Graduate Seminar

HERITAGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD

Columbia University
Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
Historic Preservation Program
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Historic preservation has always expressed a vision of social progress, focusing at times on instilling patriotism, or on conserving resources, beautifying the landscape, protecting local values, or encouraging entrepreneurship. Today, American society is (once again) in transition, following a turbulent period of social and environmental activism (1960s-70s), and an equally conflictive pendulum-swing towards market liberalism (1980s-90s). New questions are being raised about preservation's relevance. In this context this graduate seminar examines preservation's engagement with social change. What are the critically important trends reshaping American society? The significant movements for heritage conservation? The opportunities for innovative, relevant, socially engaged conservation work?

As it is assumed that students will not be experts in the language of social justice, the course opens with an introduction to fundamental concepts including rights, justice, fairness, capabilities, diversity, and inclusion. In each case, connections are drawn to current issues in heritage conservation. Next follows a closer look at four key issues in contemporary American society that bear on the practice of conservation: the resurgence of poverty and inequality, the movement towards a majority-minority society, urban disinvestment and the restructuring of the metropolis, and global warming. We then turn to some of the proposals that have been made for reorienting heritage conservation in light of these trends, focusing on four and considering their relevance for historic preservation: the concept of heritage services; socially engaged practices in public history, archaeology, and folklore; the scholarship of engagement; and the new definition of heritage proposed by the Council of Europe. This brings us to the penultimate section of the course, in which students, working in groups, will present research papers investigating aspects of conservation and how they engage with social change. The seminar concludes with a discussion of national and global organizations involved in promoting social justice that could be relevant for heritage practitioners.

Most of the semester is based on weekly readings which we will discuss in class. As some readings will cover unfamiliar topics, students are encouraged to bring any difficulties in understanding them to class for discussion. In addition, as already noted, each student will participate in a collaborative research project, which is an opportunity both to investigate current conservation practices and to

develop proposals for innovative approaches. Students may choose one of the suggested topics or of propose their own.

Please note that there is a reading assignment due at the very first class, as we will jump right into our weekly discussions. Throughout the syllabus, reading assignments are listed according to the week they will be discussed.

This course is open to students outside the Historic Preservation program. Students interested in participating are invited to share any questions they may have by email.

Outline of Classes

A. TOOLS FOR THINKING ABOUT HERITAGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.

In the first four classes, we cover some basic concepts of rights and justice that can be helpful to conservation professionals in understanding how heritage work fits within the picture of social change. In each case, we begin to draw connections between big justice issues and the ways in which people use, conserve, and sometimes even depend on heritage. We begin, then, to tease out the implications for conservation practice.

Class 1. Is there a human right to heritage?

Before we can answer – indeed before we can even ask – such a question, we have to decide what a human right is. And because human rights aren't naturally existing things that can be easily defined, like water or apples, we have to put the question in the context of the international structures devised to identify and protect them. In this class, then, we encounter fundamental concepts of human rights as well as those international agencies and agreements. Within this context, we begin to ask what relevance human rights have for cultural heritage. What are cultural rights? Is there a human right to heritage?

Reading

Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca, 2003), Chapters 1 and 2,, pp. 7-37.

Roosevelt, 1941 State of the Union or "Four Freedoms" speech: excerpt starting at par. 63 ("As men do not live by bread alone") (at http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/od4frees.html *or* http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/fdr-the-four-freedoms-speech-text/).

Council of Europe, *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Faro, 2005), esp. Preamble and Section I (download at http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/identities/default_en.asp; also included as Appendix to *Heritage and Beyond*: see the reading by Daniel Thérond under Class 5)

DianeBartel-Bouchier, *Cultural Heritage and the Challenge of Sustainabilityi* (Walnut Creek, 2012), Chapter Two ("Is Heritage a Human Right?"), pp. 27-52.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), available in Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, *The Core International Human Rights Treaties* (United Nations, 206), pp. 1-8, and in many other print and electronic sources.

United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Frequently Asked Questions on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (United Nations, 2008), excerpts tbd.

Class 2. How do we know what's fair (in heritage conservation)?

Humans care deeply about fairness. Indeed a sense of what's fair informs daily life in many ways and lies at the heart of all manner of social reform movements and justice campaigns. But what does fairness mean? What are people entitled to? These questions resonate right down through heritage conservation. For example: How do we know if government funding for preservation programs is fairly allotted fairly? Who is entitled to what? And most fundamentally, what *is* it that preservation (or heritage conservation more broadly) is supposed to be providing fairly? In this class, through the writings of three of the leading twentieth century philosophers to focus on fairness, we consider the idea of fairness as the basis for social justice, and we encounter the concept of human capabilities as a measure of freedom and fairness in society.

Reading

John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness" (1957 OR 1958 version tbd).

Amartya Sen, "Development as Capability Expansion," in S. Fukuda-Parr (ed), *Readings in Human Development* (New Delhi and New York, 2003), pp. 41-58 (download at http://scholar.google.com/scholar_url?hl=en&q=http://morgana.unimore.it/Picchio_Antonella/Sviluppo%2520umano/svilupp%2520umano/Sen%2520development.pdf&sa=X&scisig=AAGBfm2viSOIyKSGBgwbne3jPv1dxDaa-A&oi=scholarr).

Martha C. Nussbaum, "Capabilities and Human Rights" *Fordham Law Review* 66, 1997, pp. 273-300 (download at http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CDMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fir.lawnet.fordham.edu%2Fcgi%2Fviewcontent.cgi%3Farticle%3D3391%26context%3Dflr&ei=PPPKUszwOo7ksASdzIDoDA&usg=AFQjCNGD4wuIQ85_RFTBUa9qK8wYm6ergw&sig2=Vevuk17R5rIhWaRoju9FCg&bvm=bv.58187178,d.cWc).

Class 3. Respecting rights (and heritage) in a multicultural world: what is equal where everything is different?

To say that the U.S. is a multicultural society is to state a fact; to say that it is becoming more diverse – that we are well on the way to a "majority-minority" society – is to repeat a prediction that the U.S. Census Bureau has been making for some years. The question of what rights members of minority groups have, and of what responsibilities society has to respect or protect them, has long been a focus of conflict, and also a source of energy propelling some of our most important social advances, such as (most obviously) the Civil Rights movement. Attitudes to cultural heritage are deeply implicated in these conflicts. Are diverse cultural traditions barriers to inclusion or guarantors of respect? Does their observance constitute a handicap to be discarded or a right to be protected? If they are rights, do they belong to individuals – say, individual African Americans, Serbian immigrants, or Inuit – or do they belong to African Americans, Serbian immigrants, or Inuits as a group? Should society guarantee mutual tolerance, or should it actively promote the expression of diverse cultures? What responsibility does society bear to protect cultural values which infringe on the rights of other groups? Or that offend basic values of democracy and toleration? In a multi-cultural society, heritage practitioners are likely to answer these and similar questions every day, often without realizing it. In this class, we ask them explicitly.

Reading

Jeremy Waldron, "Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative," in Will Kymlicka (ed.), *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 93-122

Nathan Glazer, "Individual Rights against Group Rights," in Will Kymlicka (ed.), *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 123-138

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities*, United Nations, [2010].

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Promoting and Protecting Minority Rights: A Guide for Advocates* (Geneva and New York, 2012), Chapter X ("The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization"), pp. 80-86, with special attention to "Culture and Minorities," p. 83.

Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation*, Chapter 3 ("Eliminating the Diversity Deficit"), pp. 75-138.

Mackie, "The Movement to End Footbinding in China," in PDHRE, *Human Rights Learning*, pp. 107-112.

Class 4. Poverty, human development, and pro-poor policies: What do they mean for heritage?

At the core of the development mission has always been a campaign against poverty. But what is poverty? How do we measure it? How do we know who is poor and who isn't? Questions of definition and measurement turn out to be crucial, because if we cannot agree on what poverty *is*, we cannot be sure which policies will alleviate it. Here, building on our encounter in Class 2 with the concepts of human development and capabilities, we review changing conceptions of poverty. Elucidating the differences between absolute and relative poverty, we also begin to consider the relevance of poverty (and of anti-poverty programs) for the United States – and for heritage conservation.

Reading

United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report* 1990, Chapter 1 ("Defining and Measuring Human Development"), excerpt pp. 9-13 and Box 2.1 ("Who the Poor Are"), p. 22 (download at http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1990).

Economic Policy Institute, *The State of Working America* (12th edition, 2012), Chapter 7 ("Poverty"), pp. 419-460 (download at http://www.stateofworkingamerica.org/).

Kristen Lewis and Sarah Burd-Sharps, *The Measure of America 2010-2011: Mapping Risks and Resilience* (New York and London, 2010), "Introduction: Human Development in America Today" (excerpt), pp. 10-33.

European Anti-Poverty Network, "Poverty and Inequality in the European Union" [2005-6], *The Poverty Site*, at http://www.poverty.org.uk/summary/eapn.shtml.

James Garbarino, *Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment* (San Francisco, 1995), Chapter 8 ("Access to Basic Resources: Achieving Economic Justice"), pp. 135-148.

B. HERITAGE CONSERVATION: MOVING TOWARDS JUSTICE

Having covered some basic concepts about justice, and considered a few of the ways they relate to heritage conservation, we take an initial look at some of the ways heritage conservationists have sought to engage social justice in their work.

Class 5. Some practices of engagement in heritage conservation.

The readings focus on three responses: community-oriented projects by archaeologists, historians, and folklorists; my own proposal for heritage services; and the Council of Europe's reformulation of heritage (and heritage communities) in the Faro Convention. We also encounter the broader, university-based movement known as scholarship of engagement (or engaged scholarship). In each case, we consider the points of potential relevance for historic preservation.

Reading

Ned Kaufman, "Heritage Services: A Framework for Socially Engaged Conservation" (unpublished paper).

Andrew Hurley, *Beyond Preservation: Using Public History to Revitalize Inner Cities* (Philadelphia, 2010), Chapter 2 ("Taking It to the Streets: Public History in the City"), pp. 32-54.

Stanley Fish, "Aim Low," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 16, 2003, at http://chronicle.com/article/Aim-Low/45210.

Derek Barker, "The Scholarship of Engagement: A Taxonomy of Five Emerging Practices," *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* 9 (2004), pp. 123-137, download at http://openjournals.libs.uga.edu/index.php/jheoe/article/view/659/513.

Frank Proschan, "Field Work and Social Work: Folklore as Helping Profession," in Robert Baron and Nicholas R. Spitzer, *Public Folklore* (Jackson, MI, 2007), pp. 145-158.

Ira Harkavy and Rita Axelroth Hodges, *Democratic Devolution: How America's Colleges and Universities Can Strengthen Their Communities* (Washington, DC, Progressive Policy Institute, 2012), download from http://community-wealth.org/content/democratic-devolution-how-america-s-colleges-and-universities-can-strengthen-their.

Daniel Thérond, "Benefits and Innovations of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society," in *Heritage and Beyond* (Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 2009), pp. 9-12 (download at http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CC4QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Ft%2Fdg4%2Fcultureheritage%2Fheritage%2Fidentities%2FPatrimoineBD_en.pdf&ei=UDDLUpapMKzIsAT31IGoDQ&usg=AFQjCNGqNH_i-6c2Tdp2S3Zyck2zzVKXIQ&sig2=D6nRegaMwfj3T9TkPEkRLw&bvm=bv.58187178,d.cWc.)

C. AMERICAN SOCIETY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY.

In the next four classes we look at a few of the most important areas of tension in contemporary American society, bringing to the discussion the concepts of rights and justice we have covered as well as our preliminary investigation of their implications for heritage conservation.

Class 6. Economy: a closer look at the resurgence of poverty and inequality, and what they mean for conservation.

From the 1940s until the early 1970s, American society reduced poverty and narrowed the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Starting in the 1970s the trajectory reversed. The number of poor people in America is now at an all-time high, while the gap between rich and poor has widened to an extent not seen in a century. And while the U.S. still scores high on human development indices, its place is slipping. These problems are becoming increasingly contentious. They could affect heritage conservation in many ways. Does the U.S. need to adopt an explicitly pro-poor policy for heritage conservation? What would it look like? Our existing conservation system was designed against the background of rising prosperity and equality: what should be done to adapt that system to changing economic conditions?

Reading

Emmanuel Saez, "Income Inequality: Evidence and Policy Implications" (Stanford, 2013) : lecture powerpoint (download at http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CD0QFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Felsa.berkeley.edu%2F~saez%2Flecture_saez_arrow.pdf&ei=zM7NUpiDKYmTkQek7oHgCw&usg=AFQjCNEm_YeqJiglwL5nRSea2MJxXNrvCw&sig2=dGbr_0V5d_UIwUuTHpqPPw&bvm=bv.58187178,d.eW0).

Economic Policy Institute, *The State of Working America*, (12th edition, 2012), Chapter 6 ("Wealth: Unrelenting Disparities"), pp. 375-418 (download at http://www.stateofworkingamerica.org/).

Sabrina Tavernise, "Soaring Poverty Casts Spotlight on 'Lost Decade,'" *New York Times*, 14 September 2011, at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/14/us/14census.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

Sabrina Tavernise, "U.S. Income Gap Rose, Sign of Uneven Recovery," *New York Times*, 13 September 2012, at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/13/us/us-incomes-dropped-last-year-census-bureau-says.html?adxnnl=1&pagewanted=all&adxnnlx=1359043827-OoU1pAtiO41oG1Rz09EWzA&_r=1&.

Jason DeParle, Robert Gebeloff, and Sabrina Tavernise, "Older, Suburban, and Struggling, 'Near Poor' Startle the Census," *New York Times*, 19 November 2011, at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/19/us/census-measures-those-not-quite-in-poverty-but-struggling.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

Joseph E. Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future* (New York, London 2012), Preface (excerpt), Chapter One ("America's One Percent Problem"), and Chapter Four ("Why It Matters"), pp. ix-xxi, 1-27, 83-117.

Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World , Vatican City, Vatican Press, [2013]: paragraphs 50-75, 186-216.

Class 7. Society: race, class, and diversity in American culture.

In Class 3 we introduced some of the basic issues concerning diversity American society, placing them in a more general context of rights and justice. Here we continue the investigation of what cultural diversity means for heritage conservation. We also look at evidence of continuing racial

disparities in contemporary American society, and we review the data on the demographic shifts that are turning the U.S. into a majority-minority society.

Reading

William H. Frey, "Diversity Spreads Out: Metropolitan Shifts in Hispanic, Asian, and Black Populations Since 2000," Washington, Brookings Institution, 2006 (download at www.brookings.edu – go to "Metropolitan Policy Program"and follow link at "Diversity Spreads Out").

[Readings on racial disparities in American society tbd.]

William H. Frey, "The 2010 Census," at http://www.milkeninstitute.org/publications/review/2012_4/47-58MR54.pdf.

"Mapping the 2010 Census," *New York Times* interactive website, at http://projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/map *[spend a few minutes studying and mousing over the map]*.

William H. Frey, "Census Projects New 'Majority Minority' Tipping Points," at http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/12/13-census-race-projections-frey.

Seth Motel and Eileen Patten, "Characteristics of the 60 Largest Metropolitan Areas by Hispanic Population," at http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/09/19/characteristics-of-the-60-largest-metropolitan-areas-by-hispanic-population/.

Class 8. Geography: the evolving metropolis.

American cities are undergoing deep changes. Indeed the traditional notion of the city as a dense and compact place sharply set off from its surroundings is obsolete. Instead we must think in terms of metropolitan regions: vastly complex, polycentric areas including dozens or even hundreds of municipal governments, covering hundreds or even thousands of square miles, and containing up to twenty million or more residents. Within these regions, opposite trends are at work. As older core cities lose population, jobs, and money – and gain large numbers of vacant, abandoned, and decaying buildings – suburban peripheries continue to expand, bringing unsustainable dependence on fossil fuels and destroying farmland and open space. Meanwhile, at the neighborhood level, suburbs and centers are coming to resemble each other in unexpected ways. Poverty and racial diversity, once considered urban phenomena, are spreading to the suburbs. Yet at the same time, both urban and suburban neighborhoods are becoming more *economically* segregated. How should historic preservation respond to these conditions? What might an equitable metropolitan conservation policy look like?

Reading

Sabrina Tavernise, "Middle Class Areas Shrink as Income Gap Grows, New Report Finds," *New York Times*, 16 November 2011, at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/16/us/middle-class-areas-shrink-as-income-gap-grows-report-finds.html.

Richard Fry and Paul Taylor, "The Rise of Residential Segregation by Income" (Pew Research Center, 2012), at http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/08/01/the-rise-of-residential-segregation-by-income/.

Sabrina Tavernise, "Outside Cleveland, Snapshots of Poverty Surge in the Suburbs," *New York Times*, 25 October 2011, at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/25/us/suburban-poverty-

surge-challenges-communities.html?pagewanted=all *[be sure to click on the portfolio of photos and graphs]*.

Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story* (New York, 2009), Chapter 8 ("Historical Memory, Social Equity, and the Disappearance of New York's Working-Class Neighborhoods"), pp. 309-328.

Ned Kaufman, "Roles for Preservation in Shrinking Cities" [unpublished paper].

Jennifer Leonard and Alan Mallach, *Restoring Properties, Rebuilding Communities: Transforming Vacant Properties in Today's America* (Center for Community Progress, 2010).

[Pastor et al, reading on regional equity tbd.]

Class 9. Biosphere: global warming as a justice problem.

Global warming is one of the most difficult problems we face. Most of us probably think of it as an environmental problem: one with grave political, economic, and cultural dimensions. Here (before turning to the role that heritage conservation can play in mitigating it) we consider climate change as a global justice problem. The core of the problem can be simply stated. Those countries which have done the least to cause global warming will suffer most from it. And because those same countries are the poorest, they are therefore the most lacking in resources to protect themselves from its consequences. Conversely, those countries which have done most to cause global warming – and have the greatest resources for solving it – are also the least motivated to do so, because they are least affected by its impacts. In this class we explore the facts and politics of global warming as a justice issue, and we pose the question: what should heritage conservation in the U.S. do?

Reading

World Resources Institute, *Navigating the Numbers* (2005), Chapters 4 ("Per Capita Emissions") and 6 ("Cumulative Emissions"), pp. 21-24, 31-34 (download at http://www.wri.org/publication/navigating-numbers).

World Bank, *Development and Climate Change: World Development Report 2010* (Washington, 2010), "Overview: Changing the Climate for Development" and Chapter 1 ("Understanding the Links Between Climate Change and Development"), pp. 1-69 (download at http://wdronline.worldbank.org/worldbank/a/c.html/world_development_report_2010/chapter_1_understanding_links_climate_change_development).

Website of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, at www.thecvf.org.

Joel Stonington, "Climate Progress: Warsaw's Meaningful Compromise," *Spiegel Online International*, November 27, 2013 (at http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/warsaw-mechanism-a-move-forward-in-climate-change-debate-a-935931.html).

Graham Readfern, "How rich countries dodged the climate change blame game in Warsaw," *The Guardian Alpha*, November 25, 2013 *(*at http://www.theguardian.com/environment/planet-oz/2013/nov/25/climate-change-warsaw-rich-countries-blame-paris-deal).

D. STRATEGIES FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION.

The pressing question for us as professionals is how thinking about social justice affects the policies and practices of historic preservation. In Class 5 we learned about some of the engaged forms of practice con-

servation professionals have evolved in order to align their work with a commitment to justice. This portion of the course offers participants the opportunity to extend this investigation through independent research, with the intention of learning more about socially engaged heritage practices and of developing proposals for new practices or policies. It is expected that students will work in small groups, but this will depend on enrollment and student interests. In any case, students will either choose one of the suggested topics or propose their own during the first month or so of the course and will present their work during the following four class session. One or two weeks beforehand, each group will also be responsible for assigning readings for other participants.

Suggested topics include:

Intangible cultural heritage: international movements to recognize and safeguard intangible heritage; how "ICH" could be better protected in the U.S.; how such efforts relate to and could serve movements for indigenous and community rights.

Community archaeology, public history and sites of conscience: how historians, archaeologists, and museum professionals are using historic sites to help communities communities grapple with difficult social issues; how preservationists could learn from, adopt, extend, and contribute to this kind of work.

Progressive community (preservation) planning: asset based community development and other forms of progressive community planning; how buildings and other forms of heritage could be incorporated in an asset model

Urban shrinkage, property abandonment and vacancy: the problem of urban disinvestment and population decline; policies to counter it in U.S. and European cities; implications for heritage conservation; possible strategies for pro-poor preservation.

Green preservation: Role of building sector in causing and mitigating climate change; building reuse as a mitigation strategy; preservation and development policies for achieving significant emissions cuts.

Diversity, multiculturalism, race, ethnicity, and heritage: Demographic change in U.S.; changing migration patterns and their impact on heritage; equitable and multicultural preservation policies and programs.

The environmental justice movement: what can historic preservation learn?

Food sovereignty: crossroads between heritage conservation and social justice.

10. **Student presentations.**

11. **Student presentations.**

12. **Student presentations.**

13. **Student presentations.**

E. Conclusion. Arenas for Learning and Action.

People with similar goals can often accomplish more by working together than by working alone. Right now, support networks for conservation professionals who are interested in developing socially engaged practices are weak to nonexistent. Where can preservationists go to share ideas, learn what other people are doing, find supportive colleagues, and discover ways of participating in broader endeavors?

Class 14. Participating in social change movements.

In our final class we discuss the options both for seeking support and inspiration *outside*, and for building networks of support *inside*, the field. In the process, we may arrive at a clearer understanding of where heritage conservation fits (or might fit) within the dynamic picture of groups and movements dedicated to social change.

Reading

[Tbd.]