

# HSPV 660 Theories of Historic Preservation

Fall 2021 / First half of the semester / 0.5 CU  
Thursday 8:30-11:30 / Education Building (EDUC) 200

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“The retention of old things has always been a central ritual in human societies.”  
George Kubler, The Shape of Time

“The key to the heritage enterprise is valorization (mise en valeur)....”  
Françoise Choay, The Invention of the Historic Monument

“To accept one’s past – one’s history – is not the same thing as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it.”  
James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time

“Like the resource it seeks to protect, wildlife conservation must be dynamic, changing as conditions change, seeking always to become more effective.”  
Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

Why do we preserve old things and places? How do we make decisions about what and how to preserve? And how do we organize ourselves to do so? These basic questions drive the inquiries of this course in theories of preservation.

Theories are the models we construct to understand the world. And we must understand the world – in its material, aesthetic, social, historical and contemporary aspects – before intervening in it. Theories are essential to constructing the subject of our work, stimulating intellectual debate, defining the profession – informing practice in all senses. Theories are used to explain, to direct, and to predict phenomena. In addition to constituting the practice of preservation intellectually, preservation theories relate practices to underlying ideas and overarching social realities. Theories map the terrain of preservation, and suggest ways we can navigate through it. They are an essential, critical tool for the development of the profession (practically, culturally, intellectually) and of professionals.

Preservation is informed by ideas from many fields – from ancient parables about authenticity, to Ruskin and Viollet’s positions on architectural restoration, to urban theorists’ myriad models for combining new and old buildings, to political-economic concepts of public good and the role of markets, to theories of collective memory and cultural change, to the progressive politics of decolonization and social justice.

The preservation field has produced theory to support its particular professional briefs: the performance of materials and buildings; the interpretation of history and art; the function of settlements and urbanism; and the roles and uses of preservation in civil society. The need for theory, though abiding, has changed dramatically over time. There is a long, complex, and disparate history of preservation theories; and in recent years, preservation theory has become frankly divergent.

In this course, we’ll look critically at many kinds of theory related to historic preservation. Owing to the multidisciplinary nature of the preservation field, preservation theory is drawn from outside the field as often as within it. Sometimes theorization addresses preservation explicitly, sometimes the connection is implicit (relating to culture more broadly, to social and economic dynamics affecting

historic environments, and so on). We'll be concerned with studying traditional theory illuminating the fabric- and narrative-rooted origins of the field; we'll also explore more recent critiques and alternative theories relating preservation to broad economic, cultural, social, political and environmental dynamics. In the end, we'll build a core of ideas from which each of us constructs our own approach to preservation theories.

The work of the Theories course will consist of lectures, reading assignments, writing assignments, posing questions, guest presentations, and a variety of in-class discussions and exercises. We'll read and discuss classic texts as well as more recent works. Most weeks we'll spend some time debating contemporary issues and cases to explore deeper theoretical questions.

HSPV 660 is the first half of the required theory sequence in preservation. Foundational ideas will be the focus – this will involve serious study of the history of preservation as well as contemporary developments. In the second half of the course – offered as HSPV 661 in the second half of the spring semester – each week will take on a more specialized topic highlighting recent (and future) theoretical developments often with the participation of guest speakers.

Learning objectives for this course (and its continuation in HSPV 661) include:

- Gain familiarity with a broad spectrum theories of preservation – explanatory, normative and predictive; humanistic, political, and scientific
- Establish literacy with key preservation concepts and contemporary issues: the built environment, history and historiography, the construction of heritage (the usable past); significance, authenticity, integrity, levels of intervention; the points of connection and conflict between preservation and design, economic development, public policy, and culture and creativity
- Understand the historical evolution of the historic preservation field, actively decolonizing our historical perspective on the field
- Understand the canonical literature on historic preservation theory and history – as well as critical, reformist and alternative perspectives
- Understand and constructively critique the central role of values-based preservation theory in contemporary practice and scholarship
- Understand different epistemologies applied to practicing historic preservation
- Develop the ability to construct and deconstruct arguments about preservation theory and connect them clearly to practical phenomena, issues, projects and decisions – in other words, developing your own theoretical framework
- Practice debating positions on preservation issues (whether site-specific or policy/political/societal)
- Develop an ethical sense of preservation practice, advocacy and research.

## **PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Class sessions will be held in-person, on campus.

Keep in mind this is a half-semester course: after seven sessions this time slot will switch to HSPV 624 Digital Media.

Your coursework on Preservation Theories resumes in the Spring semester with another seven sessions (0.5 CU) of HSPV 661.

Materials for each class are available on Canvas, organized by week – readings, recordings, supplemental material, assignment information.

In addition, we'll experiment with using the Piazza function of Canvas for ongoing discussions related to the class, current events, and other questions that arise.

For “office hours”: I don’t have fixed time set aside each week, but you can always send me an email to set up some time to talk. I’m always happy to talk one-on-one with anyone for any reason (in person or by Zoom/phone). And we can chat after class or whenever you see my office door open.

Keep an eye on [this Weitzman School of Design webpage](#) about all things related to COVID-19 response. Everything from health advice to campus access is covered.

<b>CLASS SCHEDULE – Fall 2021</b>
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CLASS	DATE	TOPIC
1	9.2	Central questions: What is preservation? How does it work? The nature of the field, the need for theory This before-and-after moment
2	9.9	Fundamental issues and concepts: Values, fabric, collective memory, and public good
3	9.16	Histories of Preservation: European and global narratives
4	9.23	Histories of Preservation: US from the 19 <sup>th</sup> through the 21 <sup>st</sup> century
5	9.30	Recent and Non-Western Theories
6	10.7	Theory in Practice: Existing Policies, Guidance, Ethics
7	10.21	New(ish) and Next Paradigms Cultural landscape preservation; Economic thinking; Critical heritage studies; Experimental preservation

Note that the topics, schedule and specific activities in the schedule are subject to change. Expect the occasional adjustment – depending on the interests of those in the course, opportunities to include guests, or new ideas and issues that may come to light as the course develops.

Class themes in HSPV 661 (the Spring-term 0.5 CU continuation course of HSPV 660) will include more in-depth studies of: critiques and refinements of values-based preservation theory; decolonizing histories of preservation and heritage; cultural landscape theory; economic thinking and preservation; social justice as a driver of preservation practice; historic preservation in contemporary Asia; design, urbanism and preservation; interpretation, public history, museums and art; experimental preservation and art practices; ecological theory, the environmental movement, climate crisis, and sustainability; ethics and other issues in professional practice; ruins, curated decay, iconoclasm and other “preservation” alternatives to heritage treatment; and the future of the preservation field.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

### **[1] Two very short “op-ed” papers**

You'll write two short papers – modelled on the op-ed columns that run on the editorial page of major newspapers – on issues important to you and related to preservation theory. These short pieces (around 450-600 words) should raise a question, make a critique, present an argument, make a connection between multiple readings or ideas in the course. You can also use the papers to reflect on a particular reading moved you to see something different (a contemporary preservation controversy, for instance, or a moment in history). They papers should not simply summarize what others say; it should focus on your argument, while of course drawing on others' arguments as you see fit. One of the two papers is due before Class 2 (September 9); the other is due any time before Week 6 (October 7). The two papers together will account for 25% of total grade.

### **[2] Reading questions**

In advance of class each week's class session – for Weeks 2 through 7 – you are required to submit at least two critical, thoughtful questions raised by the readings for that week. Please keep the questions brief (2-3 sentences is usually sufficient). Your questions should be submitted in the body of an email sent to teaching assistant Chuxuan Zhang (chuxuanz@design.upenn.edu) by 8:00pm each Wednesday evening before a scheduled class meeting. 30% of total grade.

### **[3] Quiz**

A quiz will be used to build your knowledge of some of key concepts and debates discussed in the readings and class sessions in the half-semester course. This will be incorporated into the schedule for Week 7 (October 21) and will be taken in class. 25% of final grade.

### **[4] Participation and engagement in class; one-on-one tutorials**

You are expected to attend all class sessions, participate in exercises and discussions to the greatest extend possible, and generally be intellectually present and engaged. 10% of total grade.

### **[5] One-on-one tutorials**

I'll schedule one-on-one tutorials/discussions with each student sometime during our half-semester. This will give me a chance to know you a little better, and a chance to you to follow up on any issues/questions from the course. 10% of total grade.

### **Overall grading rubric for the course:**

Assignment 1	25% (12.5% for both papers)
Assignment 2	30% (5% each week)
Assignment 3	25%
Assignment 4	10%
Assignment 5	10%
Total	100%

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

### **Academic Culture**

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](#). Students with questions or concerns about plagiarism or any other issues regarding academic integrity or the classroom environment are welcome to approach the professor in confidence.

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. This will be monitored and managed throughout the semester (and could result in dismissal from a class session).

### **Academic and Support Resources**

Our Commitment to Diversity, as stated on the School's [webpage](#):

“The University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design is committed to creating an educational setting in which all students, faculty members, and staff members are valued. We strive to create an inclusive culture that celebrates difference and is strengthened by contributions from people of all races, religions, countries of origin, genders, ages, sexual orientations, physical abilities, learning differences, and socioeconomic backgrounds. We aspire to support and retain a student body, faculty and staff who are representative of the multiple communities and publics with which we collaborate and work. A diverse community here enhances our ability to prepare the next generation of artists, architects, landscape architects, planners, and preservationists to become leaders and innovators in a multicultural society.”

I want to ensure that everyone has the resources they want or need in order to participate fully in this course. Students who are differently abled are welcome let me know if you need special accommodations in the curriculum, activities, instruction or assessments of this course to enable you to participate fully. I will keep all conversations confidential.

The University provides a number of resources to support improvement of your writing, studying and learning skills. I encourage you to take advantage of them. The following University-wide points of contact may be helpful:

The [Marks Family Writing Center](#) provides individual help with writing. The [Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#) provides support and guidance on a range of academic work issues, including time management and organizational skills. [Communication within the Curriculum](#) offers guidance on speaking and making effective presentations. [Weigle Information Commons in Van Pelt Library](#) is a clearing house to these and other sources of support. And [Career Services](#) offers assistance on a number of issues related to academic work – as well as post-academic job searching and career advice.

As always, the School of Design's Student Services office, and [the University's Wellness resources](#), are ready to help with any issues that arise in or outside the classroom. Please don't hesitate to take advantage of these folks' ability and eagerness to support you.

In this and every other course in the School, you are welcome to make an individual appointment to talk to your instructor. Please email me directly, at any time, to arrange an appointment or have a conversation.

## READINGS, VIDEOS and OTHER PREP MATERIALS

Material to be read for each class meeting is listed below. All works will be available through Canvas as a pdf or hyperlink – or in some cases through PennLibraries' collection of ebooks or reserve readings. I encourage you to buy some of the books, but won't require it.

I'll also make available short recorded lectures on key concepts or cases – prepared for last year's distanced teaching format. You're welcome to watch these as supplements, but they are not required. All the recordings will be available through Canvas; each week's class will be a separate module.

### Class 1

For in-class reading and breakout group discussion:

- Morris, William, "Manifesto of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings." <https://www.spab.org.uk/>
- Global Heritage Fund, "Mission" and "Approach." <https://globalheritagefund.org/>
- Fitch, James Marston. "Preface to the First Edition," Historic Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built World. University of Virginia Press, 1990.
- Roberts, Andrea. "When Does It Become Social Justice? Thoughts on Intersectional Preservation Practice," Preservation Leadership Forum, National Trust for Historic Preservation, forum.savingplaces.org, July 20, 2017. <https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/special-contributor/2017/07/20/when-does-it-become-social-justice-thoughts-on-intersectional-preservation-practice>

### Class 2

- Erica Avrami and Randall Mason. "Mapping the Issue of Values." In Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Randall Mason, David Myers, eds. Values in Heritage Management: Emerging Approaches and Research Directions. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust/Getty Conservation Institute, 2019.
  - Optional:
    - Avrami, Erica, Randall Mason and Marta de la Torre, Values and Heritage Conservation, Getty Conservation Institute, 2000. pp.1-12; skim other chapters if you like.
    - de la Torre, Marta and Randall Mason, "Introduction." and Randall Mason. "Assessing Values in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices." in de la Torre, ed. Assessing Values in Heritage Conservation. Getty Conservation Institute, 2002.
- Arrhenius, Thordis. "The Modern Cult of Monuments" in The Fragile Monument—On Conservation and Modernity. Artifice, 2012 [translation of Riegl, Alois. "Modern Cult of Monuments" in Price, Tally and Vaccaro, eds. Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Getty Conservation Institute, 1996.
- Nora, Pierre. "Between History and Memory." Representations 26.
  - Optional:
    - Olick, Jeff. "Collective Memory." International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.
- Hardin, Garrett. "Tragedy of the Commons" in Science, v.162, 13 December 1968.
  - Optional:
    - Matto Mildenberger, The Tragedy of the Tragedy of the Commons, Scientific American, April 23, 2019, <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/voices/the-tragedy-of-the-tragedy-of-the-commons/>

In class, we'll read these two charters, and discuss them in breakout groups:

- The Venice Charter (1964): [https://www.icomos.org/charters/venice\\_e.pdf](https://www.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf)
- The Burra Charter (2013, original 1979): <https://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf>

### Class 3

- Ruskin, John. "The Lamp of Memory" in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35898/35898-h/35898-h.htm>
- Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène-Emmanuel. "Restoration" from *The Foundations of Architecture: Selections from the Dictionnaire Raisoné*. G. Braziller, 1990.
- Boito, Camillo. "Restoration in Architecture: First Dialogue" in *Future Anterior*, 6/1 Summer 2009, pp. 68-83.
- Brandi, Cesare. "Theory of Restoration" in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*. N. Stanley Price, et al, eds. The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996 (pp. 230-235, 339-342, 377-379) and "Restoration and Conservation." in *Encyclopedia of World Art*. Vol. XII. McGraw-Hill, 1966. (optionally, followed by essays by Renato Bonelli and Paul Philippot)
  
- Choay, Françoise. *The Invention of the Historical Monument*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. Introduction and Chapters 4 and 5.
- Glendinning, Miles. *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation*. Routledge, 2013. Introduction and skim chapters.
- Lowenthal, David. *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge University Press, 1985. Introduction (skim Chapters 6&7 if you have time).

### Class 4

- Bluestone, Daniel. *Buildings, Landscapes, and Memory*. W.W. Norton, 2011. Introduction and two other chapters of your choosing.
- Mason, Randall and Max Page, eds. *Giving Preservation a History: Second Edition*. Routledge, 2019. New Preface, Introduction and another chapter of your choosing

### Class 5

- Desilvey, Caitlin. *Curated Decay*. University of Minnesota Press, 2018. [excerpt]
- Donofrio, Gregory. "Preservation by Adaptation: Is It Sustainable?" *Change Over Time*, 2/2, Fall 2012, pp. 106-131.
- Akagawa, Natsuko. "Rethinking the global heritage discourse – overcoming 'East' and 'West'?" *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 22/1, 2016, pp.14–25.
- Mason, Randall. "[Carrying Weight: Rwandan Genocide Memorials](https://www.platformspace.net/home/carrying-weight-rwandan-genocide-memorials)", Platform, May 25, 2020: <https://www.platformspace.net/home/carrying-weight-rwandan-genocide-memorials>
- Choose one chapter from Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Randall Mason, David Myers, eds. *Values in Heritage Management: Emerging Approaches and Research Directions*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust/Getty Conservation Institute, 2019. – in particular, the essays by Li Kuanghan on China, Hossam Mahdy on Arabic-Islamic traditions, Joe Watkins on indigenous perspectives, and Tara Sharma and Ayesha Pamela Rogers on south Asia

### Class 6

In Canvas: you'll find two lists of websites to survey: one for major policy documents from the US and UNESCO; one for the professional ethics discussion.

OPTIONAL: scan these two relatively recent collections representing the breadth of topics addressed by the field in practical and policy terms:

- Fairclough, Graham, ed. The Heritage Reader. Routledge, 2007.
- Stipe, Robert, ed. A Richer Heritage: Historic Preservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

## Class 7

Each student will choose one of the following four topics to read and report on in-class, during breakout discussions. You should read in your chosen area before class, and be ready to discuss major insights. I'll conduct a poll of the class at Class 6 through which you'll choose your topic. (Note that each of these topics will be covered in more depth in HSPV661 in the Spring semester, so these are only teasers!)

### Cultural Landscape Preservation

- Cook, Robert. "Is Landscape Preservation an Oxymoron?" in George Wright Forum, 13/1, 1996.
- Upton, Dell. "Architectural History or Landscape History?" Journal of Architectural Education, 44/4 (Aug 1991), 195-199.
- Hayden, Dolores. Part I, "Claiming Urban Landscapes as Public History." in The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History. MIT Press, 1995.

### Economic Thinking

- Throsby, David. Economics and Culture. Chapters 1, 3, 5.
- Glaeser, Edward. Triumph of the City, introduction and chapter 6.
- Rypkema, Donovan and Caroline Cheong. Investment in Connecticut: the Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation. 2011.
- Mason, Randall. "Beware and Be Interested: Joining Economic Valuation and Heritage Conservation." International Journal of Heritage Studies, 14/4, July 2008, 303-318.

### Critical Heritage Studies

- Smith, Laurajane. Uses of Heritage. Routledge, 2006.
- Holtorf, Cornelius, et al. "Nara +20: On Heritage Practices, Cultural Values, and the Concept of Authenticity," Heritage & Society 8/2: 144-147.

### Experimental Preservation

- Special issue on preservation, Journal of Architectural Education, 72/2, 2018
- Jorge Otero-Pailos, Erik Fenstad Langdalen, Thordis Arrhenius, eds., Experimental Preservation. Lars Muller Publishers, 2016.