

AP/HISTORY 4840: PUBLIC HISTORY
Department of History, York University
Fall/Winter 2018-19

Time: Wednesdays 11:30am-2:30pm

Place: Ross S125

Moodle site: <https://moodle.yorku.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=133459>

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Bonnell

Office hour: Wednesdays 10-11am or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public history investigates the ways that history is understood by and interpreted for the public. This course examines the history, theory, and practice of public history in a wide variety of venues, including museums, archives, historic sites, the internet, and film. In addition to class readings and discussions, skills workshops throughout the course will introduce students to the practical skills for the public presentation of historical knowledge, including oral history interview techniques, communication and presentation skills, and digital tools for public history. Students will meet practitioners in the field and visit several public history-related sites. The course combines analytical study with a part-time placement with a public-history site.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete requirements for History 4840 will be able to:

- identify key debates within the scholarly literature on public history and describe how those debates have changed over time
- identify, describe, and evaluate distinct scholarly approaches to historical questions about public history
- analyse and critique concrete experiences of public history practice, from monuments to films, websites, and heritage site visits
- conduct independent research on a specific topic using primary sources in archives, libraries, and heritage sites
- read original evidence, scholarly arguments, and relevant popular depictions closely and critically
- devise a public history project, exploring and synthesizing a wide range of sources, crafting a narrative about the past, and presenting it in an accessible and creative manner (podcast, journalistic news article, walking tour, short film, etc.)

- collaborate and communicate in a professional manner with institutions and/or community organizations
- explain and evaluate themes, concepts, and approaches relevant to public history

FORMAT

Course meetings

Course meetings will include discussions of readings, skills workshops, guest speakers, and several field trips.

Public history placements

Students will be placed with a museum, archives, or heritage institution for the placement portion of the course. Placements will begin in January 2019. Students will provide 120 hours of service (10 hours/week) to their public history placements over the winter term. They will negotiate their schedules directly with their on-site supervisor, and keep track of their weekly activities in a logbook. At the end of the winter term, students will present their projects to the history department and their placement supervisors.

REQUIRED TEXTS

HIST4840 Course Kit. Available for purchase at the York University Bookstore.

Links to all remaining course readings will be available through the course Moodle site at:

<https://moodle.yorku.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=133459>

EVALUATION

Participation	20%
Letter of Introduction (19 September)	5%
Public History Podcast Project	20%
Proposal (3 October, 5%)	
Podcast Outline (7 November)	
Final Podcast (21 November, 15%)	
Research Paper (20 March)	25%
Research Project Proposal (23 January, 5%)	
Final Project Presentation (3 April)	10%
Final Public History Project (5 April)	20%

Grading:

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g. A+ =9, A=8, B+=7, C+=5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100; A = 80-89, B+=75-79, B=70-74; C+=65-69, C+60-64, etc.).

For a full description of York's grading system, see

<http://history.laps.yorku.ca/students/grading-system/>

Religious Observance Accommodation:

<https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation (20%)

In term 1, your participation grade will be based on: 1) your participation in in-class discussions and workshops; 2) your shared leadership of discussion in one seminar (2 discussion leaders/seminar); and 3) completion of weekly reading notes in the fall term. Students are expected to read all of the assigned material and come to class prepared to participate actively and to engage critically with the readings and the responses of fellow students.

Reading notes

In term 1, students will be expected to complete reading notes for each of the assigned readings each week. Use the one-page reading note template provided on the course Moodle page to briefly identify the argument, evidence, and research questions of the article, and provide an assessment of its significance. Each week I will collect reading notes for *one* of the assigned readings. Students should come to each class with a completed reading note, on paper, for each of the assigned readings that week. Reading notes will not be accepted by email. Reading notes are graded out of 2. Your best 8 of 10 notes will count towards your term 1 participation grade.

In term 2, your participation grade will be based on: 1) a self-evaluation of your progress in your public history placement/project (in the form of a logbook); 2) the evaluation of your on-site supervisor; and 3) participation in occasional term 2 class meetings.

Logbooks

Each student will keep a detailed record of the time they spend working toward their final project, both independently and at their placement sites. A logbook template will be provided for your use. Keep it up to date and you will find that it keeps you organized and focused on your project, and will help you to reflect on the overall experience when you go to write your final paper. Students will submit an up-to-date digital copy of their logbooks three times over the duration of their placements. The logbooks will be used to assess your progress and to identify and address any challenges you are experiencing. Failing to keep the logbook or submit it in time will adversely affect your participation grade.

Placement Supervisor Evaluation

Your placement supervisor will provide the course instructor with an evaluation of your work at the half-way point and again at the end of your placement. The on-site supervisors will not assign a specific grade, but will inform the course instructor about the student's diligence, contribution to the project, skills developed, and whether the student fulfilled the terms of his/her contract by showing up on time and working the

required number of hours. The supervisor's evaluation of the performance of the student will be factored in to term 2 participation marks.

I calculate participation grades as follows: terms 1 and 2 classroom participation and attendance (including seminar leadership): 50%; reading notes (term 1): 25%; placement participation/supervisor evaluations (term 2): 25%.

Letter of Introduction (5%)

Due: 19 September

The aim of this assignment is to help you develop your professional communication skills. In September you will be placed with a heritage site and assigned a specific public history project to do for this institution. This letter of introduction will be your first contact with your assigned placement, and will provide an opportunity for you to communicate your particular skills and training to your supervisor, as well as your interest in the proposed project. Further instructions will be provided in class. Once you have submitted your letter of introduction, you should plan to meet with your placement supervisor at least once in October or November to discuss your placement and begin developing your project proposal and workplan.

Public History Podcast Project (Group project, 20%)

Project proposal, 5%, due 3 October

Podcast outline, due 7 November

Final podcast, 15%, due 21 November

This term-long assignment will see students work in pairs or groups to research and produce a brief (8-10 minute) podcast on the history of a public history site (for example, a museum, historic site, monument, or memorial park) and its changing interpretation over time. The project involves three elements: 1) researching the history of the site (its prior use, establishment as a public history site, and changes in physical structure and interpretation over time); 2) conducting a single oral history interview with either a public history professional who is knowledgeable about the site, or a family member or friend who has personal experiences connected to the site; and 3) producing an audio podcast that incorporates excerpts from the interview into a narrated account of the site's history and evolution over time. This is a scaffolded assignment with four deadlines:

- 1) a project proposal that outlines the chosen site, identifies the interviewee and confirms their consent to be interviewed, and identifies relevant reference materials, due October 3 (5%);

Remaining components will be assessed cumulatively, for a total of 15%:

- 2) a list of interview questions and letter of informed consent, due October 17th;
- 3) a written podcast outline, outlining narrative elements and interview excerpts, with rough duration in minutes, due November 7th.

- 4) the final podcast, due November 21. We will be learning the necessary skills in class (developing interview questions, conducting interviews, working with audio editing software, producing a podcast) in advance of each assignment component deadline.

We will listen to these podcasts in the last two classes of term 1 (November 21 and 28th).

Research Project Proposal (5%)

Due: 23 January

Students will write this short 2-page proposal after they have met with their placement supervisors in early January. It is designed to encourage you to communicate with your supervisor about your project, and work out a way to turn it into both a public history product and an academic research essay. In this assignment you will outline your topic and your approach to the research component of the project (ie. how you will engage with the primary source materials at your placement). This is also the place where you can express any questions or concerns that you anticipate arising over the course of your research so we can address them early on. Further details will be distributed in class.

Research Paper (20%)

Due: 20 March

This 12-14 page (3000-3500 word) essay will accompany the final public history project you complete at your placement. Depending on the nature of your project, you may choose to write a paper reflecting upon the practice of communicating history to the public and working with a heritage institution, or a more traditional research paper that draws upon primary source materials that you encountered in your placement. In either case, your paper should incorporate primary sources from your placement, and draw upon the scholarly literature on public history practice (and, if appropriate, scholarly work by historians on your historical topic). Essays must include a comprehensive bibliography divided into primary and secondary materials.

Final Project Presentation (10%)

Date: 3 April

At the end of the course, students will present a brief (8-10 minute) distillation of their final projects at a student “public history conference” to be held at the Archives of Ontario April 3. This will be an opportunity to share with your peers what you learned, what you found interesting about your placement and research, and the challenges you may have encountered in completing your public history project. We will dedicate two sessions prior to the conference for practice presentations. Your presentation will be evaluated based on your ability to discuss your project – both process and product – in an engaging and thoughtful way to an audience that will include your fellow students, history faculty members, and placement supervisors.

Final Project (20%)

Due: 5 April

This is the placement project that is undertaken in the second half of the course. The projects

will take various forms, but each will involve academic research and public communication techniques. All project files, and/or images of exhibitions or final products, should be submitted both to your supervisor and the course instructor via Moodle. Projects will be assessed in consultation with your supervisor.

Late Assignment Policies:

Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments should be submitted to the instructor in person at the beginning of class on the day they are due, or to the essay drop-off box in the History office, located just outside of the main history office, 2140 Vari Hall. If you use the essay drop-off box, please note that essays are not date-stamped by department staff. If you are handing in an assignment late, you can email a copy to me to stop the clock ticking, but you must provide a hard copy within 2 working days or else the paper will not be accepted. The hard copy must match the emailed copy. Save all of your rough notes or rough drafts of your assignments; you may be asked to submit these as well.

A penalty of 2% per day (including weekends) will be deducted for late assignments. In special circumstances a student may arrange for an extension. Such arrangements must be made *in person* no less than one week before the assignment is due. Requests for extensions will not be accepted over the phone or by email. If you have accommodations from the Accessibility Office, you still need to speak with me before assignments are due to arrange extensions.

The **deadline for dropping this course** without receiving a grade is February 8, 2019. See the refund table at www.yorku.ca/sfs/refunds/tables/.

Important Add/Drop Deadlines:

	FALL	YEAR	WINTER
	(F)	(Y)	(W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 18, 2018	Sept. 18, 2018	Jan. 16, 2019
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 2, 2018	Oct. 23, 2018	Jan. 30, 2019
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 9, 2018	Feb. 8, 2019	Mar. 8, 2019
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript)	Nov. 10 - Dec. 4, 2018	Feb. 9 - Apr. 3, 2019	March 9 -Apr. 3, 2019

COURSE WEB SITE AND COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTOR

All electronic materials for this course, including a copy of this syllabus and links to library e-resources, will be posted on the course Moodle website.

You are welcome to communicate with me by email and I aim to respond within 24 hours, except on weekends. However, I also encourage you to come to my office hours or make an appointment to see me in person. Please send emails from your York email account and treat email as if you are writing a letter, and include the following:

- 1) Provide an appropriate salutation to the person you are addressing (title/full name)
- 2) Include HIST 4840 in the subject line of your email;
- 3) Write in full sentences;
- 4) Always sign the message using your full name and student number.

Make sure you consult the course syllabus, other handouts, and course website BEFORE submitting inquiries by email.

IMPORTANT LINKS FOR STUDENTS IN HISTORY COURSES

The History Department is located on the second floor of Vari Hall, 2140. The usual office hours during the academic term are M-F, 8:30am-4:00pm. The department's phone number for general inquiries is 416-736-5123.

The History Department website: Upcoming events, resources for undergraduate history students, faculty and staff information, and much more: <http://www.yorku.ca/uhistory/>

Undergraduate Program in History: links to information on history major career paths, degree programs (what is required for majors, minors, etc.), and degree checklists: <http://history.laps.yorku.ca/undergraduate-program/>

History Advising Hours: The History department offers advising times weekly. The hours are posted on our website 1-2 weeks in advance. The days and times change to accommodate student's different schedules. No appointment is necessary; students will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis. The Director of Undergraduate Studies is Prof. Adrian Shubert, and he can be contacted at dushist@yorku.ca. Please note that no grade information will be discussed via email or telephone.

The Writing Centre: One-to-one help with a writing instructor on any writing assignment. You will need to enroll to set up your appointment, though they also offer some drop-in sessions. The enrollment link and further information is found at <http://www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/centre/>. Bring a copy of your assignment to your appointment.

York University Libraries: Links to the main catalogue, e-resources, on-line help chat line with librarian, and many other research aids: <http://www.library.yorku.ca/web/>

SPARK [Student Papers and Academic Research Kit]: This is an on-line tutorial that provides handy tips and tools for understanding and successfully completing university-level assignments. Go to <https://spark.library.yorku.ca>

Learning Disability Services: Learn about LDS at <http://lds.info.yorku.ca/>

York Student Code of Conduct: <http://oscr.students.yorku.ca/student-conduct>

Academic Honesty Statement:

Violations of the York Senate Policy on Academic Honesty will be treated severely. Recent penalties have included failure in the course, suspension from the University, and withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate. Cheating during in-class or take-home examinations, collaborating on written assignments, failing to use quotations marks and citations when using or paraphrasing the printed or electronically disseminated work of others, aiding or abetting academic misconduct, and violating any other part of the Policy on Academic Honesty will result in penalties. For further details, see the relevant part of the York Website: <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/>

Academic Integrity Tutorial: http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/index.html

History department policy on grade reappraisals, including link to the grade reappraisal form: <http://history.laps.yorku.ca/students/grading-system/>

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

September 5: Introduction to the course

What to expect and how to excel
Introduction to public history placements

September 12: History and Heritage

Submission of placement rankings and rationale in class

Readings

David Lowenthal, "Fabricating Heritage," *History & Memory* 10, 1 (Spring 1998): 5-24.
MOODLE LINK.

Keith Jenkins, "What History Is," In *Re-thinking History* (London: Routledge, 2003): 6-32.
COURSE KIT.

National Council on Public History (US), "What is Public History?" MOODLE LINK.

History skills: Letter of introduction assignment guidelines

September 19: Collective Memory and Nation-Building

**Letters of Introduction due*

Readings

Matthew Hayday, "Fireworks, Folk-dancing, and Fostering a National Identity: The Politics of Canada Day," *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 287-314.
MOODLE LINK.

Ian McKay and Jamie Swift, "Prologue: 'The Dead on the Field,'" and Chapter 1, "Myths, Memories, and a Creation Story," 1-3, 5-30, in *The Vimy Trap, or, How we Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Great War* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2016). COURSE KIT.

History skills: Introduction to Podcast Assignment; locating primary sources

September 26: Representation in Public History: Whose Story Matters?

Readings

Timothy J. Stanley, "Playing with 'Nitro': The Racialization of Chinese Canadians in Public Memory." In Nicole Neatby and Peter Hodgins. *Settling and Unsettling Memories: Essays*

in Canadian Public History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012): 215-234.
COURSE KIT.

Patricia West, "Gender Politics and the 'Invention of Tradition': The Museumization of Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House." *Gender and History* 6, no. 3 (1994): 456–67.
MOODLE LINK

History skills: Library workshop: Research Project Management (at Scott library, 1-2:20pm)

October 3: Oral History and Shared Authority

**Podcast proposals due*

Readings

Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different." In Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds. *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2006): 32-42. COURSE KIT.

Pamela Sugiman, "I Can Hear Lois Now: Corrections to My Story of the Internment of Japanese Canadians—'For the Record'" in A. Sheftel and S. Zembrzycki, eds. *Oral History Off the Record: Toward an Ethnography of Practice* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): 149-67. COURSE KIT.

History skills: Oral History Research: Pre-interview Preparation & Interview Techniques

October 10: NO CLASS. Happy Thanksgiving!

October 17: Archives and Public History

**Interview questions and consent forms due*

Class meeting 11:30-12:30pm

Field trip to the Archives of Ontario (12:45-2:20pm). Presentation on Archives and Public History by AO Outreach Officer Jay Young.

Readings

Michelle Caswell, "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation", *The Public Historian*, Vol. 36 No. 4 (November 2014): 26-37.
MOODLE LINK.

Kaleigh Bradley, "Why Non-Indigenous Canadians need to Share the Burden of the Residential School System," *Activehistory.ca*, 22 February 2016. MOODLE LINK.

Krista McCracken, "The Role of Canada's Museums and Archives in Reconciliation," *ActiveHistory.ca*, 15 June 2015. MOODLE LINK.

October 24: Heritage and Authenticity: Living History Museums

Readings

Alan Gordon, "Heritage and Authenticity: The Case of Ontario's Sainte-Marie-Among-the-Hurons," *Canadian Historical Review* 85, no. 3 (September 2004): 507-32. MOODLE LINK.

Laura Peers, "'Playing Ourselves': First Nations and Native American Interpreters at Living History Sites," *The Public Historian*, vol. 21, no. 4 (Autumn, 1999): 39-59. MOODLE LINK.

History skills: Workshop on Public Communication, with Katrina Cohen Palacios, Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections

October 31: Field Trip to Black Creek Pioneer Village

Workshop on Material History and Site Interpretation at Black Creek Pioneer Village

November 7: Creating Sites of Memory

**Podcast outlines due*

Readings

Daphne Berdahl, "Voices at the Wall: Discourses of Self, History and National Identity at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial." *History & Memory* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 88–124. MOODLE LINK.

David Charles Sloane, "Roadside Shrines and Granite Sketches: Diversifying the Vernacular Landscape of Memory." *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 12 (January 2005): 64–81. MOODLE LINK.

History skills: Sound Editing and Podcast Production I, with Prof. Sean Kheraj

November 14: Museum Controversies

Readings

Susan Crane, "Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum." *History and Theory* 36, no.4 (1997): 44-63. MOODLE LINK.

Richard H. Kohn, "History and the Culture Wars: The Case of the Smithsonian Institution's Enola Gay Exhibition." *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 3 (1995): 1036–63. MOODLE LINK.

History skills: Sound Editing and Podcast Production II

November 21: Documenting Disaster: Public Histories of Terrorism

**Final podcasts due*

Podcast presentations

Readings

James B. Gardner and Sarah M. Henry, "September 11 and the Mourning After: Reflections on Collecting and Interpreting the History of Tragedy," *The Public Historian*, vol. 24, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 37-52. MOODLE LINK.

Schwartz, Pam, Whitney Broadaway, Emilie S. Arnold, Adam M. Ware, and Jessica Domingo. "Rapid-Response Collecting after the Pulse Nightclub Massacre." *The Public Historian* 40, no. 1 (February 1, 2018): 105–14. MOODLE LINK.

Take the Online Virtual Tour, 9/11 Memorial Museum,
<http://www.911memorial.org/interactive-museum-experience>

November 28: Careers in Public History

Podcast presentations (11:30-12:30pm)

Roundtable on public history careers: Guest speakers TBA (1:00-2:20pm)

Readings (optional)

Gerald Herman, "Creating the Twenty-first Century 'Historian for all Seasons'," *The Public Historian* 25, no.3 (Summer 2003), pp.93-102. MOODLE LINK.

Shelley Bookspan, "Something Ventured, Many Things Gained: Reflections on Being a Historian-Entrepreneur," *The Public Historian* 28, no.1 (February 2006): 67-74. MOODLE LINK.

TERM 2

In the second semester students will spend 10 hours per week at their placements. This will limit our time in the classroom, but we will get together periodically to review and discuss the progress of the placements, prepare for term 2 assignments, and present final projects.

January 9: no class

January 16: Class meeting 11:30-1pm to discuss placements

January 23: no class

**Proposals due via Moodle.*

January 30: possible field trip, TBA

February 4-8: by appointment. Required one-on-one meeting with course instructor

February 13: no class

February 20: Reading week; no class

February 27: Workshop to discuss research papers and final project presentations; presentation skills

March 6: no class

March 13: no class

March 20: no class

**Research papers due via Moodle*

March 27: Practice Presentations

April 3: Student Public History Conference (schedule TBA)

**Final Project Presentations scheduled*

April 6: Final Project Documents due via Moodle (no class meeting)