

Curating Guantánamo: Public History and Public Awareness

Tuesdays, 4:30-7:30 PM
Vorhees Hall, Room 001

Professor Andrew Urban
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Office: **Voorhees Hall Room 008B**
Office Hours: **Tuesdays, 1-4 PM and by appointment**

* Please email me in advance if you plan on coming by during office hours.

Course Description

This course is both an introduction to public history and an examination into the contentious history of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. It provides an upper-level undergraduate and graduate-level introduction to the theory, methods, practice, and politics of public history, and allows students to explore the possibilities and challenges of the production and dissemination of histories in nonacademic settings. Students' work will be part of a collaboration involving universities and colleges across the United States, organized by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience's Guantánamo Public Memory Project (<http://www.sitesofconscience.org/activities/guantanamo-public-memory-project>).

Readings

PLEASE BRING ALL READINGS TO CLASS.

- James Oliver Horton and Lois Horton, eds., *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), ISBN: 0807859168.
- Lisa Knauer and Daniel Walkowitz, eds., *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), ISBN: 0822333643.
- Magnus Fiskejö, *The Thanksgiving Turkey Pardon, The Death of Teddy's Bear, and the Sovereign Exception of Guantánamo* (New York: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003), ISBN: 0972819614.
- Jonathan Hansen, *Guantánamo: An American History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011), ISBN: 0809053411.

In addition to the above books, there are also individual chapters and articles that have been posted as .pdf files on the course's SAKAI site, under the heading "Resources" (the readings appear on the syllabus followed by a *). **You are required to bring a copy of these readings to class for the week they have been assigned.**

Assignment and Grading Summary

(Please consult the full assignments, which I will distribute, for additional details)

Exhibit Panels: The main project for the course will be researching, selecting images, and creating text for two exhibit panels interpreting the history of the U.S. Guantanamo Bay base. Our class will be focusing on Guantanamo's history during the age of U.S. expansion and colonialism in the Caribbean. The panels will be created collectively as a class project, and will ultimately go on display at NYU University in December 2012. I am currently working to bring the exhibit to Rutgers afterwards, in the spring of 2013.

15% (draft panels due April 6; final panels revised in class on April 24)

Digital Exhibits: Individually, each student will be responsible for curating two mini-exhibits that will be hosted by the Guantanamo Public Memory Project's website. You will be responsible for selecting two historic documents or images pertaining to Guantanamo's history, and interpreting these sources online.

20% (10% each - 1st mini-exhibit due March 21, by email; 2nd mini-exhibit due April 18, by email)

Reading Response Papers/Online Exchange with University of Miami, Ohio students: For class meetings where there are assigned readings, you are required to write and post in the discussion section of our class's SAKAI site, a response paper approximately 400 words in length. Your response papers should highlight the readings' main argument, the evidence the author uses, and your own personal assessment of the author's success and/or failure in getting across her or his main point. Later in the semester, you will have a chance to comment on and respond to online projects completed by students at the University of Miami, Ohio (details to follow).

20% (post response papers to SAKAI by 10AM on the day of class)

Exhibit Review: You will be responsible for writing a 1,000 word review of either the 9/11 Memorial or the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, following our site visit

15% (due Feb. 28, in class)

Final reflection paper: Your final assignment for the course is a five-page reflection paper that addresses your experience curating Guantánamo.

15% (due May 1, by email)

Participation Grade: 15%

Grading Scale:

92-100=**A**; 87-91=**B+**; 81-86=**B**; 77-80=**C+**; 70-76=**C**; 60-69=**D**; 0-59=**F**

Note: there are no minus grades at Rutgers.

Attendance / In-Class Policies

This is a discussion seminar. **Students are expected to attend all classes.** Attendance and participation are crucial to your success in the course. You are allowed one absence for any reason whatsoever; each subsequent absence will result in deductions from participation grade and your response paper grade. If you continually turn up late to class, you will be marked absent.

If you have to miss class due to sickness or an emergency, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

All cell phones and hand-held devices must be turned off. Please limit computer use to note-taking and approved classroom activities.

Unexcused late assignments will receive a deduction.

Learning Goals Met By Course

- Students will learn about the theories and methodologies that inform the practice and study of public history, and the specific issues associated with creating and disseminating historic narratives and interpretations that are intended for public audiences. In particular, the course will explore what it means to engage

“difficult” histories such as Guantánamo, and what different publics stand to gain from exhibits and other forms of public scholarship that challenge audiences to consider topics such as colonialism, torture, and detention.

- Students will gain hands-on experience curating both a physical exhibit and digital exhibits on Guantánamo and its history. Students will learn about the basics of exhibit design, balancing text and image presentations, and how to capture an audience’s attention.
- Students will acquire an in-depth knowledge of late-nineteenth century U.S. imperial history, and the issues surrounding American expansion into the Caribbean. Using the 1898 acquisition of Guantánamo as a specific case study, readings and classroom discussions will highlight how histories of U.S. colonialism provide insight into the contemporary debates and controversies surrounding the use of Guantánamo in the present.

Academic Policies

Please review the following policies. Should a situation arise where a violation occurs, it will be assumed that you were aware of this information and its ramifications.

Special Accommodation Requests

All special accommodation requests must be brought to my attention the first two weeks. Full disability policies and procedures are at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

Academic Integrity Policy

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

Honor Pledge

I pledge on my honor that I will adhere to all aspects of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy

Take an interactive tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

<http://sccweb.scc-net.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/Intro.html>

Consult Don't Plagiarize: Document Your Research! For tips about how to take notes so you don't plagiarize by accident.

http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml

Class Schedule

Week 1: January 17, 2012 - Introduction

Week 2: January 24, 2012 - Difficult Public Histories

- James Horton and Lois Horton, eds., *Slavery and Public History*

Week 3: January 31, 2012 - The Geography and Politics of Memory

- Daniel Walkowitz and Lisa Knauer, eds., *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space*

Week 4: February 7, 2012 - Sites of Conscience

Guest Lecturer: Liz Ševčenko, Director, Guantánamo Public Memory Project

- Guantánamo Public Memory Project Blueprint*
- Ševčenko, "Sites of Conscience: New Approaches to Conflicted Memory," *Museum International* 62 (2010): 20-25.*
- Ševčenko, "Sites of Conscience: Heritage of and for Human Rights," in *Cultures and Globalization: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, eds. Helmut K Anheier and Yudhishthir Raj Isar (SAGE, 2011), 114-123.*
- Ševčenko, "Sites of Conscience: Reimagining Reparations," *Change Over Time: An International Journal of Conservation and the Built Environment* 1 (2011): 6-33.
- Wendy Brown, "Tolerance as Museum Object: The Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance" in *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2008), 107-48.*

Week 5: No Class Meeting - trip to NYC, Sat. Feb. 11 (details to follow)

Week 6: February 21, 2012 - Guantánamo

- Hansen, *Guantánamo*, preface through chapter 4

Week 7: February 28, 2012

- Hansen, *Guantánamo*, chapter 5 to conclusion

Week 8: March 6, 2012 – States of Exception

- Giorgio Agamben, “The State of Exception as a Paradigm of Government,” in *The State of Exception* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 1-31.*
- Magnus Fiskej , *The Thanksgiving Turkey Pardon, The Death of Teddy's Bear, and the Sovereign Exception of Guantanamo* (Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003) – please read the book in its entirety.
- Amy Kaplan, “Where is Guant namo?” *American Quarterly* (2005): 831-58

Week 9: No Class, Spring Break

Week 10: March 20, 2012 – U.S. Colonial Expansion, 1898

- Gretchen Murphy, “The Burden of Whiteness,” in *Shadowing the White Man's Burden: U.S. Imperialism and the Problem of the Color Line* (NYU Press, 2010), 29-57.*
- Gail Bederman, “Theodore Roosevelt: Manhood, Nation, and Civilization,” in *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), 170-216.*
- Alessandra Lorini, “Cuba Libre and American Imperial Nationalism: Conflicting Views of Racial Democracy in the Post-Reconstruction United States,” in *Contested Democracy: Freedom, Race, and Power in American History* (Columbia University Press, 2007), 191-214.*
- Paul Kramer, “The Water Cure,” *New Yorker*, February 25, 2008*

Week 11: March 27, 2012 – Hidden Histories

- Jana Lipman, “Contract Workers, Exiles, and Commuters: Neocolonial and Postmodern Labor Arrangements,” in *Guant namo: A Working-Class History between Empire and Revolution* (University of California Press, 2010), 191-214.*
- Ann Laura Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies,” *Journal of American History* (Dec. 2001): 829-65.*
- Dolores Hayden, “Invisible Angelenos,” in *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (MIT Press, 1997), 82-96.*

Week 12: April 3, 2012

No readings...in-class work on finalizing exhibit panels for review

Week 13: April 10, 2012 - The Architecture and Geography of Detention

Guest Lecturer: Rich Nisa, PhD Candidate in Geography

- Karen Greenberg, *The Least Worst Place: Guantanamo's First 100 Days* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 1-27.*
- Nisa, "Processing (Enemy) Identity: On Wartime Classification and Bodies of Knowledge," *A Crisis of Enclosure: U.S.-Managed Military Detention after 1949**
- Nisa, "Between Kill and Capture: Apprehending the Battlefield through Interfaces of Control," *A Crisis of Enclosure: U.S.-Managed Military Detention after 1949**
- Lauren Martin and Matthew Mitchelson, "Geographies of Detention and Confinement: Interrogating Spatial Practices of Confinement, Discipline, Law, and State Power." *Geography Compass* 3 (Winter 2009): 459-477.*

Week 14: April 17, 2012 - The Boundaries and Borders of Public History

- Roy Rosenzweig, "The Road to Xanadu: Public and Private Pathways on the History Web," *Journal of American History* (September 2001): 548-79.*
- Stephanie Yuhl, "Sculpted Radicals: The Problem of Sacco and Vanzetti in Boston's Public Memory," *Public Historian* 32, no. 2 (2010): 9-30.*
- Ann Cvektovich, "In the Archives of Lesbian Feelings: Documentary and Popular Culture," *Camera Obscura* 17, no. 1 (2002): 107-47.*
- Scott Boehm, "Privatizing Public Memory: The Price of Patriotic Philanthropy and the Post-9/11 Politics of Display," *American Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (Dec. 2006): 1147-1166.*

Week 15: April 24, 2012 - Conclusions; Revisions

No readings...in-class revisions to exhibit panels based on feedback.