

# George Washington University

## MSTD 6601.10

### Historic Site Interpretation

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Professor Max A. van Balgooy

Fall 2013 :: August 29-December 5, 2013 :: Thursdays, 11:00 am-12:50 pm

- *Plus* Saturdays September 7 and November 9
- *Not* September 19 and November 22

Museum Studies Program classroom, [1310 G Street NW](#), Sixth floor (near Metro Center, across the street from the historic Church of the Epiphany & Au Bon Pain)

#### Course Overview

Historic sites and house museums are among the most common type of museum in the United States and in this class their interpretation will be explored through readings, discussions, field trips, exercises, case studies, guest speakers, and individual and group assignments. Among the major topics we'll investigate are historical significance, visitor needs and interests, and online and on-site interpretive methods. Many assignments will require travel to historic sites in the DC region (most are accessible by Metro or public transportation) and two to four field trips will occur on Saturday mornings.

Max A. van Balgooy is the professor for this course and you'll find my [profile online](#).

**Office hours** will be 30 minutes prior and 30 minutes after class, and it's generally best to make an appointment to ensure I'm available. Otherwise, it's best to **contact me by email** at [mvanbalgooy@gwu.edu](mailto:mvanbalgooy@gwu.edu) and I'll respond within 24 hours. Because of other commitments, it's often difficult to reach me directly by phone, so to talk by phone, please make an appointment via email. In case of an emergency, you can leave a message at 301-412-7940.

If you will be more than ten minutes late to class or will be absent, I'd appreciate an email. Deadlines will still be expected to be met, unless there are extraordinary exceptional situations (please discuss with me).

#### Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the basic elements of the interpretation of historic sites and house museums
2. Identify the major opportunities and challenges in the interpretation of historic sites
3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in the interpretation of an historic site

4. Conduct basic historical research on an historic site or building and present it in a standard format
5. Describe several research strategies for understanding visitor motivations and learning preferences
6. Identify target audiences and describe market segments
7. Evaluate various interpretive methods (including traditional and new) to effectively link content and audiences
8. Develop an interpretive plan for an historic site, house museum, or historic district that considers content, audience, and methods

### Prerequisites

Because this course will focus on the interpretation of historic sites in the United States, students are expected to have:

- **A general knowledge of United States history from 1750 to 1950**, which is generally obtained through a survey course in college. If you lack this knowledge but have the ability to quickly find and master it, ask for suggestions for readings from a faculty member who teaches American history or read a couple books that traverse this period from a couple different perspectives, such as *The Americans* (3 volumes) by Daniel Boorstin, *A History of the American People* by Paul Johnson, and *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn. You can try an undergraduate history textbook but I typically find them boring and superficial.
- **Great writing and presentation skills in English**, or a willingness to learn. For advice on writing, see *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White and *The Elements of Story* by Francis Flaherty. For advice on presentations, see *Presentation Zen* by Garr Reynolds and *Slide:ology* by Nancy Duarte (I'd buy these two in paperback; the digital versions are inadequate). Don't forget, the Writing Center in Gelman Library is a helpful resource.
- **Some familiarity with historic sites and house museums in the United States** and an interest in making them more engaging places for visitors. I'm not sure how to assess this, but if you visit historic sites willingly (that is, you weren't forced to go because of family, friends, or teachers) and you visited at least a couple in the last twelve months, you'll probably enjoy the course and succeed. If not, you may want to see if there's something more interesting in the course catalog (or talk to me).
- **Ability to conduct original research using primary and secondary sources**. You should know how to use a library catalog and online database to find books and articles; how to figure out what search terms and key words are most effective for online searches; how to discern bias, fact, opinion, and fiction in various sources; and have the tenacity and resourcefulness to navigate government records, corporate archives, and rare book rooms. We'll refine these skills as they pertain to historic sites, but if you're concerned you may lack these basic skills (which are a required part of a graduate education), see *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* by James Davidson and Mark Lytle and *The Methods and Skills of History* by Conal Furay and Michael Salevouris.

## Readings: Required and Optional

### Required

1. *Interpreting Historic House Museums* edited by Jessica Foy Donnelly (Altamira, 2002). Also on Reserve in Gelman Library.
2. *Design for How People Learn* by Julie Dirksen (New Riders, 2012). Also available as an e-book and on Reserve in Gelman Library.
3. *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose* by Sam H. Ham (Fulcrum, 2013). Requested purchase for Gelman Library.

Other readings (typically articles) will be listed in the syllabus and will be available on Blackboard (under electronic reserves), the Internet, or in Gelman Library.

### Recommended

We will read excerpts of these books in class but if you plan to work in historic site interpretation, you may want to buy a copy of the books for your library.

- If you're not familiar with research or interpretation of architecture: *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture* by Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Collins Cromley (University of Tennessee Press, 2005).
- If you plan to manage a museum or lead an education department: *Interpretive Planning* by Lisa Brochu (InterpPress, 2007)
- If you want examples of the variety of ways historic places can be interpreted: *American Places: Encounters with History* edited by W. Leuchtenburg (Oxford, 2002)
- If you want to develop or manage school programs at an historic site: *Teaching History with Museums: Strategies for K-12 Social Studies* by Alan Marcus, Jeremy Stoddard, and Walter Woodward (Routledge, 2012).
- If you expect writing and editing to be a major part of your career, keep near your desk: *Chicago Manual of Style* (for most scholarly writing; the laminated reference guides by BarCharts can handle 90% of your needs), *Associated Press Stylebook* (for most public writing), and the *American Heritage Dictionary* (not just for spelling but to master the meaning of words). A thesaurus is also handy to help you find just the right word and but there many versions available, so find one that works for you (I often use the online Visual Thesaurus).

## Course Assignments

### Three Field Trips as a Class

These trips provide a shared experience that we can all refer to in class discussions. The class will take three trips together to visit a variety of historic sites and two of these trips will occur on Saturday mornings due to the short period of the class. The museum studies program will take care of admission fees, however, you will be responsible for your own transportation (all are within walking distance of Metro but we'll discuss car pooling and alternative transportation).

### Three Historic Site Reviews

This exercise is designed to get you out seeing sites and thinking about them critically, plus they'll enrich the class discussions. You will write three short papers (450-700 words; 2-3 pages) evaluating the interpretation of an historic site using a principle from Dirksen (2012) or Ham (2013).

General guidelines for organization (you may have to adjust this depending on your site's circumstances):

1. One to two paragraphs describing the site and the element of interpretation you'll be evaluating (e.g., tour, exhibit, event).
2. One to two paragraphs describing the principle you'll be using to evaluate the interpretation. Quote the relevant idea from one or both of the readings (it'll give you practice writing a footnote).
3. The remainder of the paper to explain how the site's interpretation exemplifies a principle or how a principle could be used to improve the interpretation. Provide concrete examples to support your case (in other words, if you claim that the tour could be improved, give me specific details).

The report format is simple: 1" margins; type at 11 or 12 point in a professional typeface (no, you can't use Comic Sans); title, your name, and date at the top; page numbers at the bottom centered; no title page. Including one or two images is nice but optional (be sure to maintain the overall word count!).

Eligible sites are members of the Historic House Consortium of Washington, DC (DCHouseMuseums.org) except Ford's Theater, Carlyle House, or any place you are currently or have recently been associated (you need to see new places!). Check ahead to be sure the hours or admission fees haven't changed. If you want to visit a site that's not part of the Consortium, please obtain my permission in advance.

Papers are due on the date listed in the syllabus before class starts. Send them to me via email.

### Historic Site Timeline and Annotated Bibliography

Prepare a timeline for the Carlyle House that lists two dozen significant events associated with John Carlyle, the Carlyle House, Alexandria, and Virginia (events should be roughly equally divided among these topics, so it can't be all about Virginia) from 1700 to 2000. Research and read two articles published in the last 20 years that can inform the interpretation of the Carlyle House based upon your timeline. Prepare a bibliographic entry for each article followed by a one to two paragraph

summary (see the *Chicago Manual of Style* for an example of an annotated bibliography). Before class starts on the due date listed in the syllabus, email me a copy of your timeline and bibliography, and integrate your timeline entries and article summaries into the class wikis on Blackboard.

### Visitor Research Report as a Team

You'll be part of a small visitor research team for Carlyle House analyzing existing data on current and potential visitors, such as tour attendance, tourism studies, and population census. Your team will make a joint presentation to the class on recommendations on specific target audience (such as tourists or local residents), your findings and profile of these target audiences, and what could be done better or differently at Carlyle House to appeal to these target audiences. Your research will be shared with the class and may be used in the NEH grant application assignment. Before class starts on the due date listed in the syllabus, email me a copy of your paper and post your team paper to Blackboard.

- Demographics and statistics
  - [County Business and Demographics](#), United States Census Bureau (explore the map)
  - VisitAlexandriaVA.com (look for research reports under About Us)
- Geocoding (locating addresses on a map)
  - Geocoding services at Texas A&M University (geoservices.tamu.edu)
  - Google Maps and Google Fusion Tables
- Behavior and lifestyle
  - "[My Best Segments](#)" at Nielsen/Claritas (explore the "Zip Code Look-Up")

### An Interpretive Planning Proposal for an Historic Site

This is a culminating exercise designed to pull together the previous assignments and build on the readings and class discussions. Imagine you are the director of interpretation for the Carlyle House preparing a proposal for a *Museums for America* grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (imls.gov). You won't prepare the entire application, only the following elements:

- Program Information Sheet
- Organization Profile
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion
- IMLS Budget Form
- Budget Justification
- List of Key Project Staff and Consultants
- Supporting document: bibliography of references relevant to your proposed project

**Content:** Your director wants to re-interpret the Carlyle House in anticipation of the tercentennial of John Carlyle's birth in 2020. Your director said you can come up with the theme but it should be relevant and engaging, and based on solid scholarship.

**Audience:** Your director said “to the public” but you know that’s too vague (that’s 300 million people in the US!). You’ll have to come up with the target audience(s) for this project. Should it be children, adults, local residents, tourists, or 8th graders from Nebraska? You not only have to include a profile/description of the target audiences, but estimate the size of the market (e.g., how many 8th graders from Nebraska come here?) and potential market penetration (i.e., how many people in the target audience would participate?).

**Method:** Your director didn’t mention a particular way to interpret the Carlyle House, but she’d like something that’s innovative, financially sustainable, and could be a model for other organizations--but she’s willing to consider something traditional if it’ll work. Hmm.

**Budget:** Your director said the organization really doesn’t have any funds to do this, but a couple board members are urging we do something for the tercentennial. However, if we can come up with a good plan she might be able to find some funders. To do the planning, she’s willing to commit up to \$40,000 in staff time and in-kind services.

**To learn more:** Visit the IMLS website at [imls.gov](http://imls.gov), which contains guidelines and review criteria, as well as a schedule of web conferences during October-December.

**Deadlines:**

- Draft narrative and budget due by Thursday, November 21 for peer review (time tbd)
- Final proposal due Monday, December 2 at 5:00 pm EST to professor
- Presentations on Thursday, December 6. You may be randomly selected to discuss your proposal in class.

## Expectations

The class operates 24/7 with group discussions occurring on Thursdays and readings, assignments, and activities occurring on a varying schedule. The readings (which may include videos and podcasts) serve as the lectures, while class time emphasizes group discussion and activities. Carefully review the syllabus and watch for notices on Blackboard and via email. All students are expected to:

- Complete the readings on time and be prepared to discuss in class. Readings will be discussed on the date they are listed.
- Complete the assignments on time. Punctuality in this course is vital because your work contributes to the success of others in the class. If you expect to be late, please inform the professor as soon as possible.
- Support the [GWU Code of Academic Integrity](#), the [American Historical Association's Standards of Professional Conduct](#), and the [American Alliance of Museums' Code of Ethics](#).
- Complete their presentations, whether written or oral, in a professional manner appropriate for submission to a journal, a donor, trustee, or CEO. For style, formatting, and manuscript preparation, use the latest version of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (bibliographic styles A and B are both acceptable, although A is preferred). For spelling and word usage, use the 4th or 5th edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary*.

Food and Drink: The class meets over the lunch hour, so bringing a snack or a drink to carry you through the class is okay. Anything much larger will be distracting and a nuisance because we'll often be engaged in discussions, small group activities, and moving around the room. Let's see how it goes and we'll adjust as needed. I'm not exactly certain which classroom we'll be using, but I suspect it'll be the smaller one with tables arranged in an open square. That means you're sharing a table with others, so if you tip over your cup, the probability is high that it will spill onto your neighbor's notebook (in other words, be sure you have a lid or closed container).

## Evaluation and Grading

This class does not “grade on a curve”; each person is evaluated individually on the following:

- Participation 30%: class attendance, contributing to discussions, incorporating the readings & assignments, dealing constructively with criticism and evaluation, and exhibiting a full sense of commitment to this class and your work
- Minor assignments 30% (site visit reviews, timeline and research article summaries, visitor research report): Quality of your ideas, breadth of exploration and experimentation, professionalism employed in your work, and the overall organization and completion of your assignments.
- Major assignment 30% (interpretive planning proposal/IMLS application): idea and theme generation and exploration; addresses content, audience, and methods; fulfills IMLS requirements; appropriate selection of sites, scholars, and other resources; organization, accuracy, and presentation of your work.
- Punctuality 10%: punctual attendance, meeting deadlines.

My expectation is that work will be conducted at the A or B level. In the rare event that you receive a grade of C or lower, please see me as soon as possible to discuss if this might be rectified, either by resubmitting the work or completing additional work to demonstrate your mastery of the topic, or if you may need to consider an alternative class.

**Late submissions:** A grade of 'A' is equal to 4 points. Grades are reduced by 1/3 point if they are received within the first 8 hours after the deadline, and another 1/3 point for every 8 hours that follows. For example, a paper that received a grade of A if it was submitted before the deadline, would receive an A- if 0-8 hours late and a B+ if 8-16 hours late.

# Schedule

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## Class 1: August 29, 2013

### I. In Class: Introductions, Orientation, and Expectations

### II. Assignment: Readings for Next Week

### III. Assignment: Historic Site Reviews

## Class 2: September 5

### I. In Class: Challenges and Opportunities in Interpreting Historic Sites

*Required* (be prepared to discuss in class)

- “Visiting the Past: History Museums in the United States” by Michael Wallace in *Mickey Mouse History* (1996), pp. 3-32.
- “Are There Too Many Historic House Museums?” by Richard Moe in *Forum Journal* (2002)
- “Past, Present, and Future” by Patrick Butler in Donnelly (2002)
- “Interpreting the Whole House” by Rex Ellis in Donnelly (2002)
- “A Golden Age for Historic Properties” by John Durel and Anita Nowery Durel in *History News* 62 (summer 2007): 7-16

*Optional* (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives)

- “A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time,” chapter 11 in *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time* by John Brinkerhoff Jackson (Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 149-162.
- “Balancing Our Commitments” by Valerie McAllister in Donnelly (2002)
- “Pioneer Museums” by David Lowenthal in *History Museums in the United States*, edited by Warren Leon and Roy Rosenzweig (University of Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 115-127.
- “Social History on the Ground,” chapter 5 in *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* by Richard Handler and Eric Gable (Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 102-124.
- “[Why Historical Thinking Matters](#)” (Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, George Mason University, and School of Education, Stanford University, [2007?]) [click on the link to see the video, “View Why Historical Thinking Matters”].
- *Imperiled Promise: The State of History in the National Park Service* by the Organization of American Historians (2011).
- *Interpreting Our Heritage* by Freeman Tilden (1957; fourth edition University of North Carolina Press, 2008 with foreword by Bruce Craig).
- *TrendsWatch 2013* by the American Alliance of Museums.

### II. Assignment: Historic Site Timeline and Research Article Summaries

### **Class 3: Saturday, September 7**

#### **I. Field trip: Carlyle House Historic Park**

Carlyle House is located at 121 N. Fairfax Street (across from City Hall) in historic downtown Alexandria, Virginia. The behind-the-scenes tour with director Susan Hellman starts at 10 am, but arrive by 9:30 am so we can discuss the architecture and landscape. There is metered street and garage parking available throughout Old Town and it's about one mile (20 minute walk) from the King Street Metro Station. There are many historic sites in Old Town (e.g., Gadsby's Tavern, Stabler-Ledbeater Apothecary, Torpedo Factory) so you may want to stay longer to explore.

To prepare, scan the following websites in advance:

- Carlyle House: [NRVPA.org/park/carlyle\\_house\\_historic\\_park](http://NRVPA.org/park/carlyle_house_historic_park)
- Historic Alexandria: [AlexandriaVA.gov/historic](http://AlexandriaVA.gov/historic)
- Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association: [VisitAlexandriaVA.com](http://VisitAlexandriaVA.com)

### **Class 4: September 12**

#### **I. Due: Site Visit Review #1 of 3**

Based on chapters 1-2 in Dirksen and chapters 1-2 in Ham.

#### **II. Field Trip: Ford's Theater National Historic Site**

Meet across the street from Ford's Theater at the **Petersen House** (aka *The House Where Lincoln Died*), 516 10th Street, NW. It's about a 10-minute walk from either Metro Center or Gallery Place Metro stations. There's lots to see so we'll need to move efficiently to see everything in two hours, but you're welcome to stay longer if you like. Be sure to arrive by 11:00 am so we can start promptly.

To prepare, scan the following websites in advance:

- Ford's Theater Society (the non-profit operator): [FordsTheater.org](http://FordsTheater.org)
- National Park Service (the government agency that owns the site): [NPS.gov/foth](http://NPS.gov/foth)

#### **III. Readings**

Get a head start on the readings for the next class!

### **Class 5: September 19**

#### **I. No class on September 19.**

#### **II. Due: Site Visit Review #2 of 3**

Based on chapters 3-4 in Dirksen and chapters 3 in Ham.

#### **III. Readings**

Get a head start on the readings for the next class!

### **Class 6: September 26**

#### **I. Due: Site Visit Review #3 of 3**

Based on chapters 5 in Dirksen and chapters 4-5 in Ham.

## II. In Class: Would It Be Famous in Idaho? Identifying Significance

Read (be prepared to discuss in class)

- “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” *National Register Bulletin*, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior (1997).
- Chapter 1 “Definitions” in *Invitation to Vernacular History: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes* by Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Collins Cromley (University of Tennessee Press, 2005), pp. 1-18.
- “The Social Construction of Historical Significance” by Howard L. Green in *Preservation of What, for Whom?* edited by Michael Tomlan (National Council for Preservation Education, 1999), pp. 85-94.

Scan (Why are these sites significant? How are these two nominations different from each other?)

- “Ford’s Theater National Historic Site,” National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 1982.
- “Women’s National Republican Club,” National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 2013.

Optional (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives)

- *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (National Park Service).
- “Introduction” in *Great Tours* by Barbara Levy, Sandra Lloyd, and Susan Schreiber (AltaMira Press, 2001), pp. 3-5.
- “Setting Objectives,” Chapter 2 in *Interpretation of Historic Sites, Second Edition* by William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low (AltaMira Press, 1996), pp. 8-21.

## Class 7: October 3

### I. Due: Historic Site Timeline and Historical Research

In class, we’ll use your timeline and research to develop interpretive topics and themes for the Carlyle House, so be sure to bring it with you.

### II. In Class: So What? Topics, Themes, and Theses

Read (be prepared to discuss in class)

- “Creating Memorable Visits” by Sandra Lloyd in Donnelly (2002)
- “Message,” Chapter 7 in *Interpretive Planning* by Lisa Brochu (InterpPress, 2007), pp. 93-106.
- Chapters 6 and 7 in Ham (2013)

Review (look for the themes in these interpretive plans)

- [Long Range Interpretive Plan for Assateague Island National Seashore](#) (2002)
- [Interpretive Plan for Stenton](#)
- Interpretive Plan for President Lincoln’s Cottage

- Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway Interpretive Plan (2012)

*Optional* (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives)

- Selected "Roundtable Workshop Activities" in *Great Tours* by Barbara Levy, Sandra Lloyd, and Susan Schreiber (AltaMira Press, 2001), pp. 17-35.
- "What Does It Mean to Think Historically?" by Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke (Organization of American Historians, 2007)
- "Practicing Thematic Interpretation," Chapter 2 in *Environmental Interpretation* by Sam Ham (Fulcrum Publishing, 1992), pp. 33-44.

### **III. In Class: Carlyle House Topics and Themes (part 1)**

For next week, draft 2-3 potential interpretive themes based upon our discussion.

## **Class 8: October 10**

### **II. In Class: Carlyle House Topics and Themes (part 2)**

Be prepared to discuss your potential interpretive themes.

### **III. In Class: Interpreting Women's History at Historic Sites**

Guest speaker: Mary A. van Balgooy, Executive Director, Peerless Rockville

*Read* (be prepared to discuss in class):

- "Making Gender Matter" by Debra Reid in Donnelly (2002)
- "Uncovering and Interpreting Women's History at Historic House Museums" by Patricia West in *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation*, edited by Gail Dubrow and Jennifer Goodman (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), pp. 83-95.

## **Class 9: October 17**

### **I. In Class: Who Visits Historic Sites and What Do They Want?**

*Read* (be prepared to discuss in class):

- "Engaging Visitors through Effective Communication" by Margaret Piatt in Donnelly (2002)
- "Exploratory Research of Tourist Motivations and Planning" by H. Bansal and H. A. Eiselt in *Tourism Management* 25 (2004): pp. 387-396.
- "Experience is the Best Teacher: Participation, Mediation, Authority, Trust" Chapter 4 in *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen (Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 89-114.
- "Tourism Marketing in an Era of Paradigm Shift" by Xiang (Robert) Li and James F. Petrick in *Journal of Travel Research* 46 (February 2008), pp. 235-244.

*Optional* (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives)

- *Life Stages of the Museum Visitor* by Susie Wilkening and James Chung (AAM Press, 2009).

- “Market Segmentation: Geographic, Demographic, Psychographic and More” by Jennifer Lombardo (Education Portal, 2012?). Video at <http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/market-segmentation-geographic-demographic-psychographic-more.html>.

## II. Assignment: Visitor Research

Resources on visitors, members, and audiences for Carlyle House.

## III. Mid-term Class Evaluation

### Class 10: October 24

#### I. In Class: Serving Tourists

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

- “Heritage Tourism on Route 66: Deconstructing Nostalgia” by Kellee Caton and Carla Almeida Santos in *Journal of Travel Research* 45:4 (May 2007), pp. 371-386.
- “Designing the Place’s Image,” chapter 6 in *Marketing Places* by Philip Kotler, Donald Haider, and Irving Rein (1993).

Scan (What does this resource contain? How is it related to historic sites?)

- [“The Power of Travel Promotion”](#) by the U. S. Travel Association, 2011
- “San Francisco Arts and Cultural Travel Study” by Destination Analysts (San Francisco Travel Association, 2010)

#### II. In Class: Serving the Local Community

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

- “Children’s Recollections of a Holistic House Visit: Recall of Experiences and Use of Cognitive Tools” by Denice Blair Leach in *Visitor Studies* 14:1 (2011), pp. 34-47
- “Around the Clustered World” in *The Clustered World* by Michael Weiss (Little, Brown, 2000), pp. 9-42.

Scan (How does this relate to historic sites? How can I use this information?):

- Neighborhood Profile for 94109 (San Francisco)
- “A Call for a National Conversation” by James Vaughan in *Forum Journal* (Spring 2008)
- *The Social Work of Museums* by Lois Silverman (Routledge, 2010)

### Class 11: October 31

#### I. In Class: I’ll Know it When I See It: What Does Great Interpretation Look Like?

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

- Chapter 6 in Dirksen
- “Greensboro, North Carolina: A Window on Race in the American South” by William H. Chafe in *American Places* edited by William Leuchtenburg (Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 41-51.

- “Curating the Recent Past: The Woolworth Lunch Counter, Greensboro, North Carolina” by William Yeingst and Lonnie G. Bunch in *Exhibiting Dilemmas*, edited by Amy Henderson and Adrienne Kaeppler (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), pp. 143-155.
- “Do History Museums Still Need Objects?” by Rainey Tisdale in *History News*, 66:3 (Summer 2011), pp. 19–24.

Optional (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives):

- “Principles of Best Practice for Education in Museums” in the American Association of Museum Education Committee’s [Excellence in Practice: Museum Education Principles and Standards](#) (2005)
- “Teaching” and “History in the Public Realm” in the American Historical Association’s [Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct](#) (2005)
- “Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts,” by Sam Wineburg in *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 80:7 (March 1999), pp. 488-499.
- “Letting Go: Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World” by Benjamin Filene in *History News*, 66: 4 (Autumn 2011), pp. 7-12.
- *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* by Jennifer L. Eichstedt and Stephen Small.
- “Object Knowledge: Every Museum Visitor an Interpreter” by Thomas Schlereth in *Patterns in Practice* (Museum Education Roundtable, 1992), pp. 102-111.
- “Grounds for Interpretation” by Catherine Howett in Donnelly (2002)
- “Gettysburg” by James McPherson in *American Places* edited by William Leuchtenburg (Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 261-267.

## II. In Class: Making it Tasty and Nutritious: Ingredients of an Interpretive Plan

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

- “Interpretation Planning” by Barbara Levy in Donnelly (2002)

Review (How are they different? How are they the same?)

- [Long Range Interpretive Plan for Assateague Island National Seashore](#) (2002)
- [Interpretive Plan for Stenton](#)
- Interpretive Plan for President Lincoln’s Cottage
- Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway Interpretive Plan (2012)

Optional (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives):

- *Interpretive Planning* by Lisa Brochu (2007)
- “[Standards and Practices for Interpretive Planning](#)” by the National Association for Interpretation (2009)

- [“Interpretive Planning for Historic Trails and Gateways”](#) by the Chesapeake Bay Office of the National Park Service
- [“Inspiring Learning for All”](#) by the Museums, Libraries, and Archives Council (this may be challenging to navigate but see if you can figure out their components for a “self-help improvement framework”)

### III. Assignment: Interpretive Planning Proposal for IMLS

#### Class 12: November 7

##### I. Due: Visitor Research Report

##### II. In Class: The Many Flavors of Tours

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

“Historic House Tours That Succeed” by Barbara Levy in Donnelly (2002)

In class, we’ll break up into small groups. Each group will discuss one of the topics below and develop a list of 4-6 standards and best practices for presentation to the group. Don't forget the principles in Dirksen and Ham may help you evaluate these approaches. Groups will be assigned in advance so you have a chance to review the materials before class. In class, you’ll work as a team to discuss and develop the standards and best practices.

##### a. Guided Tours of Period Rooms [Group A]

- “Historic House Furnishings Plans” by Bradley Brooks in Donnelly (2002)
- “I Wish You Could Take a Peek at Us” by Nancy Bryk in Donnelly (2002)
- [“Guidelines for Preparing Historic Furnishings Reports: an Annotated Sample of Contents”](#) by the National Park Service (retrieved September 2, 2012)
- “When Values Collide: Furnishing Historic Interiors” by Carol Petravage in *Preservation of What, for Whom?* edited by Michael Tomlan (National Council for Preservation Education, 1999), pp. 151-158.

##### b. Video Tours [Group B]

- [“Downtown Washington, D. C. Night Tour”](#) by CosmoPhotography (2011)
- [“Washington DC / Arlington VA, USA - 2011 Walking Tour”](#) by GlobeTrotterAlpha (2011)
- [“Washington D.C.: Up-close & Personal”](#) by TurnHereFilms (2007)
- [“Washington DC City Tour”](#) by DennisCallan (2009)
- [“A Perfect Day in Washington DC”](#) by LonelyPlanet (2008)

##### c. Audio Tours [Group C]

- [Civil War to Civil Rights](#) by Cultural Tourism DC
- [Downtown Boston](#) by Audissey Guides (also on iTunes)
- London by Rick Steves (iTunes)

- Cannery Row Walking Tour by the Monterey Bay Aquarium (iTunes)
- Sound Map: the Caledonian Road, a London Walks Podcast by the *Guardian* (iTunes)

d. Virtual Tours [Group D]

- [The White House](#) in the Google Art Project
- [Drayton Hall Online Tour](#)
- [Snapshots of Provence](#)
- [Clara Barton Interactive Experience](#)
- [Monticello Explorer](#)
- [Virtual Mansion Tour](#) (Mt. Vernon)

### III. In Class: Preparing a Grant Application (part 1)

Guest speaker

#### Class 13: Saturday, November 9

##### I. Field Trip: President Lincoln's Cottage, 9 am-12 noon

Meet at the entrance gate (Randolph Street and Rock Creek Church Road) at 9:15 am. It's about a half-mile from the closest Metro station at Georgia Avenue/Petworth (see directions on their website). The Visitor Center opens at 9:30 am and we'll be taking the first tour at 10:00 am. Be sure to explore [LincolnCottage.org](http://LincolnCottage.org) in advance.

#### Class 14: November 14

##### I. In Class: Beyond Tours

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

"Scamper," chapter 9 in *Thinkertoys Second Edition* by Michael Michalko (Ten Speed Press, 2006), pp. 72-108.

##### II. In Class: Best Practices for Self-guided Tour Brochures [Groups A, B, C, & D]

In class, you'll be given several tour brochures to evaluate. As a small group, review a set of self-guided tour brochures and identify their strengths and weaknesses based on the quality of the content, appropriateness for the audience, and the effective use of printing and design. Develop a list of four to six best practices, using the brochures as examples, which you will enhance and improve using *Thinkpak* by Michael Michalko.

##### III. Preparing a Grant Application (part 2)

## Class 15: November 21

NO class on November 28 (Thanksgiving)

### I. Due: IMLS proposal

- Draft narrative and budget due by Thursday, November 21 for peer review (time tbd)
- Final proposal due Monday, December 2 at 5:00 pm EST to professor
- Presentations on Thursday, December 6. You may be randomly selected to discuss your proposal in class.

### II. In Class: Challenges to Interpretation

Guest speaker: Carol Stapp, Director, Museum Education Program

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

- "Letting Go? Sharing Historical Authority in a User-generated World" by Benjamin Filene. *History News* 66, no. 4 (2011): 7-12.
- Review: "Letting Go? Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World" by Stephen Lubar. *Curator* 55, no. 2 (2012): 233-6.
- *Interpreting Difficult Knowledge: Technical Leaflet #255* by Julie Rose. American Association for State and Local History, 2011.
- "No More White History" by Philip Seitz. *Curator* 55, no. 3 (2012): 279-85.

### III. Building Interpretation That's Sustainable

Read (be prepared to discuss in class):

- "Building a Tool Kit for Your Interpreters" by Meggett Lavin in Donnelly (2002)

You'll be assigned one of the following and you'll need figure out how their ideas might this inform the sustainability of historic sites):

- "[The Antidote to Apathy](#)" by Dave Meslin, TEDxToronto 2010
- "[Once Upon a School](#)" by Dave Eggers, TED 2008
- "[Changing Education Paradigms](#)" by Ken Robinson, RSA Animate
- "The Next Cliveden" by David Young in *Forum Journal* (Spring 2008)
- "Brucemore" by James Kern in *Forum Journal* (Spring 2008)

Optional (if you want additional details or alternative perspectives):

- "Management," Chapter 5 in Brochu (2007)
- "Business Model Design" in *Business Model Generation* by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur (Wiley, 2010), pp. 244-269.
- "Profit is an Estimate" and "Cracking the Code of the Income Statement" in *Financial Intelligence* by Karen Berman and Joe Knight (Harvard Business Review Press, 2006), pp. 33-45.

## **Class 16: December 5**

### **I. In Class: Selected proposals to re-interpret Carlyle House**

Three to six students will be asked to share their proposals with the class.

### **II. In Class: What Does the Future Hold for Historic Sites? For You?**

*Read:*

- “Turning Points: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change” by Max A. van Balgooy, *History News* 68:2 (spring 2013), pp. 7-13.
- “Skills Most Valued for Entry-Level Professional Museum Positions” (Technical Leaflet #261) by William Bomar, *History News* 65, no. 1 (winter 2013).
- **III. In Class: Evaluation**