

HIST 265
HISTORY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITIONS

Spring Semester 2022

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes as its subject the world of the “historical Indiana Jones”: those men—and they were pretty much all men—who transported artifacts across ethnic and cultural boundaries in the name of science and empire. From Napoleon’s military and scholarly invasion of Egypt in 1798 to the nationalist obstruction of Western archaeologists in the 1930s, we will explore the ideological motivations, logistical complexities, and material results of Western archaeological expeditions in the non-Western world. Our focus, however, will not only be on the archaeologists themselves. In order to fully understand the business of archaeology, we will also interrogate the history of the museum, the tensions of class and race, the impact of new media technologies, and the rise of popular adventure narratives. We will conclude the course with an evaluation of the popular Hollywood film franchise and the ways in which it has engaged the legacy of archaeological expeditions during the age of Western empires.

This course is offered as part of the AU Core Program, Habits of Mind: Socio-Historical Inquiry.

READINGS & FILMS:

Most readings, films, and other course materials will be available for free on our course website (www.edspace.american.edu/cave17/). You will, however, need to acquire a digital or paperback copy of the following book, which I wrote specifically for use in this course:

1. Justin M. Jacobs, *Indiana Jones in History: From Pompeii to the Moon* (Pulp Hero Press, 2017)
2. Karl E. Meyer and Sharen Blair Brysac, *The China Collectors: America’s Century-Long Hunt for Asian Art Treasures* (St. Martin’s Press, 2015)

GRADING:

The breakdown of your final grade will be as follows:

Exam #1	25 pts. (25%)
Exam #2	25 pts. (25%)

Exam #3	25 pts. (25%)
<u>A Letter to Spielberg</u>	<u>25 pts. (25%)</u>
Total:	100 pts. (100%)

ASSIGNMENTS

EXAMS (75 minutes). FEBRUARY 8, MARCH 18, & APRIL 19.

Each student will complete **three (3) in-class exams**. These exams will include a range of identifications and short essay questions, all of which will appear on an expanded study guide one class session before the exam. The actual exam will consist of roughly 1/3 of the material from the study guide, *with all IDs, essay prompts, and other exercises selected by your instructor*. In other words, everything on the exam will have already appeared on the study guide, but you will not know which material from the study guide will appear on the exam until the day of the exam. In order to get the best grade possible, make sure you provide answers and analysis that are derived from material presented and analyzed in our course—it is painfully obvious to me when students simply regurgitate factoids found on the internet or Wikipedia, and these sorts of answers will not receive full credit. Your answers on the exams (and papers) will need to reflect your active engagement with the specificity of facts, people, events, themes, interpretations, and arguments that your instructor has developed for this course.

A LETTER TO SPIELBERG (5-7 pages double-spaced). Due April 28.

Your final assignment for this course is to write a thoughtful, historically informed letter to Stephen Spielberg (or George Lucas—take your pick) that is intended to educate him about the real history of archaeological expeditions, in all of their nuanced complexity. And since criticism without constructive advice is rarely productive, you will also need to offer a detailed plot outline for a better, more historically informed Indiana Jones film. Of course, neither Spielberg nor Lucas have any interest in being informed of their beloved film franchise’s historical shortcomings, but that will not deter you in your mission. So, your job in this assignment is twofold: 1) politely explain where, when, and why the Indiana Jones film franchise is historically inaccurate and culturally insensitive; and 2) politely offer your own thoughtful, historically informed idea for a new plot for the next Indiana Jones film. For the purposes of this assignment, the geopolitical backdrop must keep pace with the first four films, i.e., it must feature a very elderly Indiana Jones in the 1960s or 70s, though of course his ideological outlook and co-stars may (or may not) have changed considerably. Regardless of how you approach the details of this assignment, your grade will be based on how well you demonstrate new historical knowledge gained in this course over the past semester.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SOCIO-HISTORICAL INQUIRY

- 1. Examine an idea, problem, policy, or institution over a defined period of time**
 - a. In this course, students will identify and trace the evolution of ideological and geopolitical factors that fueled the transport of cultural artifacts across ethnic and cultural boundaries during the age of global Western empires.

Guided class discussions, three in-class exams, and a take-home writing assignment critiquing the Indiana Jones film franchise will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their grasp of the material and immaterial factors that facilitated the rise and fall of Western archaeological expeditions and excavations.

- 2. Employ a critical or systematic method to analyze the relationship between human values, ideas, institutions, policies, or perspectives and their social and historical contexts or conditions**
 - a. In this course, we will analyze and compare primary and secondary sources produced by or about Western archaeological expeditions. Guided class discussions, three in-class exams, and a take-home writing assignment critiquing the Indiana Jones film franchise will allow students to demonstrate their ability to differentiate between primary and secondary sources and identify author biases and agendas.
- 3. Analyze and evaluate evidence and sources to develop an argument, or other student work product, that takes into account social and historical contexts or conditions**
 - a. In this course, we will engage in close comparative readings of private and public narratives produced by archaeologists during and about their expeditions or excavations. Guided class discussions on public vs. private discourses in the writings of various archaeologists will allow students to demonstrate their ability to weigh and judge historical evidence and develop an argument sensitive to evolving cultural and political contexts.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code and are obligated to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to the particular requirements for this course. The code is available online at <http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/index.htm>.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

January 11: INTRODUCTION

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. ix–xiii
2. **WATCH:** At the end of every chapter in *Indiana Jones in History* you will encounter a prompt to “continue the journey” by watching one or more Youtube documentary videos (11-15 minutes each) created by your instructor expressly for this subject matter. So you should do just that: first read the chapter, then watch the supplementary Youtube videos associated with that chapter. (In other words, the point of this prompt is to inform you that the syllabus will not always include a reminder to watch the videos, but you will be responsible for their content).

January 14: THE POLITICS OF MILITARY PLUNDER

1. **READ:** Wood, “Display, Restitution, and World Art History: The Case of the ‘Benin Bronzes’”
2. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 7–32
3. **READ:** Hevia, “Looting and Its Discontents: Moral Discourse and the Plunder of Beijing, 1900–1901,” pp. 93–108

WEEK 2

January 18: THAT BELONGS IN A MUSEUM

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 1–30
2. **READ:** Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Mission Statement”
3. **READ:** “A Baltimore Museum Tried to Raise Money by Selling Three Pricey Artworks. It Backfired Stupendously.”

January 21: EVOLUTION OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

1. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 33–62

WEEK 3

January 25: DINOSAUR NATIONALISM

1. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 63–101

January 28: THE COMPENSATIONS OF COOPERATION

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 31–59
2. **READ:** “A Thousand Miles Up the Nile,” pp. 211–42

WEEK 4

February 1: THE ELGIN MARBLES

1. **READ:** “The Elgin Marbles: A Summary,” pp. 109–19
2. **READ:** “Why the Elgin Marbles Should Not Be Returned to Greece ... Yet”
3. **READ:** “The Parthenon Marbles: Refuting the Arguments”

February 4: THE ARTIFACTION OF THE MEMNON HEAD

1. **READ:** “The Artifaction of the Memnon Head”
2. ***** the study guide for Exam #1 will be posted to Canvas today *****

WEEK 5

February 8: * EXAM #1 *****

February 11: SUBSISTENCE DIGGERS

1. **READ:** Matsuda, “Subsistence Diggers”
2. **READ:** Petrie, “A Digger’s Life”
3. **READ:** “A Poem of Praise for the Expedition, by Obulmahdi of Karakhoja”
4. **RECOMMENDED VIEWING:** If you have access to Netflix, I would highly recommend watching the film *The Dig* (2021) starring Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes (I will also organized a free Zoom watch party for this film sometime this week after the exam). It is a fictionalized retelling of the discovery and excavation of the Anglo-Saxon burial site of Sutton Hoo in England. It does a great job in highlighting the tensions of class between educated academics and less educated (or wholly illiterate) “hired hands” who provide the actual muscle in archaeological excavations—but it highlights this tension within a setting where there are no ethnic or cultural distinctions among the participants, thus allowing us to focus solely on the class aspect without conflating it with other factors.

WEEK 6

February 15: CONSUMING INDIANA JONES

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 61–92
2. **READ:** Bingham, “The Discovery of Machu Picchu”

February 18: THE AGE OF DISCONTENT

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 93–122
2. **READ:** Mahfouz, *Thebes at War* (excerpt)

WEEK 7

February 22: THE NIGHT OF COUNTING THE YEARS

1. **WATCH:** *The Night of Counting the Years* (1969, 102 minutes)
2. **READ:** Al-Banna, “Between Yesterday and Today”

February 25: NON-WESTERN MUSEUMS

1. **READ:** Wilkinson, “French Foundations,” pp. 173–207
2. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 103–39

WEEK 8

March 1: THE TREASURES OF CHINA

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 123–156
2. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 141–87

March 4: WHO OWNS ANTIQUITY?

1. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 189–252

WEEK 9

March 8: **SPRING BREAK**

March 11: **SPRING BREAK**

WEEK 10

March 15: THE EMPEROR'S TREASURES

1. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 253–303
2. ***** the study guide for Exam #2 will be posted to Canvas today *****

March 18: **EXAM #2**

WEEK 11

March 22: THE DEALERS

1. **READ:** Loo, *An Exhibition of Chinese Stone Sculptures*, introduction (1940)
2. **READ:** Loo, *Chinese Frescos of Northern Sung*, introduction (1949)
3. **READ:** “Mr. Loo and the China Trade” (1950)

March 25: CONFRONTING INDIANA JONES

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 157–90
2. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 305–36

WEEK 12

March 29: WONDERFUL THINGS

1. **READ:** Wilkinson, “Wonderful Things,” pp. 383–429
2. **READ:** “Excerpts from the Diary of Howard Carter, 1923–24”

April 1: THE END OF THE SILK ROAD

1. **READ:** *The China Collectors*, pp. 337–69
2. **READ:** “English Translation of Wan Rong’s Postface to the Chinese Translation of Stein’s *Preliminary Report* for His First Expedition in Xinjiang”
3. **READ:** “Statement Regarding Sir Aurel Stein’s Archaeological Expedition in Chinese Turkestan”

WEEK 13

April 5: THE MUSEUM STRIKES BACK

1. **READ:** Appiah, “Whose Culture Is It?” pp. 71–85

2. **READ:** Montebello, “And What Do You Propose Should Be Done With Those Objects?” pp. 55–70
3. **READ:** Ray, “Whose Loot Is It Anyway?” pp. 145–63

April 8: SCHOLARS AT WAR

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 191–223
2. **READ:** Morley, “Three Classified Reports on Central American Geography, Economy, and People” (1918)

WEEK 14

April 12: HOLLYWOOD VS. HISTORY

1. **READ:** *Indiana Jones in History*, pp. 225–50
2. **READ:** “*Raiders of the Lost Ark*: Story Conference Transcript, 1978,” pp. 1–19

April 15: THE CASE FOR TENURE

1. **READ:** “Back from Yet Another Globetrotting Adventure, Indiana Jones Checks His Mail and Discovers that His Bid for Tenure Has Been Denied”
2. **PREPARE:** Our reading for today is a short parody of the university tenure process as it might be applied to the fictional career of Henry Jones, Jr. (aka “Indiana Jones”) in 1939. Although it is an entertaining piece and intended to be funny, you should read it with a close eye to historical accuracy: which parts of the case against Indiana Jones reflect the author’s knowledge of known historical events and themes, and which parts do not? After we critique this parody, we will then engage in our own mock assessment of the fictional career of Henry Jones, Jr., but this time we will play devil’s advocate: that is, based on your knowledge of the history of archaeological expeditions as explored in this course, is it possible to make a case *for* the granting of tenure to Indiana Jones in 1939? Or is he forever doomed to operate on the illegitimate margins of academia?
3. ***** the study guide for Exam #3 will be posted to Canvas today *****

WEEK 15

April 19: EXAM #3

April 22: IF YOU WERE STEPHEN SPIELBERG....

1. **PREPARE:** Come to class prepared to share your ideas for the next Indiana Jones film. Your goal is to come up with a more historically informed concept for the plot that nonetheless retains the appeal of an entertaining, mainstream Hollywood film that will gross over one billion dollars in box office receipts (hey, someone has to pay Harrison Ford’s salary). You will also want to take into account progressive ideas about race, gender, and class that we have explored in this course—not to pander to a politically correct agenda, but rather to create a more historically accurate cinematic production. In formulating your ideas, you will at a minimum need to address the following plot points: 1) a historically plausible artifact; 2) a historically plausible geopolitical backdrop (think 1960s-70s); 3) a

historically plausible co-star or co-stars for Indiana Jones. This class session is designed to help you to complete your final assignment for this course (“A Letter to Spielberg”).

April 28: *A Letter to Spielberg due today.* Please send via e-mail as a Word file attachment to <dryhten@gmail.com> no later than 5 p.m. EST.