

HIS 626 – The Practice of Public History

Fall 2008, Tuesdays, 3:30-6:20 p.m.

Classroom: MHRA 2207

Professor Benjamin Filene

office hours: Thursdays 2:00-4:00 and by appointment: MHRA 2137

office phone: 336/334-5645

home phone: 919/932-7722 (don't call after 10:00 p.m.)

bpfilene@uncg.edu

What you're getting yourself into:

This course is not an instructional in how to claw your way to the top; rather it's an introduction to what it is like to work to within a public history institution and what it takes to thrive in one.

“You gotta serve somebody,” croaks Bob Dylan. Everyone at every level of every organization is simultaneously a leader and a follower. This course is about understanding both sides of that relationship and how to do productive and fulfilling work from both ends.

The course starts from a few key premises:

- The day-to-day, nuts-and-bolts parts of an institution's work take on life only when you understand the goals these practices were created to achieve. The policies, procedures, and programs that fill professional manuals and “how to” books exist to achieve big-picture goals for institutions.

- Fundamentally, these goals involve relationships—relationships between
 - an institution and its constituencies (“Reaching Audiences”)
 - an institution and other institutions (“Reaching Partners”)
 - an institution and its employees (“Reaching Colleagues”)

The course is structured around the theory and practice involved in building these three kinds of relationships. Throughout, the course links practical skill—writing a mission statement, creating a marketing plan, writing a budget—with discussion of the broader purposes these tools are intended to accomplish.

How we'll go about it

The best way to learn about public history work is to do some. So, in this course you will not only have regular readings, discussions, and writings but you will also each be involved in designing, collaboratively, a history project that will be practical, relevant, and engaging to real local institutions and public audiences. This semester will involve planning projects that will focus on the mill villages that sustained the Cone Mills factories in Greensboro. Next semester (HIS627) we'll implement those plans and create these projects!

How you'll be evaluated

The skills that you need to succeed in this course are ones that you will need to thrive in the workplace:

- **reading and analyzing** thoughtfully and with an eye for new ideas
- **speaking** with passion, clarity, and respect
- **writing** clearly and persuasively
- **collaborating** with energy, sensitivity, and an awareness of how much you can learn from your peers

You will be graded on

Class participation—15%: attending class, doing the reading, completing the Information Interview assignment (see below), writing thoughtful and on-time weekly responses to the reading (see below), speaking up in discussions, and helping to foster a sense of shared exploration within the classroom

Weekly responses: Each week, short, informal reactions to that week's readings (roughly a couple of paragraphs) will be due. These must be posted on our class's Blackboard Discussion Board by 8:00 a.m. each Tuesday.

Information interview: After reading in Museum Careers (Schlatter) conduct an interview with a museum professional and then give a 10-minute in-class presentation about it to the class: students sign up for dates—September 9-November 11

Assignment #1—20%: Analytical essay:

“Institutional Personality Assessment”: an analysis of the clarity and coherence of a local institution's mission, brand, marketing, fund-raising, and interpretive program—*due October 7*

Assignment #2—15%: Compilation and analysis of primary sources

Mill Village Brief: a selection and analysis of materials from the Cone Mills Corporation Records in the Southern Historical Collection at UNC Chapel Hill—*due October 28*

Final Project and Presentation—30%:

Grant application for mill villages project—due December 2

Note: Each student's grade for the collaborative final project will be determined by the quality of the product and presentation and, as well, by each individual's contributions to the project. Each student will be asked to assess the contributions that each team member (including they themselves) made to the project and to the collaborative process.

Final paper—20%: reflection essay on the final project—due December 12

Grading scale:

A=93-100; A-=90-92; B+=87-89; B=83-86; B-: 80-82; C+=77-79; C=73-76

If things go awry...

...it's your responsibility to tell me—right away. If papers are late without direct, prior approval from me, I deduct ½ a letter grade per day—no exceptions. If your project is dead-ending or your peer collaboration imploding, I need to hear about it *before* it's too late to resolve the issues.

Books to Buy

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great; Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer*, 2005.

Deutsch, Jennifer and Tamara Real. *Just Who Do Your Customers Think You Are? A Guide to Branding Your Organization* (Michigan Museums Association), 2002.

Genoways, Hugh and Lynne M. Ireland. *Museum Administration: An Introduction*, 2003.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd, et. al. *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*, 2000.

Lundin, Stephen C., Harry Paul, and John Christensen. *Fish! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*, 2000.

McLean, Kathy. *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*, 2005.

Rosenzweig, Roy and David Thelen. *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*, 2000.

Schlatter, N. Elizabeth. *Museum Careers: A Practical Guide for Students and Novices*, 2008.

Academic Integrity Policy

All students have a responsibility to uphold the standards of “*Honesty, Trust, Fairness, Respect, and Responsibility*” detailed in the Academic Integrity Policy. Instances of cheating, plagiarism, misuse of academic resources, falsification of information, and facilitating of academic dishonesty are treated with utmost seriousness by the history department and dealt with severely by the University administration. The full policy appears in the *Student Calendar/Handbook* and at academicintegrity.uncg.edu.

Per university policy, you will be asked to sign a copy of the Academic Integrity Pledge for each major assignment in this class.

Special Needs

If you require accommodations for special learning needs, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Disability Services, located within the Elliot University Center (334-5770)—and please let me know!

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Whose History? Who's History?

August 26—Introductions

Before first class:

Read about the National Council on Public History's debate about "What Is Public History" (including Cathy Stanton's summary) at the NCPH website:

<http://www.ncph.org/WhatisPublicHistory/tabid/282/Default.aspx>

Read some of the actual Listserv postings about "What Is Public History" from May, June, and July 2007, archived here: <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=lm&list=H-Public>.

Come to class with two comments that interested you.

Schlatter, N. Elizabeth. "Introduction: Why Work in a Museum." In *Museum Careers: A Practical Guide for Students and Novices*: 9-15.

Dibble-Dieng, Meadow. "A Modest Proposal." *Brown Alumni Monthly* (September-October 2004): 30-33.

Schlusser, Jim. "Lintheads' and Proud of It." In *The Beat Goes On: A Celebration of Greensboro's Character and Diversity*, Gayle Hicks Fripp, ed. (2008): 3 pp. [**BF will hand out**]

September 2: Whose History? Who's History?

Guest speakers: Paul and Judith Sams, former residents of White Oak mill village

Rosenzweig, Roy and David Thelen. *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (2000): Introduction, Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, and Afterthoughts (everything *except* Chapters 2-3).

Kelley, Robert. "Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects." *Public Historian* 1 (Autumn 1978): 16-28.

Conard, Rebecca. "Facepaint History in the Season of Introspection." *Public Historian* 25 (Autumn, 2003): 9-24.

Brown, Marvin A. *Greensboro: An Architectural Record* (1995): 52-59; 84-85; 226-227; 244-255.

Browning, Wilt. "Introduction" and "A Death in the Family." In *Linthead: Growing Up in Carolina Cotton Mill Village*: [i-iii] and 1-9.

Review website: “Remember Cliffside” (Cliffside Historical Society)
<http://remembercliffside.com/>

On your own: Drive through the Greensboro mill villages

Reaching Colleagues I

September 9: Working Collaboratively and team dynamics

Guest speakers: Lynn and Jim Rumley, directors of the Textile Heritage Center, Cooleemee, NC

Fisher, Roger and Alan Sharp. “Lateral Leadership.” In *Getting It Done: How to Lead When You’re Not in Charge* (1998): 14-34.

Schrage, Michael. “Collaboration and Creativity.” *Museum News* (March/April 2004): 44-48.

McLean, Kathy. “Problem-Solving in Exhibitions.” In *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*: 81-91.

Ayan, Jordan. “Tapping into the Creative Process.” In *Aha! 10 Ways to Free Your Creative Spirit and Find Your Great Ideas* (1996): 40-44.

Zenger-Miller, Inc. “The Four Phases of Team Development.” In *Building A Foundation of Trust*: 16-17.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd, et. al. “Preface.” In *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (2000 edition): xii-xxvi.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd and Robert Korstad and James Leloudis. “Cotton Mill People: Work, Community, and Protest in the Textile South, 1880-1940.” *American Historical Review* 91 (April 1986): 245-286.

Reaching Audiences

September 16: Making Public Institutions Matter and mission statements

Carr, David. “In the Context of the Possible.” In *The Promise of Cultural Institutions* (2003): 37-54.

Anderson, Gail, ed. *Museum Mission Statements: Building a Distinct Identity* (2000 [1998]): 12-24.

Sevcenko, Liz. "Putting Mission First." In *The Importance of Mission in Guiding Museum Practice* (2003): 9-11.

Durel, John. "Mission and Profit." In *The Importance of Mission in Guiding Museum Practice* (2003): 21-23.

Minchin, Timothy J. "'Color Means Something': Black Pioneers, White Resistance, and Interracial Unionism in the Southern Textile Industry, 1957-1980." *Labor History* 39 (May 1998): 109-133.

Glass, Brent D. "Corporatism and Consolidation: 1936-1960" and "Struggle for Survival: 1960-1990." In *The Textile Industry in North Carolina: A History* (1992): 78-106. [**BF will hand out in class**]

**September 23: Getting on the Radar Screen
and marketing plans/branding**

CLASS MEETS AT 3:30 IN WRITING CENTER, MHRA 3110

One-page project proposal due

Pine, B. Joseph II and James H. Gilmore. "Welcome to the Experience Economy." *Harvard Business Review* (July 1998): 97-105.

Deutsch, Jennifer and Tamara Real. *Just Who Do Your Customers Think You Are? A Guide to Branding Your Organization* (2002)

Wilkening, Susan. "Suck It Up: Curated Brand Experiences." *Museum News* (November-December 2007): 7 pp.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 11: 247-272.

[September 25 (tentative), 4:00-6:00 p.m.: Internship presentations]

**September 30: Preserving (and Deserving) the Public's Trust
and ethics and collections management policies**

Carr, David. "Museums and Public Trust." In *The Promise of Cultural Institutions* (2003): 109-131

Chew, Ron. "Taking Action!" *Museum News* (March/April 2004): 38-43.

Boyd, Willard L. "Museums as Centers of Controversy." *Daedalus* 128 (summer 1999): 185-228.

Crosson, David. "Museums and Social Responsibility: A Cautionary Tale."

History News (July-August 1988): 6-9.

Simmons, John. "Managing Things: Crafting a Collections Policy." *Museum News* (January/February 2004): 28-31.

Gardner, James B. and Elizabeth Merritt. "Collections Planning: Pinning Down a Strategy" (2002). In *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, Gail Anderson, ed. (2004): 292-6.

Vaughan, James M. Rethinking the Rembrandt Rule." *Museum* (March/April 2008): 2 pp.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 10: 223-245.

Optional: Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 8: 175-195.

Reaching Partners

October 7: Collaborating with Communities and organizing for civic engagement

Assignment #1 (Institutional Personality Assessment) due

Archibald, Robert R. "Friends and Colleagues." In *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (1999): 155-178.

Archibald, Robert R. "Introduction." In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002): 1-6.

Hirzy, Ellen. "Mastering Civic Engagement: A Report from the American Association of Museums." In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002): 9-20.

Sevcenko, Liz, The Reverend Deacon Edgar W. Hopper, and Lisa Chice. "St. Augustine's Episcopal Church and The Lower East Side Tenement Museum." In *History as Catalyst for Civic Dialogue: Case Studies from Animating Democracy*, Pam Korza and Barbara Schaffer Bacon, eds. (2005): 1-25.

October 14: Pursuing Outreach vs. "In-Reach" and diversity hiring plans

Archibald, Robert R. "Everybody's Business." In *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (1999): 178-197.

- Sullivan, Robert. "Evaluating the Ethics and Consciences of Museums." In *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, Gail Anderson, ed. (2004): 257-63.
- Chew, Ron. "Community Roots." In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002): 63-64.
- Lusaka, Jane. "Reflecting a Nation: Museum Fellows Program Expands Its Reach." *Museum News* (July/August 2000): 36-39.
- Bernard, Pamela J. "When Seeking a Diverse Faculty, Watch Out for Legal Minefields." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 29, 2006): B28-31. [**BF will hand out in class**]
- "Seek and You Shall Find." *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* (February 16, 2005): D1, D6. [**BF will hand out in class**]

October 21—no class (fall break)

October 28: Collaborating with Donors I—Listening and development plans

Assignment #2 (Mill Village Brief) due

In class: 10-second and 1-minute project presentations

Guest speaker: Fred Goss, Director, Greensboro Historical Museum

- Falk, John H. and Beverly K. Sheppard. "Attending to the Bottom Line." In *Thriving in the Knowledge Age* (2006): 161-181.
- Wolfe, Michael and Robert Ferguson. "New Money, New Demands: The Arrival of the Venture Philanthropist." *Museum News* (January/February 2001): 56-59.
- Gibson, Eric. "The Enronification of a Museum Near You." *Opinion Journal* (February 15, 2002): 2 pp.
- Daniel, Pete. "History with Boundaries: How Donors Shape Museum Exhibits." *OAH Newsletter* 36 (August 2008): 6 pp. [**BF will hand out in class**]
- Jahnke, Art. "Losing the Win-Win Game?" *Museum News* (September/October 1993): 34-35, 50-52.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 6: 121-160.

Optional: Jones, Chris. "The Corporate Seduction of Museums." *Chicago Tribune* (February 16, 2003): 6 pp.

**November 4: Collaborating with Donors II—Stating Your Case
and budgets and grant-writing**

Draft of slogans/logos and solicitation letters due in class (each person chooses to do one or other)

Guest speaker: Dr. Harlan Gradin, Associate Director/Director of Programs & Community Development, North Carolina Humanities Council

Radock, Michael. "Words to the Wise." *NSFRE Journal* (winter 1990): 19-24.

Hoffman, Marilyn. "Writing Realistic Grant Budgets." *Museum News* (January/February 1980): 48-53

"Five Steps to Easier Proposal Writing": 2-9.
[**BF will hand out in class**]

Staff, Grizzard. "13 Proven Elements to Make Your Direct Mail Sizzle": 2 pp.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 5: 91-119.

Reaching Colleagues II

**November 11: Building a Vision
and board management**

Draft of all NCHC materials due

Gardner, Howard. "Preface to the Paperback Edition," "Preface," "The Leader's Stories," **and** "Lessons from the Past, Implications for the Future." In *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (1996 [1995]): ix-xv, 41-65, and 285-306.

[Kegan, Robert]. "Encouraging Leaders: New Models for Leadership in Museums: An Interview with Harvard Psychologist Robert Kegan." *Museum News* (November/December 2003): 34-39.

Kotter, John P. "What Leaders Really Do." *Harvard Business Review* (May-June 1990): 103-111.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 3 (excerpt): 39-55.

[November 13 (tentative): Resume/Cover-Letter Workshop at Career Planning Office, 1:00-3:00 p.m.]

**November 18: Managing Change I—Business Models
and strategic planning**

Receive comments on NCHC materials from Harlan Gradin & BF

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great; Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer*, 2005.

Falk, John H. and Beverly K. Sheppard. "Preface and "A World in Transition."
In *Thriving in the Knowledge Age* (2006): vii-xi and 3-25.

Bridges, William. Introduction and Chapter 1. In *Managing Transitions: Making the Best of Change* (2003 [1991]): ix-xi; 1-10.

Zenger-Miller, Inc. "Creating a Safe Setting for Change." *Building A Foundation of Trust*: 2-11.

Franco, Barbara and Laura Roberts. "The Change Cycle": 2 pp.

Roberts, Laura. "Reinterpretation and Change: The Amos Smith House" and "Is It All History? The Burlington History Museum" (2004): 2-12.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 4: 75-90.

November 25: Leading from Below

and human resources/personnel management and finding your niche

Drafts of combined NCHC grant due to BF

Fisher, Roger and Alan Sharp. "Engagement" and "Choose to Help." In *Getting It Done: How to Lead When You're Not in Charge* (1998): 136-57; 200-4.

Lundin, Stephen C. Harry Paul, and John Christensen. *Fish! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*, 2000.

Durel, John. "Qm2 Work Style Assessment" (2004): 4 pp.

Bryan, Charles F., Jr. *Museum News*. "Am I A Historian?" *History News* (summer 2002): 5-8.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 7: 161-173.

December 2:

Final projects due

In class: final project presentations/Celebration!

December 5—final NCHC grant submitted

December 9: no class (“Reading Day”)

December 12: *Final papers due* (no final exam)