

# Introduction to Public History

HIS 311/511

Fall 2006

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**J. Mark Souther, Ph.D., Department of History, Cleveland State University**

Class Meetings: MWF 12:15-1:20  
Main Classroom, Room 332, 1899 East 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Office Hours: MW 2:00-3:15, or by appointment  
Rhodes Tower, Room 1904, 1860 East 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Telephone: (216) 687-3970  
Web: [academic.csuohio.edu/souther\\_m/public/home.htm](http://academic.csuohio.edu/souther_m/public/home.htm)  
Email: [m.souther@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.souther@csuohio.edu)

This course will explore “public history,” or history as it is applied beyond the classroom. It will examine urban history as a rich source for interaction between historians and the broader public. The course will examine the use of archival resources and the interpretation and presentation of history through museum exhibits, documentary films, public art, heritage tourism sites, community history projects, and various other public history venues. It will explore how these venues identify their public and how they utilize historical evidence to reach that audience. The course will also consider the role of memory in advancing certain interpretations and suppressing others. Throughout the semester, guest speakers from various Northeast Ohio public history venues will bring their perspectives into the classroom.

The practical component of the course involves developing public history exhibits that interpret the transformation of urban space, specifically Cleveland’s Euclid Corridor. Students will receive training and field experience in visualizing the past through the critical examination of historical images, as well as studying evaluating oral histories collected by the Euclid Corridor Oral History Project. The course project—part of a larger collaboration between the Cleveland State University Department of History and Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Cleveland Public Art, and ideastream (WCPN radio and WVIZ television) to create a new sense of place along Euclid Avenue—will culminate in student-created exhibits combining historical images and sounds with interpretive text.

## **Required Readings**

Available at the CSU Bookstore, 2400 Euclid Avenue, [www.csuohiobookstore.com](http://www.csuohiobookstore.com).

Glassberg, David. *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

Greenspan, Anders. *Creating Colonial Williamsburg*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.

Hayden, Dolores. *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995.

Johns, Michael. *Moment of Grace: The American City in the 1950s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Additional readings available on Electronic Course Reserve (ECR).

### **Assignments—Detailed Instructions**

#### **Important:**

1. All assignments must be typed (double-spaced unless otherwise noted) using 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The final draft of the essay assignment will be emailed, so it must be in MS Word (.doc) format.
2. You must submit all components of each assignment in order to receive a grade. In the event that you submit only a portion of an assignment, a grade of zero (0) will be assigned. If portions of an assignment are submitted after the due date, a deduction of 10 percent per day late (beginning after the class meeting on the due date and inclusive of weekends/holidays) will apply to the entire assignment. (See Policies.)

#### **Journal. 20 points.**

This assignment is intended to encourage the completion of all assigned reading, which in turn leads to more lively and productive classroom discussion. I will collect journal responses on the 10 due dates designated “**J**” in the daily schedule. I will provide a list of questions to help you focus your responses. Your responses must contain 1-2 pages of body text (which indicates that you have clearly understood and thought about the day’s topic). Journal responses will not be accepted late under any circumstances but may be submitted early.

#### **Descriptive Essay.\* 5 points.**

Choose a topic from the list distributed in class. Each topic corresponds to a place or places in Cleveland, so your next step is to visit your site/s. Note what and whom you see there. What might be the history of your site? If possible, take digital pictures. Speculate on the past and present uses of your site/s, as well as on the surroundings (including the larger neighborhood/s). Prepare a typed essay in which you describe your site/s and its/their surroundings. Your essay must include in its body no less than 3 1/2 pages of double-spaced text. \* Two of the project topics (See topics designated with an asterisk below.) do not lend themselves to writing an essay according to the above guidelines. I will provide individualized information for a comparable essay assignment as appropriate.

#### **Image/Source Collection. 10 points (5 points each).**

- 1) Collect and analyze at least 15 historical images that you order on a CD from the Cleveland State University Department of Special Collections on the third floor of the Cleveland State library. You must request the CD no later than 10 days prior to the submission deadline in order to receive it with sufficient time to complete this portion of the project, so don’t procrastinate. Your image analysis will consider in concise form (1 typed, single-spaced paragraph per image, compiled in a single document) the “who, what, where, and when” of your images. In other words, use any printed information on the back of the images as well as your own visual analysis to say as much as you can about each image. These images will comprise one of the primary sources for your exhibit later in the semester, so this is a critical step in the course project.
- 2) Prepare a bibliography (single-spaced entries separated by double spaces) of books, articles (magazine, journal, and/or newspaper), and previously conducted Euclid Corridor interviews that you plan to consult in the completion of the course project. The books and articles must include both Cleveland-specific sources and scholarly sources that suggest the broader national historical context for your topic. Michael Johns, *Moment of Grace*, is a good example and a good starting

point for the latter type of source. I will work with you individually (in person or via email) to expand your bibliography, but it is your responsibility to make use of the sources in the bibliography toward completing your exhibit.

### **Clip Collection. 15 points.**

Using InterClipper Professional (training to be provided in class on Sept. 20), listen to at least 4 interviews for your topic, preferably more. As you listen, use the software to create at least 8 substantive clips, each of them at least 30 seconds in duration. In InterClipper, enter your analysis of each clip, noting how it reflects an important theme you wish to explore in your exhibit. In other words, choose at least 8 clips that you feel confident contextualizing historically. Your analysis is an important step in your later development of a historical narrative in your exhibit and accompanying contextual essay. I will review and evaluate your clips and analyses on InterClipper.

### **Exhibit. 50 points (Prelim Essay=10 points; Presentation=15 points; Revised Essay=25 points)**

The final exhibit will consist of a CD containing a 5- to 8-frame documentary presentation (movie or slide show) created in either MS Movie Maker, iMovie, or MS PowerPoint (training provided in class on Nov. 17), and an “exhibit essay” (contextual essay) of no fewer than 15 pages of body text. Your presentation and essay must draw on: 1. Material from at least 4 interviews; 2. Your analysis of historical images; 3. Supplementary research in the holdings of area libraries and archives.

Your presentation must include: 1. At least one image per frame; 2. At least 4 interview sound clips; 3. Supplementary text (concise) as needed to make important connections between images, clips, and ideas.

Your exhibit essay must make an interpretive statement about your project topic that draws on the material contained in your interviews (quoting material from your clips is a good idea). It should be written not as an academic paper but as a creative essay that provides a compelling narrative, much like you would expect to hear on the National Public Radio (NPR) program or read in a magazine such as *The New Yorker*. In other words, it should be a learned but widely accessible piece of writing.

In the tenth week of the semester, you will submit a preliminary essay of no fewer than 10 pages of body text. I will provide suggestions for revision upon returning your essay. In the thirteenth week of the semester, you will submit your revised exhibit essay via email for Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) credit. (See Writing Across the Curriculum under Policies below.) In the fourteenth week, you will submit your exhibit presentation on CD. I will work with you individually on the next class day by appointment in lieu of a class meeting to edit your presentation as needed. In the fifteenth week of the semester, you will present your movie or slide show to the class. The presentation to the class is mandatory and accounts for 33% of your Visual Presentation grade (or 5% of your overall course grade).

### **HIS 511 Students.**

In addition to the above assignments, graduate students will listen to 6+ interviews, create and analyze 15+ clips, entering topical/thematic codes for each (detailed directions forthcoming). You will also include clips from at least 6 interviews in your presentation. Finally, your exhibit essay will be evaluated on a graduate level and should be 18+ pages in final form.

## **Assignment Products—At a Glance**

### **Journal. 20 points.**

10 1-2 page responses corresponding to selected assignments

### **Descriptive Essay. 5 points.**

3 1/2+ page essay that reflects your observations of the site(s) corresponding to your topic

### **Image/Source Collection. 10 points.**

CD with 15+ historical images ordered 10+ days prior to deadline from CSU Special Collections

Document with 1-paragraph analyses of 15+ historical images

Bibliography of sources to be used in project

### **Clip Collection. 15 points.**

8+ clips (HIS 511: 15+) of 0:30 duration or more, taken from 4+ interviews (HIS 511: 6+), plus analyses of each

### **Exhibit. 50 points.**

10+ page preliminary essay (10 points)

CD of 5-8 frame presentation with 4+ sound clips (HIS 511: 6+) (15 points)

15+ page revised essay (HIS 511: 18+) that accompanies your presentation (25 points)

## **Assignment Topics**

\* Cleveland: 1967 (City Club/Stokes)

Cleveland Cultural Gardens

Detroit Shoreway

\* Federal Art of the 1930s

Shaker Lakes

St. Clair-Superior

## **Policies**

**Assignment Submissions.** All assignments must be submitted in complete form no later than in class on the due date. Any extenuating circumstances that prevent submission of an assignment must be brought to my attention prior to the due date. Any work submitted after the class meeting on the due date or on the day after will incur a penalty of 10 percent, with an additional 10 percent subtracted per subsequent day (inclusive of weekends and holidays).

**Extensions.** Occasionally extreme circumstances make it difficult or impossible to submit an assignment on the due date. You may request an extension in advance. If granted, a new due date will be identified in consultation with me.

**Attendance.** If you anticipate not being able to be in class consistently at the appointed time, you should withdraw from the course. You are allowed two unexcused absences during the semester, beyond which you will lose 0.5 point from your course average per unexcused absence.

**Student Conduct.** Unacceptable conduct will not be tolerated because it undermines the learning environment necessary to students' success. Unacceptable conduct includes but is not limited to: excessive or disruptive talking or noisemaking, arriving late to class or leaving early without notice, intimidating or threatening anyone in the classroom, sleeping, bringing any activated electronic

equipment in the classroom such as cell phones and pagers.

**Academic Integrity.** Using someone else’s ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism. “Ideas or phrasing” includes written or spoken material ranging from whole papers and paragraphs to sentences and phrases. “Someone else” can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; and a paper-writing “service” (online or otherwise) which offers to sell written papers for a fee.

Source: Capitol Community College’s guide to plagiarism (based on the MLA style):  
[webster.comnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml](http://webster.comnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml)

**Writing Assistance.** The Department of History offers a History Tutoring Center where you may seek assistance in preparing written work. The Center is located in Rhodes Tower, Room 1913, and may be reached at (216) 687-3921.

**Student Disabilities.** If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to contact the Office of Student Disabilities, which will work with you to develop a reasonable course of action that will enable you to complete the course successfully. You must then provide proper documentation to me if you are requesting any special consideration of your disability.

**Writing Across the Curriculum (Applies only to HIS 311).** This course meets the following criteria for the Writing Across the Curriculum General Education requirement:

1. Students must be required to write a minimum of 2,000 words in writing assignments.
2. The required writing must be in at least two separate assignments or drafts. The instructor should give feedback to assist the student in preparing subsequent papers or drafts of papers. This must include feedback on the writing. It should not consist entirely of mechanical correction of punctuation and grammar.
3. In order to receive a C or better in this course, the student must write at a satisfactory skill level (C or better). If the student’s writing is weak but shows understanding of the course material, the student may be assigned a D, in which case WAC credit will not be received for the course.
4. Maximum enrollment for this course is 35.

In order to receive *Writing Across the Curriculum* credit for this course, you must complete the course with at least a C average. You must also turn in all written work on time in order to avoid substantial penalties to your grade.

## Daily Schedule

“J” indicates that a journal response is due for the accompanying assignment on this date.

### Week 1

Mon., Aug. 28	Course Introduction
Wed., Aug. 30	What is Public History? Cassity, “History and the Public Purpose” (ECR) Linenthal, “Committing History in Public” (ECR) Glassberg, <i>Sense of Place</i> , intro.
Fri., Sept. 1	Introduction to the Euclid Corridor Project

### Week 2

Mon., Sept. 4	<b>LABOR DAY (No Class)</b>
Wed., Sept. 6 J	The American City since 1945: Downtown, Neighborhoods, & Suburbs Johns, <i>Moment of Grace</i> , chap. 1, 2, or 3
Fri., Sept. 8	Sense of Place Glassberg, <i>Sense of History</i> , chap. 6
	<b>Topic Selection Due</b>

### Week 3

Mon., Sept. 11 J	Whose History? Who “Owns” the Past? Glassberg, <i>Sense of History</i> , chaps. 2-3
Wed., Sept. 13	Contested Pasts in Public History Gardner, “Contested Terrain” (ECR) Alexander, “Do Visitors Get It?” (ECR) <i>Between a Rock and a Hard Place</i> , americanhistory.si.edu/sweatshops
Fri., Sept. 15	Visualizing Urban History Through Image Analysis: in CSU Special Coll. <b>Descriptive Essay Due</b>

### Week 4

Mon., Sept. 18	Oral History as Public History
Wed., Sept. 20	Introduction to Oral History Editing (InterClipper tutorial): in RT502 (Guests: Dr. Michael Frisch, Judith Weiland, and Douglas Lambert, Randforce Associates, SUNY-Buffalo)
Fri., Sept. 22 J	The Challenges of Presenting Local History Analyze CD of Interview Clips

### Week 5

Mon., Sept. 25	Archives: Collecting and Processing Materials Tryon, “Archivists and Records Managers” (ECR)
Wed., Sept. 27	Archives: Conserving and Making Materials Accessible (Guest: Dr. Judith Cetina, Cuyahoga County Archives)
Fri., Sept. 29 J	The Power of Place: Urban History as Public History Hayden, <i>Power of Place</i> , chaps. 1-5 + any one chapter from chaps. 6-10 <b>Image/Source Collection Due</b>

**Week 6**

- Mon., Oct. 2 Introduction to Historical Societies  
Franco, "In Urban History Museums and Historical Societies" (ECR)  
Patterson, "In Local Historical Agencies, Museums, and Societies"  
(ECR)
- Wed., Oct. 4 **J** Introduction to History Museums  
Kulik, "Designing the Past" (ECR)  
Wallace, "Visiting the Past" (ECR)
- Fri., Oct. 6 Planning the Stokes Exhibit at WRHS  
(Guest: Amanda Zima, WRHS)

**Week 7**

- Mon., Oct. 9 **COLUMBUS DAY (No Class)**
- Wed., Oct. 11 Interpretation in Museums  
Roth, *Preserving the Past*, intro. + chaps. 2-3 (ECR)
- Fri., Oct. 13 Education in Museums  
(Guest: Janice Ziegler, WRHS)  
**Clip Collection Due**

**Week 8**

- Mon., Oct. 16 The Fundamentals of Oral History  
*Folklife and Fieldwork*, [www.loc.gov/folklife/fieldwork](http://www.loc.gov/folklife/fieldwork)
- Wed., Oct. 18 **J** Analyzing Oral History  
Analyze Interview CD
- Fri., Oct. 20 Refining Interview Clips

**Week 9**

- Mon., Oct. 23 **J** The History of Historic Preservation  
Wallace, "Preserving the Past" & "Preservation Revisited" (ECR)
- Wed., Oct. 25 Issues in Historic Preservation: Widening of Scope  
Hodder, "Savannah's Changing Past" (ECR)
- Fri., Oct. 27 Issues in Historic Preservation: Memory & Space  
Weyeneth, "The Architecture of Racial Segregation" (ECR)

**Week 10**

- Mon., Oct. 30 Introduction to Historical Film  
Glassberg, *Sense of History*, chap. 4
- Wed., Nov. 1 Historical Documentaries
- Fri., Nov. 3 History and the Web  
Rosenzweig, "Public & Private Pathways on History Web" (ECR)  
**Exhibit Essay First Draft Due**

**Week 11**

- Mon., Nov. 6 Historical House Museums  
(Guest: Laurie Gilles, Stan Hywet Hall)  
Herbst, "Historic Houses" (ECR)

Wed., Nov. 8 **J** Hidden History and House Tours  
 Eichstedt & Small, *Representations of Slavery*, chap. 4 or 5, 8 (ECR)  
 Fri., Nov. 10 **VETERANS DAY (No Class)**

**Week 12**

Mon., Nov. 13 The History of Heritage Tourism  
 Wed., Nov. 15 **J** Heritage Tourism and Outdoor History Museums  
 Greenspan, *Creating Colonial Williamsburg*  
 Fri., Nov. 17 iMovie/MovieMaker Tutorial

**Week 13**

Mon., Nov. 20 **J** Heritage Tourism and Urban Transformation  
 Stanonis, “French Town,” and Souther, “Preservation and Profit” (ECR)  
 Wed., Nov. 22 History and the Federal Government: An Introduction  
**Exhibit Essay Due (for WAC credit completion)**  
 Fri., Nov. 24 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (No Class)**

**Week 14**

Mon., Nov. 27 History and the National Park Service  
 (Guest: Jennie Vasarhelyi, Cuyahoga Valley National Park)  
 Wed., Nov. 29 Making a Career Out of Public History  
**Exhibit Presentation Due**  
 Fri., Dec. 1 Individual Student Consultations

**Week 15**

Dec. 4-6-8 Student Presentations

**Week 16 Final Exam Period**

Dec. 11, 1:00-3:00 PM—Reflecting on the Project