**University of Mary Washington – Department of Historic Preservation**

**AMERICAN FORMS AND VALUES (HISP 320)**

Fall 2012, MWF 2:00 – 2:50, Combs Hall Room 112

**Instructor:** Dr. Cristina Turdean

**Email:** cturdean@umw.edu

**Tel:**  540-654-1310

**Office hours:** TR 9:00-11:00 and by appointment

**Location:** 129 Combs Hall

**Course**

**Description:** This course examines the connections between material objects (the “forms”) and the ideas, practices, and beliefs (the “values”) that shaped them, for what they can tell us about our past. The readings in this class focus on a variety of products of human work - from buildings and parks to everyday objects such as refrigerators and razors - and introduce the students to the major themes and methods relevant to the discipline of material culture. Hands-on projects, analytical papers, and class discussions will emphasize the issues of meaning and interpretation of objects as well as how, by raising a unique set of questions, the study of artifacts complements (and sometimes challenges) the documentary record in illuminating the world of earlier generations of Americans.

**Learning**

**Outcomes:** Successful completion of this course involves the following learning outcomes: 1.Students will be able to identify various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of material culture and the ways in which historians and other social scientists have applied those ideas to their work

2. Students will be able to use objects as sources in historical research

3. Students will be able to explain how the study of material culture supports the

practice and thinking of historic preservationists, museum professionals, and

public historians

4.Students will be able to identify and analyze primary and secondary sources to

support the object-based research.

**Texts:** All the readings (articles in academic journals and book chapters) are available in

electronic format on Canvas.

**Canvas:** This class uses Canvas, the school’s learning management system. Use your

regular school ID and password to log in to Canvas at: https://canvas.umw.edu/ You will find this class listed on the first page, under “Courses.” All the materials (syllabus, readings, assignments, etc.) and announcements for this class will go through Canvas. For tutorials and training for students, check: http://canvas.umwblogs.org/

**Course Assignments:**

**Reading, class participation, and routine written assignments:** This class meets as a seminar group to discuss the assigned readings in an active and participatory way. We will critically evaluate the content, argument, and main themes of each text and formulate conclusions that will be further applied in other class discussions and assignments. Because a sizable percent of the final grade is based on your class participation, you have to make sure that *you come to class with all the readings done* and prepared to engage in the discussion in a meaningful manner. The class participation grade will take into account (1) the quality and frequency of your contribution and (2) your use of the readings. You can check with me periodically about your partial grade and ask for help to improve your performance. To ensure the fluidity of the class discussions, five times during the semester, you are required *to write a one-paragraph summary* (200-250 words) of the reading assigned for a specific day of the week. This summary must be posted on Canvas by 6am of that day. A separate handout details the specifics of this assignment.

**Semester Research Project (65%):** This assignment requires that you conduct a research

on an artifact of your choice and:

(1) write a 200-300 word paper proposal **(due in hard copy in class on 10/05)**

(2) write a 1,200-1,500 word essay that identifies and describes the artifact and formulates a few potential research topics **(due in hard copy in class on 10/19; 15%)**

(3) write an annotated bibliography of at least 3 primary and 5 secondary sources **(due in hard copy in class on 11/02; 15%)**

(4) write a 2,100- 2,500 word essay **(due in hard copy in class on your presentation day; 20% of the final grade)**

(5) make a 8-10 minute class presentation on the results of your research **(15% of the final grade)**

A separate handout details these assignments.

## Grading: The final grade will be based on the following components:

1. Reading responses (5 x 3%) 15%

2. Paper #1 “The Object” 15%

3. Paper #2 “Annotated Bibliography” 15%

4. Paper #3 “Context Essay” 20%

5. Class presentation 15%

6. Class participation 20%

Grading scale: A 4.00 93-100%

A- 3.70 90-92%

B+ 3.30 87-89%

B 3.00 83-86%

B- 2.70 80-82%

C+ 2.30 77-79%

C 2.00 73-76%

C- 1.70 70-72%

D+ 1.30 67-69%

D 1.00 60-66%

F 0.00 <60%

If a student has a C- or below in the course by the middle of the semester, a

report of unsatisfactory (U) will be submitted.

**Academic**

**Honesty:** Students in this class are expected to comply with the University of Mary

Washington Honor System. Please check the following website to find

out more about the university policy on academic integrity -- including the

disciplinary sanctions against offenders

<http://www.umw.edu/honor/documents/UMWHonorConstitution.pdf>

and further information about plagiarism, cheating

http://www.umw.edu/honor/fredericksburg/default.php

Students who fail to cite their sources, plagiarize any part of their assignments

will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs. Please consult me with questions about proper citation and attribution of sources.

**Office of**

**Disabilities**: If you have a disability and need special accommodations in this class, please made contact with the Office of Disabilities Resources (540- 654-1266) or online at <http://www.umw.edu/disability/> and bring the official letter to me, no later than the end of the first week of the semester, so we can take the appropriate steps to meet your needs.

## Attendance,

## Absences, and

## Tardiness: Attendance is required in this class and will be checked at the beginning of

## each session. If you must miss a class due to exceptional circumstances, please

## let me know IN ADVANCE, preferably over the email. I reserve the right to turn

## down lame excuses and will not excuse absences for medical reasons that are

## not supported by doctor notes. Each unexcused absence will cost you 1% from

## the final grade for the entire class. Make-up examinations will be given only in exceptional circumstances. Should such a situation occur, please notify me well in advance. Late turn in of Papers #1, #2, and #3 is penalized 2 points/ day. Late

## turn in of daily summaries is penalized 2 points, regardless of delay. To

## pass the class you must turn in all assignments.

## Classroom

**Etiquette:** Please turn off your cell phone at the beginning of the class and refrain yourself

from checking text messages during our meeting time. Your effort to arrive to

class on time will be highly appreciated. If you need to leave early, please notify

me at the beginning of the class.

**Weekly Schedule:**

Mon., 08/27 Intro and syllabus.

Wed., 08/29 What is Material Culture? Class Exercise

**Thinking About Objects. Theory and Methodology**

Fri., 08/31 Sherry Turkle (ed.) *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With (*Cambridge, MA:

MIT Press, 2007), Introduction , pp. 3-12; Tod Machover, “My Cello,” pp.12-22.

Julian Beinart “The Radio,” pp.102-110 and Jeffrey Mifflin “The Mummy,”

pp.272-276.

Mon., 09/03 Abby Clouse, “Narratives of Value and the *Antiques Roadshow:* "A Game of

Recognitions,” *The Journal of Popular Culture,* Vol. 41, No. 1, 2008, pp.3-20.

Wed., 09/05 Karin Dannehl, “Object Biographies. From Production to Consumption” in Karen

Harvey (ed.), *History and Material Culture: A Student’s Guide to Approaching*

*Alternative Sources* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp.123-138.

Fri., 09/07 Jules David Prown, “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory

and Method,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring, 1982), pp. 1-19.

Leslie Shannon Miller “The Many Figures of Eve: Styles of Womanhood

Embodied in a Late-Nineteenth-Century Corset” in Jules Prown, ed. *American*

*Artifacts: Essays in Material Culture* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press,

2000), pp.129-147.

Mon.,09/10 Dell Upton, “The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular

Architecture,” in *Material Culture: A Research Guide,* Thomas J. Schlereth (ed.)

(Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1985) pp. 57-78.

Wed.,09/12 Giorgio Riello, “Things that Shape History: Material Culture and Historical

Narratives” in Karen Harvey (ed.), *History and Material Culture: A Student’s Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp.24-46

Fri., 09/14 Skill Building: Using library sources. Guest speaker, Jack Bales, UMW Reference

and Humanities Librarian.

Mon.,09/17 Skill Building: Critical thinking, how to read a book/article, how to find the thesis

of an article

**The Domestic Space**

Wed.,09/19 Kenneth L. Ames, “Meaning in Artifacts: Hall Furnishings in Victorian America” in

Thomas J. Schlereth (Ed.) *Material Culture Studies in America* (Nashville, TN: The

American Association for State and Local History, 1986), pp. 206-221.

Fri., 09/21 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH DAY

Mon.,09/24 Diana Strazdes, “The Millionaire's Palace: Leland Stanford's Commission

for Pottier & Stymus in San Francisco,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 36, No. 4

(Winter, 2001), pp. 213-243

Wed.,09/26 Joseph Heathcott, Reading the Accidental Archive: Architecture, Ephemera, and

Landscape as Evidence of an Urban Public Culture*, Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 41,

No. 4 (Winter 2007), pp. 239-268.

Fri., 09/28 Cheryl Lyon-Jenness, “Bergamot Balm and Verbenas: The Public and Private

Meaning of Ornamental Plants in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Midwest,”

*Agricultural History* 73, 2 (Spring 1999), pp.201-221

**The Public Space**

Mon.,10/01 Thomas J. Schlereth “The Material Universe of American World Exhibitions” in

*Cultural History and Material Culture. Everyday Life, Landscapes, Museums*

(Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), pp. 265- 299.

Wed.,10/03 Kirk Savage “The Self-Made Monument: George Washington and the Fight to

Erect a National Memorial,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Winter, 1987),

pp. 225-242.

Fri., 10/05 Semester project proposal due in hard copy in class

Janet R. Daly Bednarek “The Flying Machine in the Garden: Parks and Airports,

1918-1938,” *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Apr., 2005), pp. 350-373.

Mon.,10/08 John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, Remembering Roadside America: Preserving the Recent Past as Landscape and Place, University of Tennessee Press, 2011, Chapter 2 “Observing Roadside America” pp. 29-60.

Wed.,10/10 Skill Building: Speaking in class. Guest speaker: TBA, UMW Speaking Center.

Fri., 10/12 Skill Building: Essay writing. Guest speaker: Dr. Gwen Hale, Director of the UMW

Writing Center and Writing Intensive Program.

Mon.,10/15 Fall Break

**Issues and Interpretation: Race, Class, and Gender**

Wed.,10/17 Ellen Weiss, “Tuskegee: Landscape in Black and White,” *Winterthur Portfolio*,

Vol. 36, No. 1 (Spring, 2001), pp. 19-37.

Fri., 10/19 Assignment # 1 due in hard copy in class today

M.M. Manring, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima*

(Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998), pp. 149-183 and 193-196.

**Shopping and Leisure**

Mon.,10/22 Susan Porter Benson, “Palace of Consumption and Machine for Selling: The

American Department Store, 1880-1940,” *Radical History Review* 21 (Fall 1979),

pp.199-221.

Wed.,10/24 Marie J. Clifford, “Helena Rubinstein's Beauty Salons, Fashion, and Modernist

Display” *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 38, No. 2/3 (Summer/Autumn 2003), pp. 83-

108.

Fri., 10/26 Alison J.Clarke “Tupperware. Product as Social Relation” in Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison American (eds.) *Material Culture. The Shape of the Field*

(Winterthur, DE: Winterthur Museum, 1997), pp. 225-250.

**Technology and Work**

Mon., 10/29 Kevin Borg “The "Chauffeur Problem" in the Early Auto Era: Structuration Theory

and the Users of Technology” *Technology and Culture,* Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct., 1999),

pp. 797-832.

Wed., 10/31 Sarah A. Lichtman, “Do-It-Yourself Security: Safety, Gender, and the Home

Fallout Shelter in Cold War America” *Journal of Design History* Vol. 19, No. 1,

pp. 39-55.

Fri., 11/02 Assignment # 2 due in hard copy in class today

Shelley Nickles, “’Preserving Women: Refrigerator Design as Social Process in

the 1930s,” *Technology and Culture* 43, 4 (October 2002), pp. 693-727.

**Issues and Interpretation: Race, Class and Gender**

Mon.,11/05 Adrienne Berney, “Streamlining Breasts: The Exaltation of Form and Disguise of

Function in 1930s’ Ideals,” *Journal of Design History* 14, 4 (2001): 328-342

Wed.,11/07 Bill Osgerby “The Bachelor Pad as Cultural Icon. Masculinity, Consumption and

Interior Design in American Men’s Magazines, 1930–65*”* *Journal of Design*

*History* Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 99-113.

Fri., 11/09 Retallack, G., “Razors, Shaving and Gender Construction: An Inquiry into the

Material Culture of Shaving,” ***Material Culture Review / Revue de la culture***

***matérielle***,” North America, 49, Jan. 1999, pp.4-19.

**Cooking and Foodways**

Mon.,11/12 Pamela H. Simpson “Butter Cows and Butter Buildings: A History of an

Unconventional Sculptural Medium” *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Spring 2007), pp. 1-20.

Wed.,11/14 Laura Shapiro “Something from the Oven. Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America”

Penguin Books, 2004, Chapter 2 “Something from the Oven” pp. 43-83.

Fri.,11/16 Jeffrey Pilcher, “The Globalization of Mexican Cuisine,” *History Compass* Vol.6,

No.2, 2008, pp.529-551.

**Discarding Stuff**

Mon.,11/19 Joshua Reno, “Your Trash is Someone’s Treasure: The Politics of Value at a

Michigan Landfill,” *Journal of Material Culture*, 2009, pp.14-29.

Wed.,11/21 Thanksgiving Break

Fri.,11/23 Thanksgiving Break

Mon.,11/26 Presentations I

Wed.,11/28 Presentations II

Fri.,11/30 Presentations III

Mon., 12/03 Presentations IV

Wed., 12/05 Presentations V

Fri., 12/07 Presentations VI

Assignment #3 is due on your presentation day (hard copy in class)