



Fall 2017

Honors College, U Heights, 10-11:15 TR

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HCOL 185: Art and Its Destruction

Course Description:

On September 23, 2014, John Kerry, Secretary of the State, spoke about the intentional destruction of art by ISIL (ISIS), and stated, "For the proud people of Iraq and Syria—ancient civilizations, civilizations of great beauty, great accomplishment, of extraordinary history and intellectual achievement—the destruction of their heritage is a purposeful final insult, and another example of ISIL's implacable evil. ISIL is stealing lives, yes, but it's also stealing the soul of millions."

ISIL is by no means the first group to destroy works of art as a means of warfare. In fact, throughout history, especially in times of political and/or religious strife, art objects have been the target of thievery and destruction as a means by which a foe wreaks damage to its rival. In this course, we will examine important case studies over a wide expanse of time and place in order to understand what happened (why particular sorts of art objects were destroyed or stolen, for example) and what the outcomes were. We will discuss how and why art is a powerful tool of war and protest. We will also examine some of the issues involved today as museums sort out issues of ownership and propriety of objects obtained during or post-war, possibly by questionable means.

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify and describe works of art from a variety of time periods that were intentionally destroyed.

Students will be able to pinpoint various rationales given for the destruction of art of the past and present.

Students will reflect on the value of art and the importance of its preservation in times of warfare, social and religious conflict, oppression, protest and revolt.

Students will be able to articulate their ideas and newly-gained knowledge about art and its destruction in the form of papers, online and in-class discussions.

Students will improve their reading, synthesizing, research and writing skills.

Students will present readings and research to the class so as to gain a better understanding of the material and to improve public speaking and presentation skills.



Assignments and Assessment:

Your final grade will be composed of the following:

Research paper: 10% rough draft; 20% final paper

Students will write a 5-7 page research paper on a relevant case not covered in class (focusing on one object, one collector, or one incident). The paper will be turned in in stages--1. choice of topic and thesis statement 2. a first draft, with a peer review session, 3. a rewritten draft, turned in to me for my commentary, then 5. a final paper with further revisions. Students will learn how to locate sources in a variety of media and learn how to evaluate the critical value of online and print sources in research.

Research paper presentation: 5%

Students will present their papers to the class, creating powerpoint/prezi/keynote, etc. slide presentation, or a weebly site or similar.

Course reflection essays: 20% each (40%)

Students will write two course reflection essays. The essays will draw from class discussions and readings. I will post questions to guide your responses. The essays will be posted in the journal in Course Materials on Blackboard.

Object presentation: 5%

Students will also be assigned a class day for which they must prepare and present an example of looted or destroyed art. Ideally, the examples will correspond with the topic of the day.

Participation: 20%

Students are expected to be active participants in all class discussions and activities. The course is intended to be discussion-based and it is imperative that students come well prepared to talk about the readings. Students should bring in their notes from the reading and at least three points or questions to contribute to the discussion.

Policies

Missed deadlines:

All work will be docked a half-letter grade for each day late.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory and will be checked at the start of each class. If students have more than three unexcused absences in the course of the semester, their final grade will be docked by 5% (one-half of a letter grade) for each additional absence.

Other information:

Readings are posted on Blackboard in Course Materials, unless otherwise noted. *Iconoclash* and other relevant books have been placed on reserve in Bailey-Howe.



There is a facebook group for the class: HCOL Art and Its Destruction 2017 and a twitter feed: @Art&Destruction. You are not obligated to join the group, but I will post some interesting and relevant news stories there, if you are interested! I also post things to Blackboard with frequency. Do check it often and check your email!

Student Learning Accommodations Statement:

In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact ACCESS, the office of Disability Services on campus. ACCESS works with students to create reasonable and appropriate accommodations via an accommodation letter to their professors as early as possible each semester. Contact ACCESS: A170 Living/Learning Center - 802-656-7753 - access@uvm.edu. Website: <http://www.uvm.edu/~access/>

Students working with ACCESS and who have special needs will be accommodated. These students must present the professor proper documentation from the Office of Specialized Student Services AND must speak to the professor about their situation before **September 15** so that arrangements may be made.

Policy on disability certification and student support:

<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/disability.pdf>

Religious Holidays:

Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. If you need to miss class to observe a religious holiday, please submit the dates of your absence to me in writing by the end of the second full week of classes. You will be permitted to make up work within a mutually agreed-upon time.

Academic Integrity:

This policy addresses plagiarism, fabrication, collusion, and cheating.

<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

Grading Policies:

For information on grading and GPA calculation, go to <http://www.uvm.edu/academics/catalogue> and click on Policies for an A-Z listing.

Grading Appeals:

<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/gradeappeals.pdf>

FERPA Rights Disclosure:

The purpose of this policy is to communicate the rights of students regarding access to, and privacy of their student educational records as provided for in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/ferpa.pdf>

