

**Topics in Historic Preservation & Public History**  
***Revolutionary Approaches to Philadelphia's Black Heritage***  
**University of Pennsylvania Weitzman School of Design**

**HSPV 6200**

Spring 2024

F 8:30am-11:29am

Meyerson Hall B5

Office Hours: Th 11am-1pm

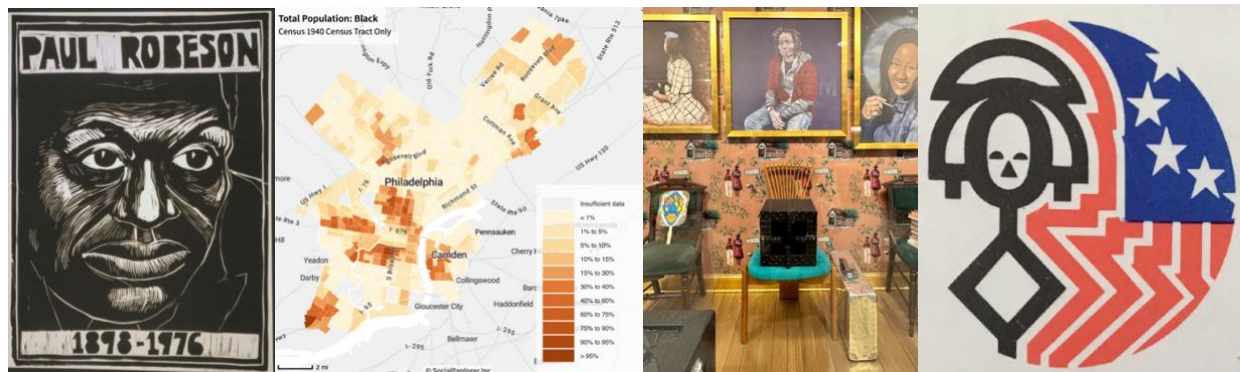
**Prof. Wiley**

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L to R: *Paul Robeson, 1898-1976*, *Rachael Romero*, Black population in Philadelphia 1940, *Sit a Spell* airport installation, The Colored Girls Museum, Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation logo

This seminar is a deep dive into Black heritage sites in Philadelphia, with the purpose of developing documentation and historic context around these underrepresented and threatened community assets ahead of the Semiquincentennial of 2026. The class grows out of a series of conversations between the Center for the Preservation of Civil Rights Sites (CPCRS), Black heritage stewards, architects, planners, creatives, and cultural producers in the city. To date, there has been no systematic investigation into Black historic assets in Philadelphia.

Many of these sites are in areas that are experiencing new development and gentrification. As the 2018-2023 Statewide Preservation Plan for Pennsylvania noted, "There is little diversity in the historic and archaeological resources that reflect Pennsylvania's diverse ethnic and cultural history. In particular, African American resources in Pennsylvania are greatly underrepresented in National Register of Historic Places listings, by Pennsylvania Historical Markers, and in the CRGIS database of identified historic properties maintained by PA SHPO.<sup>1</sup> It is critical to protect, preserve, and elevate these histories.

<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania State Historic Office and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. *2018-2023 Pennsylvania's Statewide Historic Preservation Plan: Community Connections: Planning*

This class forms the first part of a cultural heritage and tourism initiative by CPCRS. We will engage in archival research, document sites, map resource locations, investigate creative approaches to storytelling and stewardship, and create public-facing content to share with city and state-level stakeholders. This research will highlight Black Philadelphians contributions to the performing and visual arts, abolitionism, science, politics, sports, education, civil rights, etc. Visits to archives, museums, and heritage sites are required and essential for success in classrooms and assignments.

## **LEARNING GOALS**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Display a general understanding of Philadelphia’s Black history, from colonial era to present
- Develop a critical analysis of Philadelphia’s Black heritage methods, documentation, preservation, strengths, and deficits
- Engage in critical discourse about the preservation field and its relationship to underrepresented and under resourced communities
- Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to the discipline, including the production of historic context and significance statements
- Develop creative approaches to cultural heritage practice

## **TEXTS**

- All readings and media will be available on Canvas

## **GRADING**

Participation	(15%)
Mapping Black Philadelphia	(20%)
Historic Context Paper (10-12 pp)	(25%)
Project Proposal (10-12 pp)	(25%)
Final Presentation	(15%)

## **ATTENDANCE**

Your success in this course depends on your attendance, participation, reading, and completion of course assignments. This course meets once a week and attendance is mandatory. Special circumstances such as excused absences are the exception. These include illness, religious holiday, or a personal/family crisis that is documented by an academic administrator. You are allowed two unexcused absences; absences after that are detrimental to your class grade. Each unexcused absence will result in a 2% lowering of the final grade in this course. Timeliness is paramount and tardiness can cause you to miss important class announcements and information in lecture. The course includes several site visits and events. Attendance is required unless there is a direct time conflict, which should be discussed with professor ahead of time.

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*for Preservation in Pennsylvania*, 49. <https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation/Preservation-Plan/Documents/2018-Final-Statewide-Plan-Web.pdf>

## **PARTICIPATION**

Participation includes contributing to in-class discussions by speaking, being intellectually present and engaged for each meeting, paying attention to what is said by your peers, and being an active learner and listener. To make meaningful contributions to class discussions your participation should reflect your engagement with, and understanding of, the assigned course **readings and questions**. Students should therefore have the **texts read and videos viewed prior to the date on which they first appear on the syllabus**. Not participating in lectures and discussions will result in a lower class grade.

Mutual respect. Each person in this course has unique prior experiences and a unique viewpoint to share. This offers a great opportunity for us to learn from each other. Though disagreement and even conflict may occur, I expect your cooperation in maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect. When participating in discussions, it is perfectly acceptable to have strong opinions – in fact, I encourage you to do so. In the process, however, I expect you to respect the basic intelligence and humanity of each of the other participants in the discussion. Disagreement is not necessarily a bad thing, if there is a commitment to mutual respect. Hateful and demeaning speech will not be tolerated.

Use of digital devices and wireless internet access during class time must be confined to course-related activities. Uses unrelated to the course can be distracting to others. This will be monitored and managed throughout the semester (and could result in dismissal from a class session).

Wearing masks in class is at the discretion of each individual. If public health conditions change, however, professors may require students to wear masks.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

The material that will aid in completing assignments will be covered both in class lectures and assigned readings. It will be necessary to attend class and read all assigned material to be prepared for these exercises. Please follow the Chicago Style for essay citations. Full credit will not be given to essays/text that do not meet minimum length requirements. There will be no extension granted on the assignment due date, unless for valid reasons as determined by the professor. You will receive a 1/3 reduction in your grade for each day that exceeds the stated submission deadline, meaning, a high A will become a mid-A after one day, a low-A after two days, a B+ after three days, etc.

## **GRADE SCALE**

**A = 94 - 100** (Exceptional) Exceptional performance, exceeding the requirements of the course, showing strong academic initiative and independent resourcefulness.

**A- = 90 - 93** (Outstanding): Strong performance, accurate and complete; meeting the requirements of the course.

**B+ = 87 - 89** (Very Good): Performance above the norm; with more research and rigor the work has great potential.

**B = 84 - 86 (Good):** Beyond the minimum requirements of the course; work demonstrates marked progress and initiative.

**B- = 80 - 83 (Satisfactory):** Satisfactory work that adequately meets minimum requirements and demonstrates comprehension.

**C+ = 77 - 79 (Unsatisfactory):** Unsatisfactorily meets minimum requirements. With significantly more research and rigor the work could be above average.

**C = 73 - 76 (Poor):** Demonstrates little initiative to investigate the problem without substantial prodding of the instructor; work shows little improvement.

**C- 70 – 73 (Extremely Poor):** Demonstrates minimum comprehension, communication skills; initiative lacking; improvement not noticeable.

**F = 69 and Below (Failing):** Does not meet minimum requirements; fails to adequately demonstrate comprehension, communication skills, and effort.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Absolute honesty of the entire community is expected in all academic endeavors. As part of the community, students have responsibilities regarding the originality of all independent work that forms the basis for the evaluation of their academic achievement. Examples of a violation of academic honesty include but are not limited to: submission of the same written work in more than one course; plagiarism – the use of someone else’s words, ideas, information, or original material without acknowledging the source. If you are unclear about how to cite sources in your papers, you should ask. I have a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism – plagiarizing sources will result in a failing grade for an assignment. I strongly advise you to familiarize yourself with the university’s updated [University’s Code of Academic Integrity](#) for this class, and for your other classes and future work. All suspected cases of cheating and plagiarism will be automatically referred to the Office of Student Services, and I will recommend penalties appropriate to the gravity of the infraction. Students with questions or concerns about plagiarism or any other issues regarding academic integrity or the classroom environment are welcome to approach the professor in confidence. ChatGPT and other AI tools may only be used in the course by permission of the instructor, and only if it meets a legitimate research purpose.

### **ACADEMIC FREEDOM STATEMENT**

The policies of the University of Pennsylvania protect academic freedom, as defined in the [AAUP’s 1940 Statement of Principles](#). This statement has been endorsed by over 250 scholarly and educational organizations in the United States, and its principles are written into faculty handbooks nationwide, including [Penn’s](#). The principles of academic freedom were established to protect the integrity of research and teaching from interference by donors, trustees, politicians, and others who might seek to make universities serve private and political interests. They are founded on the idea that a university’s purpose is to generate new knowledge that can serve the common good in a democratic society, and that generating new knowledge requires free and open inquiry. To safeguard the university’s public mission, academic freedom entails the following rights for all faculty members—whether tenure-track or non-tenure track, and including graduate research and teaching assistants—and for students:

- The right of faculty members to full freedom in research, teaching, extramural speech (public speech on issues of general concern) and intramural speech (speech about the university itself, including criticism of it).
- The right of students to freedom in learning, which includes freedom of association and expression and freedom of inquiry in the classroom.

## MISCELLANEA

I reserve the right to update the readings and assignments as the semester moves along but will stay within the boundaries of the workload signaled in this syllabus. Our situations may change, and I will adjust accordingly.

I will do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours, *except* on weekends and holidays, and I only check email between the hours of 9 am and 5pm.

### Week 1

#### 01.19.24 Snow Day

- No Class

### Week 2

#### 01.26.24 Introduction

- *Declaration of Independence*, 1776

- Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" Frank Stewart, ed. *In the Silence: International Fiction, Poetry, Essays, and Performance* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2023): 68-71

#### Events:

- 01.25.24 [Preservation Futures: History](#), 12 pm in Kleinman (Recommended)

- 01.25.24 [Heritage Hangout](#), 5-7:30 pm at Parkway Central Library (**Highly** recommended)

### Week 3

#### 02.02.24 Mapping as Method

- Emily Holloway, "Recover and Remix: Digital Humanities, Heritage Preservation, and Black Geographies," CPCRS White Paper, June 2022

- W. E. B. Du Bois and Elijah Anderson, "Introduction," Chapters 1-4, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2023), ix-45

- Explore: City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Properties and Historic Districts Map

**Archive Visit:** Class meets in Meyerson B5 as usual for discussion, then at 9:30 am moves over to the Davis Seminar Room in the Fisher Fine Arts Library. Map and newspaper collection orientation with librarian **Lauris Olson**.

## Week 4

### 02.09.24 Revolutionary Approaches: 1976-2026

- Tammy S. Gordon, "Introduction: In the Spirit of the Revolution," *The Spirit of 1976: Commerce, Community, and the Politics of Commemoration* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013): 1-20
- M. J. Rymsza-Pawlowska, "Preservation is People: Saving and Collecting as Public Practice," *History Comes Alive: Public History and Popular Culture in the 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 67-88
- Andrea A. Burns, "'To Satisfy a Deadline but Little Else': The Public Debut of the African American Museum of Philadelphia," *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 106-128
- Explore: Black Docents Collective

**Site Visit:** Class meets in Meyerson B5 for discussion, then at 9:30 am travels to **African American Museum of Philadelphia**. Tours and discussion led by **Michael Clemmons** and **Richard White**, members of the **Black Docents Collective**.

### Events:

- 02.07.24 [Black City Makers 7<sup>th</sup> Ward Tribute Salon](#) 6-8 pm @ Mother Bethel AME (**Highly** Recommended)
  - 02.08.24 [In-person Design Career Fair](#) 12-4 pm (Recommended)
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## Week 5

### 02.16.24 Theatre as Memory and Community

- **Class visit** from director and actor **Phyllis Yvonne Stickney**
- Jamil Jude, Sheila Kay Davis, Ty Jones, Guinea Bennett-Price, Ron Himes, Margo Hall, Rebecca Flemister, "'More Than a Space': Conversations with Artistic Directors of Black Theater Companies," *Theater* (2021) 51 no. 3: 35–55
- Charles Fuller, *Zooman and the Sign*, (Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street Press, 2002, originally published 1980)
- Catherine Bache, "New Freedom Theatre," CPCRS Case Study, February 11, 2021

### Events:

- 02.13.24 [Virtual Design Career Fair](#) 12-4 pm (Recommended)
  - 02.17.24 [Zooman and the Sign](#), Penn Live Arts, Harold Prince Theatre (**Required**)
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## Week 6

### 02.19.24 Due: Mapping Black Philadelphia

#### 02.23.24 Legacy Reclaimed: 7<sup>th</sup> Ward Tribute

- Marcus Anthony Hunter, "If These Row Homes Could Talk," and "The Night the Roof Caved In," *Black Citymakers: How The Philadelphia Negro Changed Urban America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 3-20, 69-114
- Explore: 7<sup>th</sup> Ward Tribute and Sweet Chariot: The Long Journey to Freedom Through Time

**Site Visit:** Class meets at Mother Bethel AME at 9 am for tour of 7<sup>th</sup> Ward Tribute led by historian **Amy Hillier**. We will be joined by students in the Spatial Reparations course.

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## Week 7

### 03.01.24 Independent Research

- NO CLASS
- Readings individualized around selected historic themes
- **Skim:** Charles Blockson, *Philadelphia: 1639-2000 Black America Series* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000)
  - African American Churches of Philadelphia, 1787-1949 Multiple Property Documentation Form
  - 20th Century African American Civil Rights Sites in Washington, DC, 1912-1974
  - Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: African American History of Los Angeles

#### Events:

- 02.29.24 Preservation Futures: Design, 12 pm in Kleinman (Recommended)
- 02.29.24 Jessica Vaughn, 6 pm @ ICA (Recommended)

**Due: Historic Context proposal and preliminary bibliography**

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## Week 8

### 03.08.24 Spring Break

- NO CLASS
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## Week 9

### 03.15.24 Historic Designation in Philly and In-Class Workshop

- **Class visit** from planner and lawyer **David Gest**
- Readings individualized around student's selected historic themes
- Philadelphia Historic Preservation Task Force, *Final Report*, 1-5, 13-18, 47-51
- City of Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance, May 22, 2023
- Explore: HistoricPlacesLA, Treasure Philly!

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## Week 10

### 03.22.24 Philadelphia Black History Resources

- Readings individualized around student's selected historic themes
- Watch: PBS, *Holding History: The Collections of Charles L. Blockson*, January 11, 2016

**Archive Visit:** Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection led by librarian **Aslaku Berhanu** and curator **Diane Turner**.

#### Events:

- 03.21.24 Preservation Futures: Science, 12 pm in Kleinman (Recommended)
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## Week 11

### 03.29.24 Reckoning with Difficult History in West Philly

- Laura Wolf-Powers, "The Black Bottom and the Birth of University City," *History, Race, and Community in the Era of the Innovation District* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022), 19-42
- J.T. Roane, "On the MOVE," *Dark Agoras: Insurgent Black Social Life and the Politics of Place* (New York: New York University Press, 2023), 209-242
- Watch: Jason Osder, *Let the Fire Burn* (2013)
- Explore: Heritage West

**Site Visit:** Class meets at **Penn Museum**. Students process items in archaeology lab with professor **Meg Kassabaum** and research liaison **Sarah Linn**.

**Due: Historic Context Paper**

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## Week 12

### 04.05.24 Philadelphia 250, America 250

- U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, *Inspiring the American Spirit*, December 31, 2019, 20-35, 42-55
- National Park Service, *The Declaration House Through Time*, July 5, 2021
- Amber N. Wiley, "East Jersey Old Town Village, Piscataway, NJ," *Revolution Research: Revolution NJ Artistic Research Residency*, Monument Lab (Summer 2021): 29-32
- Explore: Philadelphia250, America250

#### Events:

- 04.04.24 Preservation Meeting the Moment: Are We Ready? 12 pm (Recommended)
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### **Week 13**

#### **04.12.24 Announcing a Community Cultural Platform**

- **Class visit** from CPCRS Research Fellow **Chris Rogers**
  - Valerie Russ, "What does the future hold for the Tanner House? Historic preservation grad students have ideas," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 21, 2022
  - Christopher R. Rogers, "Singing the Praises of Dr. Halle Tanner Dillon Johnson," *Hidden City*, March 30, 2023
  - Shelby Weaver Splain, "Preserving the Henry Ossawa Tanner House," *Pennsylvania Historic Preservation*, November 29, 2023
  - June Jordan, "Foreword," *Civil Wars* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), ix-xiv
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### **Week 14**

#### **04.19.24 Black Landscapes Matter**

- Casey Cep, "The Fight to Preserve African American History," *New Yorker*, January 27, 2020
- Walter Hood, "Introduction," "Practicing Culture," "Lifeways," "Commemoration," *Black Landscapes Matter* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 1-8, 29-50

#### **Events:**

04.18.24 Kameelah Janan Rasheed, 6 pm @ICA (Recommended)

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### **Week 15**

#### **04.26.24 Presentations**

- Final Presentations

#### **05.06.24 Due: Project Proposal**