

Place, Community, and Public Humanities:

Programming Environmental Justice

26:050:545 / 26:510:565

Mondays, 5:30pm-8:10pm

**Instructor Information:**

Mary Rizzo

Director, Graduate Program in American Studies

Assistant Professor, History Department

Office: 247A Conklin Hall

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: [mary.rizzo@rutgers.edu](mailto:mary.rizzo@rutgers.edu)

Twitter: @rizzo\_pubhist

**Description:**

In this experiential, project-based public humanities class, students will become conversant with the history, theories, and methods of place-based public humanities and community engagement. We will partner with the Humanities Action Lab (HAL), an international consortium of universities headquartered at Rutgers-Newark, which is producing a traveling exhibition on environmental justice that will open in fall 2019 in Newark. Our focus will be to develop programming for the opening and plan a pop-up event or activity to take place at the annual Telling Untold Histories unconference on April 26, 2019 at Rutgers-Newark.

To accomplish our goals, this class will be a mix of readings on environmental justice, public history theory and methods, and urban studies and collaborative work on developing programs that address issues relevant to Newark, NJ.

**Expectations:**

**You will be treated as both graduate students who are expected to complete required readings and contribute thoughtfully to class discussions and as members of a project team who will work collaboratively to produce public history texts and materials.** Collaborative work is a key skill for all public historians (and pretty much anybody who isn't a hermit). We will practice it throughout this course.

Because of the nature of our project, this syllabus is subject to change.

**Humanities Action Lab and Community Partner:**

A unique aspect of this class is our collaboration with the Humanities Action Lab. The Humanities Action Lab (HAL) is a coalition of universities, issue organizations, and

public spaces in 20 cities that collaborate to produce community-curated public humanities projects on urgent social issues. Students and stakeholders in each city develop local chapters of national traveling exhibits, web projects, public programs, and other platforms for civic engagement. We will also be working with the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC). The ICC has been involved in community development since 1969. As it notes on its website, “Since Ironbound is home to both the state’s largest garbage incinerator and one of the country’s most contaminated sites — a former Agent Orange dioxin factory — and has both active and abandoned industrial facilities, close flight paths and active truck routes, ICC has worked to improve the quality of air, water, and green space in our community.”

### **Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students will have:

- Learned about Newark, environmental and public history;
- Interpreted primary sources;
- Synthesized secondary readings and interpreted primary sources as public programming;
- Learned the process of program development;
- Worked collaboratively with HAL;

### **Assignments:**

- **Environmental Justice in Newark Analysis Paper:** Using resources from the [Newark Public Library’s Digital ICC archive](#), the [Picturing Justice Tumblr](#), and the [Ironbound Voices](#) digitized newspaper collection as well as class readings, write a short paper analyzing how ICC has addressed environmental justice issues over time in Newark. You may want to think about who was leading these efforts, what claims they were making, or the strategies and tactics used. **Due: March 4**
- **Public Humanities Program Evaluation:** Attend a program on any topic at a museum, historic site, or state humanities council that interests you. Contact the program’s creator and find out how the program works, its goals, and if it has been evaluated. Did its goals match with what you experienced? In a short paper *incorporating class readings and discussions about public history*, critically evaluate the program. Did it meet its goals?
- **Program proposals:** in small groups, propose at least 3 programs that could be offered while the HAL exhibit is on display in Newark during Fall 2019. These programs should be united by a theme, include goals and objectives, intended audiences, and evaluation criteria. Each group will present their proposed program series.

### **Attendance and Participation:**

You will be expected to attend class having completed readings and assignments and be prepared to actively participate. If you cannot attend class, please let me know at least 24 hours before class (except in the case of emergencies).

In order for us to accomplish our ambitious agenda, it is necessary for me to communicate with you and for you to communicate with each other outside of our formal class time. The easiest way to do this is by email. **You are required to check your email regularly and to respond to requests from me or your classmates in a timely manner.** If you use a different email address than your Rutgers' one, I suggest that you either forward email from your Rutgers account to your other address or you make sure that I have your correct email address.

### **Grading:**

Environmental Justice in Newark Analysis Paper: 30%

Public Humanities Program Evaluation: 30%

Group Program Proposal: 30%

Participation and Attendance: 10%

### **Required Texts:**

- Andrew Hurley, *Beyond Preservation: Using Public History to Revitalize Inner Cities*.
- Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*.
- Rebecca Solnit and Joshua Jelly-Shapiro, *Nonstop Metropolis: A New York City Atlas*.

Articles and readings as assigned below. These can be found on our blackboard site or online.

### **Academic Integrity**

Rutgers has a strict policy against plagiarism and cheating. If you have questions about what counts as either, please see me before completing assignments. You can review the academic integrity policy here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

### **Disability Statement**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake

interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973)353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting [odsnewark@rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@rutgers.edu).

### **Weekly Schedule:**

Week 1/Jan. 28 – Introduction to the Course

- Guest speaker: Aleia Brown, Humanities Action Lab

Week 2/Feb. 4 – Environmental Justice in Newark

- “Off The Rails,” Sara Grossman, <http://newestamericans.com/OFF-THE-RAILS/>
- “Dirty Little Secrets,” WNYC <https://www.wnyc.org/story/nj-contaminated-sites/>
- “Introduction: Public History and Environmental Sustainability,” Leah S. Glaser *The Public Historian*, 36 (Aug. 2014), 10-16
- “Public History Skills,” David Glassberg *The Public Historian*, 36 (Aug. 2014), 17-30.
- “Reflections on the Public Interpretation of Regional Environmental History in Western Pennsylvania,” Chris Magoc *The Public Historian*, 36 (Aug. 2014), 50-69.

Week 3/Feb. 11 – Urban Public History

- Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place*

Week 4/Feb. 18 – Urban Public History

- Andrew Hurley, *Beyond Preservation*

Week 5/Feb. 25 – PH Method: Display/Exhibition/Interpretation

- “Objects of Ethnography,” from *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 17-78.

- “Confronting the “Tyranny of Relevance”: Exhibits and the Politics of Representation,” Andrea Burns, *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement*. 72-105
- “K(NO)W Justice K(NO)W Peace The Making of a Rapid-Response Community Exhibit,” Brenda Tindal *The Public Historian*, 40 (February 2018), 87-96

Week 6/Mar. 4 – Hopefully visit Form Design Lab (I’m in Baltimore)

**DUE: Environmental Justice in Newark Analysis Paper**

Week 7/Mar. 11 – PH Method: Mapping

- “Appendix B: The Use of the Method,” from *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch
- *Nonstop Metropolis* by Rebecca Solnit

**March 16-March 24 Spring Break**

Week 8/Mar. 25 – PH Method: Facilitated Discussions

- “Kitchen Conversations: Democracy in Action at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum,” Ruth Abrams, *The Public Historian* 29 (Winter 2007), 59-76.
- “Using Dialogue to Interpret Immigration,” Sarah Phareon from *Interpreting Immigration at Museums and Historic Sites*, 1-24.
- National Dialogues on Immigration website, <http://www.dialoguesonimmigration.org/>
- “Storytelling,” from *Local Acts: Community Based Performance in the United States*, Jan Cohen-Cruz, 129-152

Week 9/Apr. 1 – PH Method: Play and Interaction

- *Queer Political Performance and Protest*, Benjamin Shepard, 1-109
- “More than Fun and Games: Play, Public Humanities and Engaged Democracy,” Mary Rizzo *Public* 2 (1), <http://public.imagingamerica.org/blog/article/more-than-fun-and-games-play-public-humanities-and-engaged-democracy/>

Week 10/Apr. 8 – Program Planning and Evaluation

- Shaping Outcomes IUPUI Museum Studies modules on program development <http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/index.htm>

Week 11/Apr. 15 – In-class group collaborations

Week 12/Apr. 22 – Program Preparation for Telling Untold Histories Unconference

**April 26 – Telling Untold Histories Unconference**

Week 13/Apr. 29 – Peer Review

- “Geographies of Displacement: Latina/os, Oral History, and the Politics of Gentrification in San Francisco’s Mission District,” by Nancy Raquel Mirabel *The Public Historian* 31 (2009), 7-31.
- “Fighting for a better memorial?” Interview of Sam Imperatrice, History at Work, <https://ncph.org/history-at-work/fighting-for-a-better-memorial/>

Week 14/May 6 – Class Presentations

Group Program Proposals due: May 13.