

History Museum Curatorship: Collections Management HIS 547 / IAR 547

Hall for Humanities & Research Administration

Room 3208

Greensboro Historical Museum

Greensboro Masonic Museum

Tuesday 6:30-9:20pm

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Description

This course will introduce students to the professional principles and practices in the care and management of history museum collections and historic sites, including collections development, museum registration methods, cataloging, collections care, conservation and preservation. The class will look at collections-related jobs in the museum field: registrar, collection manager and curator, and explore what it means to be physically and intellectually responsible for museum objects. And lastly the class will examine the components of a collections management policy and a collections plan.

In addition to weekly reading assignments, students will be expected to actively participate in class and lead discussions based on assigned readings. There will be several practical “hands-on” exercises during the course and a class project at the Masonic Museum (requiring approximately 30 hours outside of classroom). There will also be one writing assignment and approximately three or four quizzes.

Grading

- 40% Class Participation (includes attendance, participation and leading class discussion of assigned chapters and/or articles)
- 30% Class Project
- 30% Writing Assignments: Three or four quizzes and one paper (5-7 pages) based on an assigned hypothetical situation.

Required Reading

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *The New Museum Registration Methods*, Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1998.

Gardner, James B. and Elizabeth E. Merritt. *The AAM Guide to Collections Planning*, Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 2004.

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, Second Edition, 1998.

Messenger, Phyllis Mauch. *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture/ Whose Property?* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1999.

Various journal articles, chapters and handouts (available on Blackboard/e-Reserves or distributed in class)

Recommended Reading

- Bachmann, Konstanze, editor. *Conservation Concerns: A Guide for Collectors and Curators*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.
- Fisher, Charles E. and Hugh C. Miller, eds., Heritage Preservation and National Park Service. *Caring for Your Historic House*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1998.
- Landrey, Gregory J., et al., *The Winterthur Guide to Caring for Your Collection*. Delaware: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 2000.
- Lanmon, Dwight P. *Evaluating Your Collection: The 14 Points of Connoisseurship*. Delaware: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1999.
- Lubar, Steve and Kathleen M. Kendrick. *Legacies: Collecting America's History at the Smithsonian*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001.
- Malaro, Marie C. *Museum Governance: Mission, Ethics, Policy*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.
- Schwarzer, Marjorie. *Riches, Rivals & Radicals: 100 Years of Museums in America*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 2006.
- Shapiro, Michael S. et al., *A Museum Guide to Copyright and Trademark*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1999.
- Simmons, John E. *Things Great and Small: Collections Management Policies*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 2006.
- Williams, Don and Louisa Jaggar. *Saving Stuff: How to Care for and Preserve Your Collectibles, Heirlooms, and other Prized Possessions*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005.

Course Schedule

January 15, 2008: Introductions and Course Overview

Class meets at HHRA 3208

January 22, 2008: Collectors, Collecting and Museums, Part 1

Collections and the History Museum

Class meets at HHRA 3208

- Akin, Marjorie. "Passionate Possession: The Formation of Private Collections," Chapter 9 in *Learning From Things: Method and Theory of Material Culture Studies*. pp. 102-128. (e-Reserve)
- Case, Mary. "What Registrars Do All Day," in *Registrars on Record*. pp.13-33. (e-Reserve)
- Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Chapter 1, "What Is a Museum? What is Required of Its Board Members?" pp.3-21. (e-Reserve)
- Muensterberger, Werner. *Collecting: An Unruly Passion*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994. Chapter 1 "Passion, or the Wellspring of Collecting" and Chapter 2 "First Possessions" pp.3-24. (e-Reserve)
- Schwarzer, Marjorie. *Riches, Rivals & Radicals: 100 Years of Museums in America*. "Introduction," pp.1-27 and Chapter "The Collection" pp.69-119. (e-Reserve)
- Woodhouse, Anne. "Museum Curators," in *Public History: Essays in the Field*. pp.187-201. (e-Reserve)

January 29, 2008: Collectors, Collecting and Museums, Part 2

Collections Development and Collecting Plans

Class meets at HHRA 3208

Guest Lecturer: Will South, Curator of Collections, Weatherspoon Art Museum

Collections Plans on e-Reserve:

Collecting Plan of the State Historical Society of Iowa, 1993. pp.1-16.

Permanent Collection Collecting Plan, Rogers Historical Museum, 2002. pp.1-7.

Gardner, James B. and Elizabeth E. Merritt. *The AAM Guide to Collections Planning*.

Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 2004.

“Building the Intellectual Framework,” pp.5-10. (e-Reserve)

“Writing the Collections Plan,” pp.11-26. (e-Reserve)

“The Planning Process,” pp.27-32. (e-Reserve)

“Museum Politics,” pp.33-37. (e-Reserve)

February 5, 2008: Collectors, Collecting and Museums, Part 3

Collections Management Policy

Class meets at Greensboro Historical Museum

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *The New Museum Registration Methods*. Introduction, pp. 45-62, 95-101, 221-223.

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Chapter 3, “Collections Management Policies,” pp.45-57.

Collections Management Policies on e-Reserve:

Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Collections Management Policy, 2001. pp.1-9.

Historical Society of Frederic County, Collections Management Policy, 2002. pp.1-16.

AAM Writing a Collections Management Policy—handout

Object Handling and Condition Reporting Exercise

QUIZ #1

February 12, 2008: Collecting Cultural Property & NAGPRA

Class meets at Museum of Anthropology at Wake Forest University (Class Time:TBD)

Guest Lecturers: Beverly Hancock, Curator and Kyle Bryner, Registrar

Buck and Gilmore. *The New Registration Methods*. pp. 309-319.

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Chapter 4 Section entitled “Objects Improperly Removed from Their Countries of Origin,” pp.84-118.

McKeown, Timothy C., et al., “NAGPRA at 10: A Critique,” in *Museum News*. September/October 2000. pp. 42-49, 67-69, 71-75. (e-Reserve)

Messenger, Phyllis Mauch. *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture/ Whose Property?* Intro, Chapters 1, 2, 6-10, 12.

UNESCO: A Brief History—hand-out

February 19, 2008: Museum Registration Methods: Acquisitions, Accessions Cataloging, Collections Documentation & Automation
Class meets at Greensboro Historical Museum

Classification schemes; Management, Descriptive Data and Historical Information: Records and Inventory

Blackaby, James R. AASLH Special Report 3 "Managing Historical Data: The Report of the Common Agenda Task Force" (e-Reserve)

Buck and Gilmore. *The New Registration Methods*. pp.1-44, 64-93, 117-119, 156-166, 301-302.

Malaro. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Chapter 4 "The Acquisition of Objects: Accessioning," pp.58-82, and Chapter 11 "Promised Gifts," pp. 360-368. (e-Reserve).

Object Cataloging Exercise

February 26, 2008: Care of Collections, Conservation, Preservation and Storage
Class meets at Greensboro Historical Museum
Guest Lecturer: Anne Peranteau, Textile Conservator, North Carolina Museum of History

AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice (e-Reserve)

Buck and Gilmore. *The New Registration Methods*. pp.103-116, 120-125.

Clavir, Miriam. "The Social and Historic Construction of Professional Values in Conservation," in *Studies in Conservation*, Vol. 43, No.1 (1998), pp.1-8 (e-Reserve)

Heald, Susan and Kathleen E. Ash-Milby. "Woven by the Grandmothers: Twenty-four Blankets Travel to the Navajo Nation," in *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (1998), pp.334-345. (e-Reserve)

Kite, Marion and Audrey Hill. "Man-made Materials and Textile Conservation" in *International Perspectives on Textile Conservation*. pp.8-12. (e-Reserve)

Mellor, Stephen P. "The Exhibition and Conservation of African Objects: Considering the Nontangible," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Vol. 31, No.1 (1992), pp.3-16. (e-Reserve)

Merritt, Jane. "Housekeeping for Museum Collections," Winterthur Museum, May 2002 (e-Reserve)

Williams, Don and Louisa Jaggard. *Saving Stuff: How to Care for and Preserve Your Collectibles, Heirlooms, and other Prized Possessions*. Chapter 1 "Your Treasures Want to Live in an Egyptian Tomb," pp.3-13 and Chapter 2 "Deciding What Stuff to Save, Give Away, or Toss" pp.14-22. (e-Reserve)

AIC Definition of Conservation Terminology—hand out

Object Cataloging Exercise, continued

March 4, 2008: Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Pest Management

Temperature, Relative Humidity, Light Levels, Pollutants, Housekeeping

Class meets at Greensboro Historical Museum

Guest Lecturer: Stephen Catlett, Archivist, Greensboro Historical Museum

Buck and Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. pp. 227-234, 255-266.

Butcher-Youngmans, Sherry and Gretchen E. Anderson. AASLH Technical Leaflet #

171 "A Holistic Approach to Museum Pest Management," in *History News*, Vol. 45, No.3, May/June 1990. (e-Reserve)

AAM Technical Information Service, "Describing the Museum Environment"—handout

QUIZ # 2

March 11, 2008: SPRING BREAK

NO CLASS

March 18, 2008: Incoming & Outgoing Loans and Exhibitions; Deaccessions,

Ethics and Museum Law-- Standard Facility Report, Packing and Shipping, Couriers, Appraisals and Authentications

Class meets at Greensboro Historical Museum

AASLH Technical Leaflet #224. "Ethics Position Paper: The Capitalization of Collections," in *History News*. Vol. 58, No. 4, Autumn 2003. (e-Reserve)

Buck and Gilmore. *The New Registration Methods*. pp.126-156, 167-206, 277-287, 303-307, and Registrar's Code of Ethics. pp. 349-358.

Byrne, Kathleen T., "Deaccessioning Museum Collections," in *CRM Cultural Resource Manager*. pp.15-17. (e-Reserve)

Malaro. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Chapter 5, "The Disposal of Objects: Deaccessioning," pp.216-234, Chapter 6 "Loans: Incoming and Outgoing," pp.239-273, Chapter 12 "Tax Considerations Relevant to Gifts" pp.369-387 and Chapter 13, "Appraisals and Authentications, pp.384-405. (e-Reserve)

Miller, Steven H. "Guilt-Free Deaccessioning," in *Museum News*. September/October 1996, pp.32, 60-61. (e-Reserve)

Weisz, Jackie. *Codes of Ethics and Practice of Interest to Museums*. (e-Reserve)

AASLH Statement of Professional Ethics, pp.8-9.

AAM Code of Ethics for Museums, pp.10-16.

Curators' Code of Ethics, 1996. pp.181-186.

March 25, 2008: Risk Management, Disaster Planning and Emergency Plans
Copyright, Insurance, Rights and Reproduction, and Security
Class meets at Greensboro Historical Museum

Buck and Gilmore. *The New Registration Methods*. pp.225-226, 237-254, 267-275, 288-300

Flitner, Arthur. AASLH Technical Leaflet #147 "An Insurance Primer for the Local Historical Organization," (e-Reserve)

Lindblom, Beth C. and Karen Motylewski. AASLH Technical Leaflet # 183, "Disaster Planning for Cultural Institutions." (e-Reserve)

Lowenthal, Constance. "A Trust Betrayed: Inside Theft." in *Museum News*, May/June 1994. pp. 32-35. (e-Reserve)

Shapiro, Michael S. and Brett I. Miller. "Copyright in the Digital Age," in *Museum News*, January/February 2000. pp. 36-45, 66-67. (e-Reserve)

Vogt-O'Connor, Diane. "A Precarious Balance: Collections Access and Intellectual Property Rights," in *CRM Cultural Resource Manager*. pp. 61-65. (e-Reserve)

Whalen, Maureen. "Marooned in Storage: Rescuing Orphan Works," in *Museum News*, September/October 2000. pp.57-60. (e-Reserve)

Common Security Mistakes—hand out

Optional: *Stolen: A Documentary Film*. Directed by Rebecca Dreyfus, 2004.
(85 minutes)

April 1, 2008: Historic Preservation

Frens, Dale H. "Establishing A Maintenance Program," Chapter 3 in *Caring For Your Historic House*. pp.29-39. (e-Reserve)

Miller, Hugh C. "Why Care about Your Historic House?," Chapter 1 in *Caring For Your Historic House*. pp.10-19. (e-Reserve)

Slaton, Deborah and Timothy Barton, "Getting to Know Your House," Chapter 2 in *Caring For Your Historic House*. pp.20-28. (e-Reserve)

Secretary of Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties—hand-out

QUIZ #3

April 8, 2008: What is Free Masonry?

Class meets at Greensboro Masonic Museum

Guest Speaker(s) from Greensboro Masonic Lodge

Additional readings on Masonic History—hand outs

<http://www.grandlodge-nc.org/> read section called **Freemasonry Revealed**

April 15, 2008: National Tragedies and Contemporary Collecting
Class meets at Greensboro Masonic Museum

Gardner, James B. "Collecting a National Tragedy," in *Museum News*. March/April 2002. pp. 42-45, 66-67. (E-Reserve)
Linenthal, Edward T. "Oklahoma City, September 11, and the Lessons of History," in *History News*. Vol. 57, No. 1, Winter 2002. pp.12-15. (E-Reserve)
Roe, Kathleen and Christine Ward. "And the Walls Came Tumbling Down... New York's Historical Community Responds to the World Trade Center Disaster," in *History News*. Vol. 57, No. 1, Winter 2002. pp.18-21. (E-Reserve)

April 22, 2008: Everything is Illuminated
Class meets at Greensboro Masonic Museum

American Association of Museums. *Guidelines Concerning the Unlawful Appropriation of Objects During the Nazi Era*. 2001. (e-Reserve)
American Association of Museums. *Recommended Procedures for Providing Information to the Public about Objects Transferred in Europe during the Nazi Era*. 2000. (e-Reserve)
Everything Is Illuminated. Film written and directed by Liev Schreiber, 2005. Adopted from the 2003 Novel by Jonathan Safran Foer.
<http://wip.warnerbros.com/everythingisilluminated/>

April 29, 2008: Final Presentations
Class meets at Greensboro Masonic Museum
Paper due
Class Project completed

Greensboro Historical Museum

130 Summit Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27401
Free parking in lot behind museum

Greensboro Masonic Lodge

426 West Market Street
Greensboro, NC 27401
Free parking in lot behind the lodge
Masonic Museum is located at the Masonic Lodge

*This syllabus is subject to change due to extenuating circumstances.