

HUMANITIES SEMINAR PROGRAM -- SPRING 2016
“ART AS PLUNDER”
Mondays, February 1-29, 2016, 1:00-3:00 PM

SYLLABUS

Instructor:

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Course Description:

This course examines the topic of art plundered or stolen during times of war, occupation, or peace. We will explore the historical, political, and legal framework of specific cases and the ways art has been used for propagandistic purposes, as pawns in high-stakes political arenas, or as “cash cows” in the legitimate marketplace and “black market;” ethical issues associated with the formation of museum collections; the debate over cultural property and its ownership; the dilemma of recovery or repatriation of art collections. Case studies include the looting of Greece by the Romans and the impact on Roman art and culture; the plunder of art from Italy and Egypt by Napoleon Bonaparte and the impact on the development of the Louvre and other European museums; the removal of sculpture from the Acropolis of Athens by Lord Elgin and the ongoing controversy about requests to return the collection to Greece; seizure and destruction by the Nazis of works of art, archives, libraries, and cultural objects, especially from Jews, and claims for restitution; recent cases of the looting of archaeological sites and museums, especially in conflict zones in the Middle East; and museum thefts in Europe and the U.S.

Schedule and Readings:

(Note: All the readings are posted on a special Box@UA site for this course or are accessible via the Internet. Purchasing books is not required.)

Week 1 (February 1): Introduction to the course. Ancient attitudes toward plunder. *Graecia Capta*: The plunder of Greece by the Romans and its impact on Roman art and culture.

Readings: M.M. Miles, *Art as Plunder: The Ancient Origins of Debate about Cultural Property*, 2008, pp. 13-82.

Week 2 (February 8): The Egyptian and Italian Campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte and the impact on the formation of European museums.

Readings: Miles, pp. 319-348.

Week 3 (February 15): Lord Elgin and the Parthenon Marbles. Who owns antiquity? The ongoing debate about the return of cultural heritage to countries of origin.

Readings: William St. Clair, "Imperial Appropriations of the Parthenon," in John Henry Merryman, ed., *Imperialism, Art and Restitution*, 2006, pp. 65-97. (key papers and videotapes of conference are available online at <http://law.wustl.edu/harris/pages.aspx?id=1762> See St. Clair article entitled, "The Parthenon and the Elgin Marbles")

John Henry Merryman, "Whither the Elgin Marbles?" paper in Merryman, pp. 98-113 (available at <http://law.wustl.edu/harris/pages.aspx?id=1762>)

Neil MacGregor, "To Shape the Citizens of 'That Great city, the World,'" in James Cuno, *Whose Culture?: The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities*, 2009, pp. 39-54 (British Museum point of view).

If you have time, you may wish to read the more complete version of the background to this case in William St. Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles: The Controversial History of the Parthenon Sculptures*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Week 4 (February 22): The systematic confiscation of art by the Nazis and case studies of claims for restitution.

Readings: Lynn H. Nicholas, "World War II and the Displacement of Art and Cultural Property," in *The Spoils of War*, ed. E. Simpson. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997, pp. 39-45.

If you have time, you may wish to read Lynn Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa*, 1994 and watch the excellent documentary "The Rape of Europa," 2006, available through Netflix and based on the groundbreaking book by Lynn Nicholas.

For summaries of case studies see the Commission for Art Recovery website: <http://www.commartrecovery.org/cases>

For further reading on many cases see Melissa Mueller and Monika Tatzkow, *Lost Lives, Lost Art: Jewish Collectors, Nazi Art Theft, and the Quest for Justice*. New York: Vendome Press, 2010.

Week 5 (February 29): Contemporary cases of museum thefts and looting of cultural heritage.

Readings: Anthony M. Amore and Tom Mashberg, *Stealing Rembrandts: The Untold Stories of Notorious Art Heists*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, There is No "Dr. No," pp. 7-25.

Ed Caesar, "Too Hot to Handle: What is the value of a stolen painting?" *New York Times Magazine* November 17, 2013, pp. 28-33:

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/17/magazine/what-is-the-value-of-stolen-art.html?_r=0

Robert Wittman, *Priceless: How I Went Undercover to Rescue the World's Stolen Treasures*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2010, pp. 245-255.

Peter Watson and Cecilia Todeschini, *The Medici Conspiracy: The Illicit Journey of Looted Antiquities – From Italy's Tomb Raiders to the World's Greatest Museums*. New York: Public Affairs, 2007, pp. ix-24; 325-359.

Jason Felch and Ralph Frammolino, *Chasing Aphrodite: The Hunt for Looted Antiquities at the World's Richest Museum*. Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, pp. 74-123; 147-158 (but, you are going to want to read it all!) "The Impact of War Upon Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage": http://www.archaeological.org/pdfs/papers/AIA_Afghanistan_address_lowres.pdf

Bibliography (Books and articles of interest on various topics covered in this course)

Anthony M. Amore and Tom Mashberg, *Stealing Rembrandts: The Untold Stories of Notorious Art Heists*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Hans Belting, *The Invisible Masterpiece*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

Matthew Bogdanos, with W. Patrick, *Thieves of Baghdad*. New York/London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005.

Ulrich Boser, *The Gardner Heist*. New York: Harper Collins, 2009.

Nina Burleigh, *Mirage: Napoleon's Scientists and the Unveiling of Egypt*. New York/London: Harper Collins, 2007.

Noah Charney, *Art and Crime: Exploring the Dark Side of the Art World*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2009.

Noah Charney, *Stealing the Mystic Lamb*. New York: Public Affairs, 2010.

Craig Childs, *Finders Keepers: A Tale of Archaeological Plunder and Obsession*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2010.

James Cuno, *Whose Culture?: The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Robert M. Edsel, with Bret Witter, *The Monuments Men*. New York: Center Street, 2009.

Jason Felch and Ralph Frammolino, *Chasing Aphrodite: The Hunt for Looted Antiquities at the World's Richest Museum*. Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011.

Patty Gerstenblith, *Art, Cultural Heritage, and the Law: Cases and Materials* (Law Casebook Series). 2004, especially Part III: Cultural Heritage.

Jeanette Greenfield, *The Return of Cultural Treasures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Devon A. Mihesuah, ed., *Repatriation Reader: Who Owns American Indian Remains?* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.

John Henry Merryman, ed., *Imperialism, Art and Restitution*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. (key papers and videotapes are also available online at <http://law.wustl.edu/harris/pages.aspx?id=1762>)

Margaret M. Miles, *Art As Plunder: The Ancient Origins of Debate about Cultural Property*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Melissa Mueller and Monika Tatzkow, *Lost Lives, Lost Art: Jewish Collectors, Nazi Art Theft, and the Quest for Justice*. New York: Vendome Press, 2010.

Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.

Anne-Marie O'Connor, *The Lady in Gold: The Extraordinary Tale of Gustav Klimt's Masterpiece, Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer*. New York: Alfred P. Knopf, 2012.

Jonathan Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Robin F. Rhodes, ed., *The Acquisition and Exhibition of Classical Antiquities: Professional, Legal and Ethical Perspectives*. South Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008.

Elizabeth Simpson, ed., *The Spoils of War: World War II and its Aftermath: The Loss, Reappearance, and Recovery of Cultural Property*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997.

William St. Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles: The Controversial History of the Parthenon Sculptures*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Francis Henry Taylor, *The Taste of Angels: A History of Art Collecting from Rameses To Napoleon*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948.

Peter Watson and Cecilia Todeschini, *The Medici Conspiracy: The Illicit Journey of Looted Antiquities – From Italy's Tomb Raiders to the World's Greatest Museums*. New York: Public Affairs, 2007.

Sharon Waxman, *Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World*. New York: Times Books, Henry Holt & Co., 2008.

H. J. Wechsler, T. Coate-Saal, and J. Lukavic, eds., *Museum Policy and Procedures for Nazi-Era Issues*. AAM Professional Practice Series, 2001.

Robert Wittman, *Priceless: How I Went Undercover to Rescue the World's Stolen Treasures*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2010.

Useful Websites and Online Resources

Art Loss Register: <http://www.artloss.com/>

Association for Research into Crimes Against Art (ARCA): <http://art-crime.blogspot.com> (you can subscribe by e-mail)

Commission for Art Recovery: <http://www.commartrecovery.org/about> (see especially the overview and case descriptions)

Guidelines and Procedures for World War II Provenance Issues. The Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., September 2009:
<http://www.asia.si.edu/collections/downloads/FSgGuidelinesProcedures.pdf>

Illicit Cultural Property: www.illicitculturalproperty.com (subscribe by e-mail)

International Committee of the Red Cross: International Humanitarian Law: Treaties and Documents, Cultural Property:
<http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/TOPICS?OpenView#Cultural%20Property>

Lawyers' Committee for Cultural Heritage Preservation (LCCPH):
<http://www.culturalheritagelaw.org>

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Nazi-Era Provenance Research:
<http://www.mfa.org/collections/provenance>

Nazi-Era Provenance Internet Portal:
http://www.nepip.org/public/info/about.cfm?menu_type=info

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Cultural Property Advisory Committee:
<http://exchanges.state.gov/heritage/culprop/committee.html>

Recommended Films

"The Rape of Europa" 2006: an extraordinary documentary based on the book by Lynn Nicholas. Available through Netflix.

"The Thomas Crown Affair" 1999: not to be confused with the 1968 version; an example of our romanticized notion of art thieves and art theft.

“Woman in Gold” 2015: about the journey to restitution to the heirs of Adele and Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer of Klimt’s *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I* and other Klimt paintings.