Ruins & Reconstruction
Instructor: Lynn Meskell

Location
Meeting Time
Seminar: 3hr, max enrolment 20

This class examines our enduring fascination with ruins coupled with our commitments to reconstruction from theoretical, ethical, socio-political and practical perspectives. This includes analyzing international conventions and principles, to the work of heritage agencies and NGOs, to the implications for specific local communities and development trajectories. We will explore global case studies featuring archaeological and monumental sites with an attention to context and communities, as well as the construction of expertise and implications of international intervention. Issues of conservation from the material to the digital will also be examined. Throughout the course we will be asking what a future in ruins holds for a variety of fields and disciplines, as well as those who have most to win or lose in the preservation of the past.

Requirements
Assessment 1: Class presentation and oral participation (40%). This is a seminar, not a lecture-course, and consistent participation by all members is vital. Each of you will select specific readings the discussion of which you will commit to facilitate. Facilitation entails coming up with questions that will enable constructive and well-informed conversation based on presentations of the readings. It is expected that all students will attend all classes and participate in all discussions.

Assessment 2: Research paper to be handed in at the end of term on a topic developed in consultation with the instructor (60%). The paper should: (a) show that you have read and understood the texts at hand; and (b) provide an opportunity for you to think about the material in relation to your own writing and research. For undergraduates, the paper is to be double-spaced and approximately 15-20 pages in length. Papers submitted by graduate students are expected to be more detailed at 20-25 pages or longer, to be discussed with the instructor. The paper is due on the last class of the semester. Please email me an electronic copy of your essay. Late papers will not be accepted.

Schedule of Meetings The following lecture outlines and readings may be slightly modified in the course of the seminar.

Background Reading:
WEEK 1 Jan 12 Introduction to course, assessment and seminar designations

WEEK 2 Jan 19 The Cult of Monuments
*Choay, Françoise. 2001. The Invention of the Historic Monument. New York: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 4

WEEK 3 Jan 26 Theorizing Ruins
*Stewart, Susan. 2020. The Ruins Lesson: Meaning and Material in Western Culture. Introduction

WEEK 4 Feb 2 Classical Ruinscapes
*Hell, Julia, 2019 The Conquest of Ruins. Chicago: Chicago University Press. Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
*Stewart, Susan. 2020. The Ruins Lesson: Meaning and Material in Western Culture. Chapter 1

WEEK 5 Feb 9 Archaeological Ruins


Online resource
*Ruin Memories project: http://ruinmemories.org/about/project-description/

WEEK 6 Feb 16 Modern Ruination


Online Resource
*Equal Justice Initiative: https://eji.org/reports/

WEEK 7 Feb 23 Ruin Porn


**Online resources**
* [https://paulmullins.wordpress.com/2012/08/19/the-politics-and-archaeology-of-ruin-porn/](https://paulmullins.wordpress.com/2012/08/19/the-politics-and-archaeology-of-ruin-porn/)

**WEEK 8 March 2 Theories of Conservation**


*Avrami, Erica, Cherie-Nicole Leo, and Alberto Sanchez-Sanchez. 2018 “Confronting Exclusion: Redefining the Intended Outcomes of Historic Preservation.” *Change Over Time* 8, no. 1: 102-120.

*DeSilvey, Caitlin. 2017. *Curated Decay: Heritage Beyond Saving*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. *Chapter 1* and *4*


**Online resources**
**WEEK 9 March 16** Destruction and Reconstruction


**Online Resources**

*Coventry: A collage of the past and the present https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXBc5LhOwb8

**WEEK 10 March 23** Authenticity- Post Authenticity


*Glendinning, Miles. 2013. The conservation movement: a history of architectural preservation; from antiquity to modernity. London, Routledge. [Chapter 11](#) and [Chapter 12](#)

**Online Resources**


*BURRA CHARTER & PRACTICE NOTES: https://australia.icomos.org/publications/burra-charter-practice-notes/
WEEK 11 April 6 War, Destruction and Reconstruction I


Online Resources

*Unite4Heritage https://www.unite4heritage.org/en/unite4heritage-celebrating-safeguarding-cultural-heritage


*UNESCO 2015 The Bonn Declaration on World Heritage https://whc.unesco.org/document/147735

WEEK 12 April 13 War, Destruction and Reconstruction II


**Online Resources**

**WEEK 13 April 27 Ethics of Digital Reconstruction**

**Online Resources**

**Further Online Resources**
*University of Missouri Online exhibition* [https://maa.missouri.edu/sites/default/files/exhibit/online_romance_of_ruins_complete_reduced.pdf](https://maa.missouri.edu/sites/default/files/exhibit/online_romance_of_ruins_complete_reduced.pdf)
*Monument Lab: https://monumentlab.com/
*Center for the Preservation of Civil Right Sites [https://www.design.upenn.edu/cpcrs/about](https://www.design.upenn.edu/cpcrs/about)
*Southern Poverty Law Center “Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy.”* [https://savingplaces.org/african-american-cultural-heritage#.YHylDS1h2fU](https://savingplaces.org/african-american-cultural-heritage#.YHylDS1h2fU)