Museums and Difficult Histories

CLMD 6104W, ARTH 5218, ANTH5807A

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will focus on museums that represent histories of violent conflict, oppression, and genocide and their growing prominence in world museology since the mid-20th century. We will examine these museums in relation to earlier practices of memorialization through monuments and to theorizations of memory and trauma in anthropology, history, art history, and other disciplines. We will also explore the mixture of commemoration, revisionist history, therapeutic impact and social and human rights activism that have come to inform them and the ethical positions they assume or advocate. Ultimately, the historical and comparative framework of the course is intended to foster the development of critical, analytical, creative, and curatorial skills needed to meet the challenges of representing difficult histories in future museological projects.

ASSIGNMENTS
The central work of the course is careful and critical reading of assigned journal articles, essays and book chapters. Each student will be asked to; 1) serve as a discussion leader for weekly readings, 2) give an oral presentation of a chosen research project during the last three weeks of the course (length to be announced in class), and 3) write a 15-20 page research paper (20-25 pages for PhD students) to be handed in on the last day of term.

The Role of the Discussant: Weekly reading assignments are listed below. Discussants should confer in order to develop a set of questions to put to the class. Please provide the questions by emailing in advance and/or in hard copy in class. They should be designed to generate discussion that leads to clearer understandings of the arguments put forward by the authors.

The most effective questions are usually short, and specific to the texts. I urge you to frame questions that identify passages that are difficult, unclear or subject to different interpretations and ask how others in the seminar understand them.

Avoid giving a mini book review of the reading first - that is the job of the class; you should ask your fellow students to provide an initial summary of each reading rather than do this yourself. It is also important to look up the authors of the readings and find out who they are and what disciplines or research areas they come from. Discussants are encouraged to read beyond the assignments for that week's topic-- either more of the work from which the reading is extracted, or other texts. (Suggestions for additional reading are given in the "Supplementary" sections but
these are by no means exhaustive. The option of further reading are of course open to other students in the class as well.) Students are also encouraged to look at the website or any relevant YouTube videos of the museums to be discussed prior to the class.

Research Presentation and Paper: You are asked to develop an in-depth study of a museum or major exhibition that focuses on a difficult history. In some cases you may want to focus on a particular installation, temporary exhibition, on-line exhibition, controversy or area of programming.

GRADING
Class participation: 30%; Oral presentation 20%, final paper 50%.

CLASS SCHEDULE

September 11 - WEEK 1 – Introduction to the Course

Points of departure – Please read these short texts for a preliminary in-class discussion (online or on culearn)


"Museums and Archives," [recommendations 67-70], *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*

September 18 - WEEK 2 – Formulating the Questions

Readings


Jenny Edkins, "Introduction: trauma, violence and political community," in *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1-19

**Discussants:** ____________________  ____________________

**September 25 - WEEK 3 - Monuments/ Museums**

**GUEST SPEAKER** (Dr. Rebecca Dolgoy)

**Readings:**

http://search.proquest.com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/docview/1297331770/3C295869BDE14413PQ/8?accountid=9894


**Supplementary -**

Google war art project: https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/asset-viewer/in-the-shelter/PAFiLr9pY0wY0w?hl=en-gb&projectId=art-project


**Discussants:**

**October 2 - WEEK 4 - Trauma and Healing**

**Readings:**


**Supplementary**


Dominic LaCapra, *Writing history, writing trauma*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001)

**Discussants:**


October 9 - WEEK 5: The Politics of Remembering and Forgetting

Readings:
http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.library.carleton.ca/journals/american_quarterly/v055/55.4giamo.pdf


To watch on line: Terrence and Brian McKenna "Death by Moonlight: Bomber Command," from CBC/NFB documentary series "The Valour and the Horror" (1991) - https://www.nfb.ca/film/death_by_moonlight_bomber_command

Supplementary
http://www.jstor.org/stable/2945111

Georges Bataille (Hiroshima) "concerning the Accounts Given by the Residents of Hiroshima," in Cathy Caruth ed., Trauma Explorations in Memory, 221-235.


**Discussants:** _______________ _______________

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**October 16 – WEEK 6**

**Never Again - Activism and Holocaust Museums**

**Readings**


**Supplementary**


Endowment for International Peace, 1944)
http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/AxisRule1944-1.htm


"The Canadian War Museum" Historica Canada website

Discussants: ___________________ ___________________

October 23 - NO CLASS - READING WEEK
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October 30 – WEEK 7 -Representation
Readings


Read for Class Discussion (Short Texts)
The Exhibit B controversy (please read these short newspaper pieces and come prepared to debate the issues)


Wail Qasim, "Why is the depiction of black slavery considered art, and the protests against it censorship?," The Independant, 25 Sept 2014 http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/why-is-the-depiction-of-black-slavery-considered-art-and-the-protests-against-it-censorship-9755683.html

Terence Blacker, "It's not just censorship of Exhibit B which proves that the stupid are winning,"

**Supplementary**

**Discussants:** ________________  ________________

**Week of Nov 6: CLASS TIME TBA - WEEK 8 - Post-Apartheid South Africa**

**Readings**


**Supplementary**


**Discussants:** ________________  ________________

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November 13 - WEEK 9 - Indigenous Peoples, Residential Schools and Stolen Children
GUEST SPEAKER (Trina Bolam)

Readings


Russ Moses, Residential School Memoir (MS)


Supplementary

Phil Fontaine, Aimee Craft, A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016)

Andrew Woolford, This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015)


Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar and Mike Degagné eds., Response, Responsibility and
Renewal (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009)
free download http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/trc2.pdf

Marlene Brant Castellano, Linda Archibald and Mike Degagné eds, From Truth to Reconciliation: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2008)

Ashok Mathur, Jonathan Dewar and Mike Degagné eds., Cultivating Canada: Reconciliation through the Lens of Cultural Diversity (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2011)


Discusants: ___________________ ___________________

November 20 - WEEK 10 - Histories of Racism and Social Marginalization
Readings


**Supplementary**
Will Kymlicka and Bashir Bashir eds., *The Politics of Reconciliation in Multicultural Societies*


**Discussants:** ___________________  __________________

**Class Presentations:**

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November 27 – WEEK 11
Class Presentations

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December 4 - WEEK 12

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Research Paper Topics

You may choose to research in greater depth any of the museums or special exhibitions discussed in class readings. You may also choose a museum or special exhibition we have not studied.

Keep three core questions in mind: "What work does it propose to do?," "For whom does it seek to do this work?," and "On the available evidence, how successfully does it accomplish its target goals?" Research your chosen museum as exhaustively as is feasible, documenting its history of development, mandate, sources of support, target audiences, public response, critical reviews and scholarly analyses.

Note that the degree to which you are able to gather these different kinds of data and the completeness of your analysis will depend on whether you are researching a past or current exhibit or museum, and, if current, whether you are able to visit it and its archives in person or remotely. It is fine to provide only a provisional analysis based on the information you were able to collect, but it is important to state clearly what further sources you would need to be able to access in order to be more conclusive. Where the sponsoring institution is accessible to you and a personal visit is possible, take advantage of the opportunity to examine archival records or accessible curatorial files and try (considerately and courteously) to arrange interviews with curators, designers or other staff whose areas of work are relevant to your topic.

The two lists below are by no means exhaustive and you are welcome to choose another museum or special exhibition, but will need to submit it for approval. List A includes museums in or near Ottawa where your analysis could be developed through direct observation and/or archival research and interviews with curators, designers and others. List B suggests museums at a greater distance about which there will be published analyses, catalogues and websites.

LIST A
Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre
Canadian War Museum (past exhibitions such as World War Women)
Canadian War Museum: selected permanent exhibit (for example, a section on World War I or World War II)
History Hall and First Peoples Hall, Canadian Museum of History
Japanese Canadian National Museum, Burnaby, B.C.
Africville Museum, Halifax, Nova Scotia
Musée de la Femme, Longueuil, Quebec
Canadian Museum of Human Rights, Winnipeg
Diefenbunker, Ottawa
Armenian Museum of America, Watertown, N.Y.
North American Black History Museum, Amherstburg, Ontario
LIST B

Walking with Our Sisters (travelling commemoration of murdered and missing Aboriginal women) [currently travelling]
The DDR Museum, Berlin (commemorating life in Communist East Germany)
The Tenement House Museum, New York City
Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America (New York Historical Society)
National Museum of African-American History and Culture (Smithsonian Institution)
The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920 (Smithsonian American Art Museum, 1991)
Remembering Our Indian School Days - Heard Museum, Phoenix AZ
Witnesses: Art and Canada’s Indian Residential Schools
Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum
Kenyan Peace Museum movement (e.g. Akamba Community Peace Museum, Lari Memorial Peace Museum)
The Killing Fields Museum of Cambodia
Kigali Genocide Memorial
The controversy surrounding the creation of a national Memorial to the Victims of Communism in Ottawa
ART HISTORY, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Instructional Offences, especially Plagiarism: Students are to read and abide by the policies stated in the calendar under “Student Conduct.” The following definition of plagiarism can be found under “Academic Integrity Standards.”

http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv14/

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the Internet.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
- submitting a takehome examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/

For Religious Observance: Carleton provides accommodation for religious observances according to a policy that identifies recognized religious holidays. Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

http://www2.carleton.ca/equity

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required. Link: http://www2.carleton.ca/equity