Syllabus
H 542 Introduction to Public History
Monday, 6:00pm-8:40pm
Room CA 537

Professor:  Dr. Melissa Bingmann
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Office Hours:   Monday, 1:00pm -2:00pm; Wednesday, 4:30pm-5:30pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is designed to provide the foundations of public history for students who are preparing for work outside of the academy. Students will learn that the difference between public history and conventional history is mainly in approach. We will also explore how the public uses the past and challenges faced by public historians. This course will also help students develop skills for analyzing the variety of sources used in public history research and presentation. This will be accomplished through readings and discussion, projects to develop research methodology skills common among public historians, and the development of a project for a client.

POLICIES:

Attendance
Attendance is required and will be taken at class meetings.

Cheating and plagiarism
Students who cheat or plagiarize will receive a zero for the work in question and will be reported to the Dean. According to the Academic Handbook, Indiana University, August 2001, pp. 172-173, “Any student who fails to give credit for ideas or materials taken from another source is guilty of plagiarism.”

For comprehensive information on IUPUI’s policy on cheating and plagiarism consult Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct available on-line at http://hoosiers.iupui.edu/studcode/studcode.htm.

Incompletes
I will be very reluctant to give a grade of Incomplete (I). I assign Incompletes only to students who have successfully completed most of the course work and who have been prevented by significant and unanticipated circumstances from finishing all of their assignments.

Classroom Courtesy
Please arrive on time and turn off cell phones and pagers prior to the beginning of class.

READINGS:
The following are available in the IUPUI bookstore:
Going Public: The Changing Face of New Zealand History, ed Bronwyn Dalley & Jock Phillips,


Shackel, *Memory in Black and White*


The following are available on reserve at the IUPUI University Library:

*Artifacts & Analysis*, Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies.


In addition, there are several assigned articles that will be made available on ERROL.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Class participation:
Students are expected to complete readings prior to each session in order to participate in discussion. Your comprehension of readings that are not assessed by written assignments will be evaluated based on oral response and small group discussion. Students are also required to assess undergraduate students National History Day entries on December 13, 6:00pm-8:40pm.

Written assignments for readings:
All written assignments based on the readings are due one week after the class discussion. Papers must be typed, edited, and demonstrate graduate-level writing skills. Book reviews and or essay responses should be 1-2 pages, single-spaced. Book reviews need to focus on the assigned monograph, however, should also reference the assigned articles and additional readings. If a student masters the writing skills required of public historians in the first five to seven assignments and can demonstrate superior comprehension of readings through class discussion, it may be unnecessary to turn in the last one to three written assignments.

1. Rosenzweig and Thelen, *The Presence of the Past*, review, due Sept. 11th
2. *Going Public: The Changing Face of New Zealand History*, Dalley & Phillip, due Sept. 18th
3. Essay on “shared authority,” due Sept. 25th
5. Imposing the Past on the Present: History, The Public, and the Columbus Quincentenary,” review, incorporating *All the World’s A Fair*, due Oct. 16th
6. Comparison paper of a monograph and popular history using *All the World’s A Fair* and *Devil in the White City*, due Oct. 23th
7. Discussion of use & misuse, due Nov. 6th
8. Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe*, review, due Nov. 20th
Research Skill Building Assignments:

1. Oral History research design: due October 30
Research the provenance and provide an interpretation for an artifact at a local museum (details tba). Students will need to locate historical images and documents to contextualize the artifact,
3. Historic Marker project: due November 27
4. Historic Building/land use research due December 4

Final project: due December 18
Each of you will be assigned to a group that will develop a consultant’s proposal for one of the following clients:
   • World War I Exhibition at the State Library
   • Women’s History Trail
   • Fountain Square
   • Commemoration of the War of 1812

ASSESSMENT:

Class participation, oral presentation, evaluate H217 NHD projects 10%
Written summaries for reading assignments 25%
Artifact interpretation 7.5%
Historic Marker project 7.5%
Oral History research design 7.5%
Historic Building research 7.5%
Historic context research for final project 10%
Final project 25%

COURSE SCHEDULE:

August 28 How public audiences think about “the past.”

In this inaugural session we will discuss the various methods that public audiences use to pursue the past and how they use history in their everyday lives.

Readings:


Sept. 4 LABOR DAY

Sept. 11 Public history vs. conventional history

   Public history differs from conventional history mainly in approach. Public historians must always consider their audience and the method of communication. A conventional historian concentrates on the same audience (colleagues and teenagers) using the same type of format for communication (monograph or article). Public historians may be asked to conduct research and develop museum exhibits, educational programs, school curricula, institutional histories,
commemorative events and video documentaries and work with a variety of audiences. They may also be asked to provide expert testimony as a trial witness. The research is no less academic, however, public historians’ creativity comes less from the project’s thesis or research than from the method of presentation.

**Readings:**


**Sept. 18**  Using the past to create community dialogue & “shared authority”

Readings:


**Sept. 25**  Research Skill Development: Oral History

Readings:


**Oct. 2**  Commemoration & Memory/Local History through historical markers

Readings:


Articles on eugenics apologies

Shackel, *Memory in Black and White*


Guest Speaker: Pamela Bennett, Director, Indiana Historical Bureau

**Oct. 9**  
**Commemoration (cont.) & Historical Representations through display**

**Readings:**


**Oct. 16**  
**Popular history and film**

In-class viewing of “Murder at Harvard.”


**Oct. 23**  
**Researching skill development: Photograph, Artifact, Document Analysis**

**Readings:**
*Artifacts & Analysis*, Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies. (available on reserve or on-line at [http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/idealabs/artifacts_analysis.html](http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/idealabs/artifacts_analysis.html))


[http://lewisandclarkeexhibit.org](http://lewisandclarkeexhibit.org) launch the on-line exhibit. Be prepared to analyze and discuss the curators use of maps, documents, and artifacts in this interpretation. Consider how the absence of one or more of these elements would have impacted the interpretation.

**Guest Speaker:** Paul Mullins
Oct. 30  History for hire/use and misuse/historical consultants

This session will explore misuse of the past and the idea that working for clients can be construed by conventional historians as compromising the profession. Misuse can take the form of making false analogies, blurring the distinctions between reality and fiction for economic gain, and can occur when an historian knowingly distorts the past for the sake of a client or for political purposes. We will also discuss the misnomer that working for clients is inherently a “misuse” of the profession.

Readings: (We will discuss which articles can wait until next week)

Guest Speaker: Daniel Miller, President and Founder, Historical Solutions LLC

Nov. 6  Historical Consulting (cont)

Readings:
Review NCPH Ethical Guidelines, available on-line at [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org)

Guest Speakers: Sue Ferentinos, Public History Manager, Organization of American Historians
John Dichtl, Executive Director, National Council on Public History

Nov. 13  Cultural Heritage tourism & Historic Preservation

Readings:
Nov. 20  Research skill development: researching historic buildings and land-use

Guest Speakers:  Suzanne Stannis, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana  
Steve Haller, Indiana Historical Society

Nov. 27  Policy making & government work

Readings:

Dec. 4  Technology and History/Encyclopedia Projects

Web sites (please review prior to coming to class):
http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/
http://www.dohistory.org/

Guest Speaker:  David Bodenhamer, Polis Center

Dec. 11  Final group presentations

Dec. 13  Judge National History Day entries developed by H217 students, 6:00pm-8:40pm

Dec. 18  Final Projects Due