

HSPV 621 Heritage and Social Justice

Spring 2020

Monday 2:00-5:00 / Meyerson B7

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Office hours Wednesday 10am-noon, and by appointment (116 Meyerson Hall)

OVERVIEW

This seminar will explore connections between historic preservation (and related design, planning and artistic practices) and the pursuit of social justice. Our core question will be: How do heritage and historic preservation (broadly conceived) relate to, and advance, social justice? This is an abiding and long-standing question, though it certainly has gained urgency in recent years. This urgency is magnified by recent national political developments, and more profoundly in connection with cultural turns of the last generation raising the stakes regarding diversity, discrimination, inclusion (and the historic dimensions thereof) in all facets of American society.

What specifically can heritage and historic preservation contribute to society's pursuit of justice – in terms of working on physical sites, interpreting and designing experiences of historic places, and writing histories? More broadly, we'll consider how design professionals contribute to more equitable and just societies, and how projects and institutions can be imagined and organized to result in greater equity, access and social justice.

Our investigations will focus on both conceptual and theoretical constructions (how we think about social justice) and practical examples of advancing social outcomes through preservation and design. We'll draw on work by: geographers, anthropologists and other social scientists and theorists; historians; design practitioners; heritage organizations; artists; and more. Our sources will aim to be as diverse as possible, in all senses of the word. And the particular subjects we consider will include public interest design, creative placemaking, public art, memorialization, and methods of practice and institutional organization – as well as some more heritage-specific topics such as the status of indigenous cultures' heritage, the effects of globalization on heritage and memory, addressing the heritage of "alternative" or subaltern cultures.

The organization of the course will be notably different from the usual, scripted 14-week lecture. At first we will start with some table-setting readings. After the first couple weeks, the seminar's own ideas will take over – as a group and as individuals we'll formulate a set of topics, works, and people we collectively argue have relevance to the overall topic; we'll schedule this together, read and discuss it together, sometimes including guest practitioners and scholars. Students will therefore bear significant responsibility for helping flesh out the topics and cases we study; final projects of the course (individual and group) will be envisioned as a statement (in the form of a book or exhibit) of how social justice concerns are reshaping practice and how they could reshape our fields in the future.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course will depart somewhat from the typical 14-week lecture or seminar format. In the first several sessions, we will discuss the overall shape of the course and our varied interests in focusing on this theme for the semester, then organize weekly seminar-style reading/discussion sessions centered on particular themes I've chosen.

After this start, we'll decide as a group the kinds of themes, readings, media, tours, guests, etc., to drive the learning objectives – on topics as vast and controversial as social justice and heritage there are many possible choices to focus our work; I'd like the range of topics to genuinely be authored by the whole group. The result will be a collective "literature review."

In the last few weeks of the semester, we'll apply what we've learned to a few practical sites/situations here in Philadelphia. Through a short (3-week) workshop sequence, you'll collaborate in small groups to research, brainstorm, debate and create a strategy for addressing the intersection of three specific heritage/social justice sites. (More about the assignments below.)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes for the semester include:

- Understanding of social justice concepts;
- Understanding heritage as a complex, dynamic phenomenon with social, environmental and design dimensions;
- Developing an understanding of how social-justice issues relate to matters of heritage, historic preservation, and other design practices;
- Researching and articulating contemporary debates about social justice through the lens of their connection, expression or agency with regard to the built environment;
- Practicing collaborative problem-solving and having difficult conversations around local issues where heritage and social justice dynamics are at work; and
- Developing individual positions on the issues raised by the course, including the future of one's profession, as prompted by social justice debates.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance and participation:

There is no substitute for diligent attendance and thoughtful participation in the seminar, so a substantial part of your grade for the entire course will be based on your participation. This includes occasional assignments to lead discussions in class, participation in workshops/exercises, contributions in all aspects of class, as well as the completion of assigned readings. 15% of final grade.

Assignment 1: Talking points

Before Class 2, submit a one-sentence "talking point" or question about each work you read for that session. Email to rfmason@design.upenn.edu on Sunday, January 26 (before 11pm). 5% of final grade.

Assignment 2: Suggestion for a class topic

Based on your own interests and our collective scan/discussion of topics in the first couple weeks of the semester, pitch a topic (or two or three) for class discussion in weeks 5-12. A short rationale and some ideas for specific readings, videos, etc. would be helpful. Due at class 4; 10% of final grade.

Assignment 3: Prep and lead a class discussion sometime during the semester

Prompted by your suggestions in Assignment 2, you'll choose a heritage/social-justice topic, develop some readings/materials for the class to discuss, develop some introductory remarks to stimulate discussion, and help conduct the in-class conversation. In Weeks 6-11, we'll take on two topics per Monday afternoon class session. We'll work out the specifics of topic and schedule around Week 4. 20% of final grade.

Assignment 4: Lit review contribution

Based on the same topic you've identified in Assignments 2 and 3, you'll develop annotated bibliography entries for a collective "literature review" of heritage and social justice issues that the class will "publish" as a collective work at the end of the semester. Entries should be 2-3 paragraphs; I'll provide some format models. Due one week after last class (May 4). 25% of final grade.

Assignment 5: Participate in collaborative workshops; last few class sessions

Over the last few weeks of the semester, we'll organize into three small teams for the purposes of workshopping issues and strategies for reckoning with a few Philadelphia sites where heritage and social-justice issues collide. The end point is not a specific strategy (there's not enough time to develop them); it will be an RFP that frames future intentions for the site and its management, who's involved, the goals and principles. The work will consist of some basic research (secondary lit, perhaps interviews, quick site documentation), discussions among your team and with me, drafting an RFP that frames future projects in terms of your group's intentions and presentation to a group of visitors (local practitioners and scholars) in the last class meeting. 25% of final grade.

Final letter grades will be figured on the basis of these assignments and expectations.

General guidelines for grades are as follows: A+ Exceptional; A Outstanding; A- Excellent; B+ Very good; B Good; B- Competent; C+ Fair; C Acceptable; C- Marginal; F Failure. Refer to the PennDesign Student Handbook for other academic policies:

<http://www.design.upenn.edu/current-students/student-handbook-policies-and-forms>, as well as the University's guidance on academic integrity. Academic integrity is the foundation of the University's culture of learning and research. Everyone, at all times, is expected to abide by the principles set out in the University's Code of Academic Integrity—see <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>. Students with questions or concerns about plagiarism or any other issues regarding academic integrity or the classroom environment are welcome to approach the professor.

Use of digital devices and wireless internet access during class time must be confined to course-related activities. Uses unrelated to the course can be distracting to others in the classroom. This will be monitored and managed throughout the semester (and could result in loss of in-class internet access, or dismissal from a class session).

SCHEDULE

The **first five class meetings** are planned, and I'll lead the discussions. Readings listed below.

If the reading is not hyperlinked in the schedule, please see Bibliography below.

The subjects and discussions for **classes 6-12** will be collectively decided by the class group in the first few weeks of the semester; the syllabus provides some suggested topics, but we'll have some deliberate conversations about it.

Potential topics (each followed by a few starting-point references):

- Cultural trauma / remembering and forgetting processes (Jeffrey Alexander; Paul Connerton; David Rieff)
- Gentrification & equitable redevelopment (PolicyLink; Samuel Stein; Lance Freeman; Japonica Brown-Saracino)
- Migrants and their heritage (TK–Museum migration seminar)
- Civil War and colonial memorials (Kirk Savage; Dell Upton; Paul Farber et al)
- Heritage responses to genocide (focused on Rwanda, my project; Remi Korman; Delia Wendel) and disaster (Liz Greenspan; Erika Doss)
- Feminist critiques (19thAMD; Dolores Hayden; Leonie Sandercock; Beatriz Colomina)
- Indigenous peoples & heritage processes/conservation (Keith Basso; Ari Kelman)
- Environmental justice (especially vis-à-vis climate crisis) (ICOMOS report on climate change; Juli Polanco lecture)
- LGBTQ heritage (NPS theme study; Gail Dubrow in GPAH2; Jim Buckley and Donna Graves; [Change Over Time](#) issue)
- Heritage and cultural access as issues in international development and human rights (Karima Bennoune)
- Emergent design practices for advancing social-justice issues (Theaster Gates, Blackspace; Konkuey; Mindy Fulliove)
- Public art (Michelle Lopez at ICA; various artists at ESP)
- discrimination in housing and other built-environment-related policies (Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor; Larry Vale)

The **final three class sessions** will be devoted to collaborative workshops, for which we'll assemble small groups to problem-solve three specific, nearby Philadelphia site that present significant heritage and social-justice problems/opportunities.

Sites:

- MOVE conflict sites: 33rd & Winter; 61st & Osage)
- Gosnell Clinic: 38th & Lancaster
- Hill Field/Black Bottom, 34th & Walnut
- North Philly Peace Park, 22nd & Jefferson, Sharswood

Guests (invited):

- Kwesi Daniels, Tuskegee University
- Tayyib Smith, Little Giant Creative
- Bill Adair, Pew Center for Arts & Heritage
- Akira Drake Rodriguez, CPLN
- Sylvea Hollis, NPS Mellon Fellow

Class 1

1/15 (Weds)

Framing the course; Exploring key concepts; Personal stories & social goals.

in-class read and discuss:

Diangelo, [White Fragility](#) [excerpt]

Martin Luther King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" [excerpt]

Class 2

**1/27 Scanning the intersections of heritage and social justice;
Reporting on some foundational readings**

Read two articles (or samplings from books) from each list.

Assignment 1: Submit one "talking point" from each work you read on Sunday, January 26 (before 11pm).

Kaufman, [Race, Place and Story](#) [scan]

Graves & Dubrow, "Taking Intersectionality Seriously." [pdf]

Smith, [Uses of Heritage](#) [scan]

Page, [Why Preservation Matters](#) [scan]

Harrison, "Heritage as social action." [pdf]

Mitchell, [Right to the City](#) [scan]

Solnit, [Hope in the Dark or Whose Story Is This?](#) [purchase]

Fullilove, [Root Shock](#) [scan]

Equal Justice Initiative. [EJI Reports](#) [pdf]

Diangelo, [White Fragility](#) [scan]

Next City, "The Just City Essays" [pdf]

National Endowment for the Arts. [Design and Social Impact](#) [pdf]

Cooper-Hewitt Museum. [By the People: Designing a Better America](#). [scan]

Class 3

2/3 Memorial Controversies

Upton. [What Can and Can't Be Said](#) [scan]

Farber, et al. [Monument Lab](#).

Doss, [Memorial Mania](#)

Class 4

2/10 Redlining

Rothstein, [The Color of Law](#)

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, [Race for Profit](#)

Little Giant Creative, "[A Dream Deffered](#)"

Richmond mapping website

Class 5

2/17 Reparations

Coates, "[The Case for Reparations](#)"

Wilder, [Ebony & Ivy](#)

Articles/videos on Georgetown University

[Penn Slavery Project](#)

Class 6
2/24 Discussion topic & activities TBD

Class 7
3/2 Discussion topic & activities TBD

Spring break
3/6-3/13 No class

Class 8
3/16 Discussion topic & activities TBD

Class 9
3/23 Discussion topic & activities TBD

Class 10
3/30 Discussion topic & activities TBD

Class 11
4/6 Discussion topic & activities TBD

Organize site assignments & teams for workshops

Class 12
4/13 No class meeting – research your sites

Class 13
4/20 In-class work sessions (RM with each group; plus general discussion)

Class 14
4/27 Workshop presentations & discussions (with invited guests)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Following are some of the readings with which we'll start the semester. Other sources will be added and suggested as the semester progresses, and we collectively decide on readings.

Ned Kaufman. Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation. Routledge, 2009. [scan; Kindle and paperback versions available]

Graves & Dubrow, "Taking Intersectionality Seriously." The Public Historian, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 290–316 (May 2019). [pdf]

Laurajane Smith, Uses of Heritage. Routledge, 2006. [scan]

Max Page, Why Preservation Matters. Yale University Press, 2016. [scan]

Rodney Harrison, "Heritage as social action." 241-76 in Susie West, ed. Understanding Heritage In Practice. Manchester University Press/The Open University, 2010.

Don Mitchell. The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space. Guilford Press, 2003. (Kindle and paperback versions available)

Rebecca Solnit, Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities. Haymarket Books, 2016 (second edition). (ebook available at <https://www.haymarketbooks.org/books/791-hope-in-the-dark>)

Rebecca Solnit, Whose Story Is This?. Haymarket Books, 2019 (ebook available at <https://www.haymarketbooks.org/books/1330-whose-story-is-this>)

Mindy Fullilove, Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, And What We Can Do About It. New Village Press, 2016. [scan]

Equal Justice Initiative. EJI Reports. <https://eji.org/reports/> [web]

Robin Diangelo, White Fragility. Beacon Press, 2018. [scan]

Next City. "The Just City Essays." <https://nextcity.org/features/view/just-city-essays-toni-griffin-theaster-gates-angela-glover-blackwell>

National Endowment for the Arts. Design and Social Impact [pdf]

Cooper-Hewitt Museum. By the People: Designing a Better America. [scan]

Dell Upton. What Can and Can't Be Said. Yale University Press, 2015. [scan]

Paul Farber and Ken Lum, eds. Monument Lab: Creative Speculations for Philadelphia. Temple University Press, 2019.

Erika Doss, Memorial Mania. University of Chicago Press, 2010. [scan]

Richard Rothstein, The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America. Liveright, 2018. [scan]

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership. UNC Press, 2019. [scan]

Little Giant Creative, "A Dream Deffered" [visit]

University of Richmond website: <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining>

Ta-Nehisi Coates. "The Case for Reparations." The Atlantic, June 2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/projects/reparations/>

Craig Steven Wilder, Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery and the Troubled History of America's Universities. Bloomsbury, 2013. [scan]

Penn Slavery Project: <http://pennandslaveryproject.org>