

HSPV 661 Theories of Historic Preservation 2

Spring 2022 / Second half of the semester, March 3-April 21

Thursday 8:30-11:30 / McNeil 285 [with occasional breakout meetings in Meyerson B5/B6/412]

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Office hours by appointment (contact me by email)

“The retention of old things has always been a central ritual in human societies.”

George Kubler, [The Shape of Time](#)

“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](#)

“The key to the heritage enterprise is valorization (mise en valeur)...”

Françoise Choay, [The Invention of the Historic Monument](#)

“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 organize ourselves to do so? How do we gauge impact and communicate results? To what extent are crises in the preservation field related to crises of theory? These basic questions drive the inquiries of this course in theories of preservation – the successor to HSPV 660, which covered fundamental ideas in the history and theory of historic preservation as a professional field.

Theories are the models we construct to understand the world. And we must understand the world – the parts we are exploring – before intervening in it. For particular phenomena like historic preservation, 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. Theories map the intellectual and ethical 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.

As with other cognate fields of knowledge and practice, historic preservation is premised on several kinds of theory. From Ruskin and Viollet’s positions on architectural restoration, to urban theorists’ myriad models for orchestrating the combination of new and old buildings, to political and economic concepts of public good and the role of markets, to theories of cultural change and ecological conservation, preservation is buffeted by theories from many fields. The preservation field is also enabled, animated, and challenged to produce theory about the performance of materials and buildings, about the interpretation of history and art, about the function of settlements and urbanism, and the functions of preservation in civil society. The need for theory is abiding, though has changed dramatically over time. We traced the long, complex, and disparate history of preservation theories in HSPV 660; preservation theory has become frankly divergent in recent years, and our challenge in HSPV 661 is exploring this.

The work of the Theories course will consist of lectures, discussions, reading assignments, writing assignments, and a variety of in-class exercises. Most weeks we’ll spend some time debating, as a group, a contemporary issue to explore deeper theoretical questions. Against the foundational ideas and themes covered in the fall – the origins and evolution of the field, the development of theories of and about preservation, the trajectory of preservation discourse and practice up to the present – the second half of the course will explore recent critiques and alternative theories relating preservation to broad

economic, cultural, social, political and environmental dynamics. We'll also have some conversations with other experts in the field – sometimes live, sometimes recorded – to explore issues more deeply.

Learning objectives for both halves of the theory course include:

- Gain familiarity with a broad spectrum of 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
- Understand the canonical literature on historic preservation theory and history – as well as critical, reformist and alternative perspectives
- Understand different epistemologies applied to practicing historic preservation
- Develop the ability to construct 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 (site-specific and policy/political) – be well-informed and persuasive, within the discourse of the field and in public
- Develop an ethical sense of preservation practice, advocacy and research.

Class format

Given the large size of this spring's class, the format of our weekly meetings will be varied a bit to enable more, and more meaningful, participation. In Classes 2-6, we'll start off the morning with small-group meetings in which you'll discuss the pre-class readings for that week and agree on a few questions/examples to present succinctly to the larger-group discussion. Here's how it will work:

8:30-9:30am Small-group meetings in Meyerson Hall: I will post the rosters and meeting locations of each group on Canvas. We have a few rooms booked in Meyerson for this. The assignment for each group is to discuss the range of readings and bring 2-3 insights and questions to the full group discussion that will follow. I will circulate among the groups.

9:30-10:00am break and walk to our assigned classroom in McNeil 285 ([link to location map](#))

10:00-11:30am: Full group discussions, lectures, guest talks (the mix will change from week to week)

CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: Each week's readings will be available in Canvas or via weblink in the syllabus below. Two books are recommended for purchase – Trouillot and Desilver – but scans of key chapters will be made available too.

Class 1, March 3 Review, Overview, Mapping questions of Preservation Theory
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Subjects:

- Recap HSPV660; outline HSPV661
- Mapping current & emerging theoretical issues in contemporary scholarship and practice
- Values-centered theory revisited
- Theorizing the current and future terrain of the preservation field

Reading:

- Avrami, Erica and Randall Mason, "Mapping the Issue of Values." In Avrami, Macdonald, Mason and Myers, eds., Values in Heritage Management. Getty, 2019.
https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/books/values_heritage_management.html
- Randall Mason and Kaitlyn Levesque. "Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field." Urban Heritage Project/PennPraxis, February 2022.

Assignments:

In-class discussion

Class 2, March 17 Remembering and Forgetting

Subjects:

- Fundamental processes of collective memory and cultural politics
- How is the built environment connected to cultural politics
- How well do historic preservation concepts, politics and practices respond to contemporary cultural politics?

Reading:

- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History. Beacon Press, 2015 (1995). (selections are scanned, but I recommend it for purchase).
- Boyer, M. Christine. City of Collective Memory. MIT Press, 1994. (selections; also in Fine Arts Library - Core Reading Collection NA9031 .B72 1994)
- Trujillo, Michael. "Oñate's Foot: Remembering and Dismembering in Northern New Mexico." Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies, 33:2, Fall 2008.

Class 3, March 24
Critical Heritage Studies & International Practices

Subjects:

- Politics of heritage within and between cultures
- Critical Heritage Studies
- Models of community-centered practice

Reading:

- Laurajane Smith. Uses of Heritage. Routledge, 2006. (selections)
- Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa, eds. Intangible Heritage. Routledge, 2009. (selections)
- One article (your choice) about a non-US heritage or indigenous context from the past ~5-10 years of one of these academic journals: [available through Franklin]
 - International Journal of Heritage Studies
 - Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development
 - Historic Environment
 - Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites
 - Change Over Time
 - Future Anterior
 - Places
- Li, Kuanghan. “The Contemporary Values behind Chinese Heritage.” in Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Randall Mason, David Myers, eds. Values in Heritage Management: Emerging Approaches and Research Directions. J. Paul Getty Trust/Getty Conservation Institute, 2019. <https://www.getty.edu/publications/heritagemanagement/part-two/7/>

Assignments:

Assignment 2 Book choice due (submit on Canvas)

Class 4, March 31
Black Heritage

Subjects:

- Forms of Black heritage
- Issues arising from preservation of Black heritage
- Contemporary politics and activism

Reading:

- The 1619 Project
 - The New York Times Magazine homepage for the project is: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>. Everyone should read Nikole Hannah-Jones’ [lead essay](#) and some of the other essays available through the homepage above.
 - You may also scan the book version: Nikole Hannah-Jones and The New York Times Magazine. The 1619 Project. New York: One World, 2022.
- Casey Cep. “The Fight to Preserve African-American History.” The New Yorker, January 27, 2020. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/02/03/the-fight-to-preserve-african-american-history>

- McKittrick, Katherine: choose one of these two articles (or other works of hers, if you prefer)
 - “On plantations, prisons, and a black sense of place.” Social & Cultural Geography, Vol. 12, No. 8, December 2011
 - “Plantation Futures.” small axe 42, November 2013.

In-class Guest: Brent Leggs, NTHP AACHAF; CPCRS

Class 5, April 7 Curated Decay

Subjects:

- Cultural landscape ideas and practices present a radical critique of traditional preservation theory
- Rethinking materiality and all that stems from it
- How do environmental histories and ecological processes inflect preservation? How do they connect to social justice?

Reading:

- Caitlin Desilvey. Curated Decay. University of Minnesota Press, 2017. (selections are scanned, but I recommend it for purchase).

Class 6, April 14 Experimental Preservation
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Subjects:

- What is experimental preservation?
- Experimentation and its uses in various facets of heritage and conservation practice
- The roles and functions art practice should play in the heritage sphere

Reading:

- Special issue on preservation, Journal of Architectural Education, 72/2, 2018 [including Shelton & Struth, “Architecture and Human Attachment: an interview with Jorge Otero-Pailos.” and Mason, “Engaged Preservation,” Journal of Architectural Education, 72:2 (2018)]
- Jorge Otero-Pailos, Erik Fenstad Langdalen, Thordis Arrhenius, eds., Experimental Preservation. Lars Muller Publishers, 2016.
- Monument Lab: <https://monumentlab.com/>

Assignments:

Assignment 2 paper due to Canvas.

Class 7, April 21 The Future of Heritage and Preservation
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Subjects:

- The future, as seen from 2012... and 2022... and 2032
- Alternative scenarios for the future of heritage and conservation
- What will the issues be?
- What should the professional-academic field dealing with these issues be called?

Reading:

- Erica Avrami. "Sustainability, Intergenerational Equity, And Pluralism: Can heritage conservation create alternative futures?" in Cornelius Holtorf and Anders Hogberg, eds. Cultural Heritage and the Future. Routledge, 2019.
- Cornelius Holtorf and Annalisa Bolin. "Heritage futures: A conversation" Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development.
- Kwesi Daniels. Call for papers, Change Over Time special issue on Civil Rights Heritage, 2022
- Sarah Marsom: <https://www.sarahmarsom.com/>

Assignment:

Assignment 3 Two-minute presentations in class

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

[1] Reading reaction papers

This assignment calls for very short papers – one page, or about 250-300 words – on the issues, questions, or insights you took from the week's assigned reading. These short papers are NOT intended to summarize the readings – rather, they should capture your reactions to the readings.

They are due by 8pm the night before class – submitted on Canvas. You must submit four of these short papers during the course – you have the choice which four weeks you choose to write about. Worth 40% of total grade (10% for each of your four papers).

[2] Read and critique a book

Issues about preservation theory are sufficiently complex that fundamental ideas and debates often are best represented in full-length books. This assignment is designed to let you engage in greater depth and detail than the usual weekly readings allow. You'll focus on one extended work. Choose one book, read and think about it, and write a short, critical response. Note that a response is not meant to be a summary, nor is it merely descriptive of what's in the book; it interprets and analyzes its meaning for yourself and for fellow preservation professionals.

You'll have wide latitude in choosing your book, and several weeks to read and think about it. You can choose from classics, from new works, from works in adjacent fields. The book can be a monograph, an edited collection of multiple authors, an exhibition catalog. (As an alternative, you may elect to read three academic journal articles around a single theme or topic.)

The finished product will be a three-four page (~1,000 word) response to the book's connections, contributions, or impacts on preservation theories.

A list of possible books is available on Canvas (in the Assignments module). You are free to look beyond this list, and even read in other languages. Send me your choice ASAP – by the beginning of Class 2 at latest – I will approve it ASAP so you can get started. The paper is due at Class 6 and worth 30% of total grade.

[3] Two-slide presentation – 2032 issues

In our final class meeting, each student will present and speak briefly about an issue, problem, site or practice you think will be an urgent matter in the historic preservation field ten years from now. The in-class presentation (during Class 7) should consist of a two-slide pdf illustrating your chosen issue (use multiple images on a single slide if you wish; 8.5x11” Letter format, landscape orientation) and a two-minute presentation delivered live to explain your issue. The slide pdfs must be uploaded to Canvas by 10:00pm the evening before class. 10% of total grade.

[4] Participate and engage in class

You are expected to prepare for classes, attend all class sessions, participate fully in exercises and discussions, and generally be intellectually present and engaged. There may be small, additional assignments added occasionally to enhance class discussions. 20% of total grade.

Overall grading rubric for the course:

Assignment 1	40%
Assignment 2	30%
Assignment 3	10%
<u>Assignment 4</u>	<u>20%</u>
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—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).

Academic Resources

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. In this and every other course in the School, you are welcome to make an individual appointment to talk to your instructor. 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.

Diversity and Inclusion

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.

I am happy to meet for any reason; please send me an email directly to organize a time. Also keep in mind that [Emily McCully](#), the School's director of student services, has many resources to support students in many aspects of graduate student life – she is super helpful!