
- Wed. 11/28 *Mapping the Fourth of July*, <http://incite.cs.vt.edu/m4j/incite/>
 Ariel Beaujot, "Sun Up in a Sundown Town" *
Hear, Here, <http://www.hearherelacrosse.org>
- Fri. 11/30 Dee Harris, "Confessions of a Novice Tweeter," <https://bit.ly/2AZkrZS>
 @NorthwestMuseum #GreatFire1889 live-tweet project, <https://bit.ly/2nKYeoT>
App Story Draft Due on Cleveland Historical

Week 15: Reflecting and Looking Ahead

- Mon. 12/3 Lightning Rounds, Part I
- Wed. 12/5 Lightning Rounds, Part II
- Fri. 12/7 Ask a Practitioner, <http://ncph.org/history-at-work/tag/ask-a-practitioner/> (Choose any 3 or more posts tagged "Ask a Practitioner")
- Fri. 12/14 12:30-2:30 PM – **Final App Story Due on Cleveland Historical**