

Course: AS 389.260, Cultural Heritage in Crisis, Spring 2022
Class meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 10:30-11:45 AM, Gilman 150
Instructor: Sanchita Balachandran (she/her/hers)
Email: Sanchita@jhu.edu
Office hours: Immediately after class meetings and by appointment
Cross Listings: AS Program in Museums and Society, AS Anthropology, AS Archaeology, AS History, AS History of Art, AS International Studies

Land Acknowledgement Statement

Johns Hopkins University does not currently have an official land acknowledgement statement. My own land acknowledgement statement is a work in progress as I try to listen to and learn from Native and Indigenous peoples. As a settler on this land who is also a museum worker, my own commitment is to ensure that ancestral remains and ancestral items can be cared for, returned and repatriated as desired by their own peoples.

Scholars Elisa Sobo, Michael C. Lambert and Valerie L. Lambert [have drawn attention to the ways that land acknowledgements](#) “relegate Indigenous peoples to a mythic past and fail to acknowledge that they owned the land”; how “plans are never articulated to give the land back”; deny the past and ongoing trauma of Indigenous peoples, and undermine Indigenous sovereignty. They state, “land acknowledgments are not harmful, we believe, if they are done in a way that is respectful of the Indigenous nations who claim the land, accurately tell the story of how the land passed from Indigenous to non-Indigenous control, and chart a path forward for redressing the harm inflicted through the process of land dispossession.”

I am grateful to Peggy Mainor of the [Multicultural Initiative for Community Advancement](#) (MICA) Group for generously crafting the following statement and bringing our awareness to the long histories, ongoing presence, and futures of Indigenous people in this place now called Baltimore:

We gather today on the lands of the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island, now known as North America. The history of the Native people of the Upper Chesapeake Bay dates back 12,000 years. Our university stands on the traditional lands of the Susquehannock people, who lived in this region until 1652 when they were forced by the Maryland colonial government to cede their homeland and resettle at a fort on the banks of the Potomac River. In 1675, they were forced north to Conestoga, Pennsylvania by militia forces. There, the remaining members of the Susquehannock people were killed by the “Paxton Mob” in 1763. Although the Susquehannock Tribe no longer exists, we acknowledge their ongoing presence here. We also acknowledge that this place is one of gathering and stewardship of many Native peoples including the Piscataway and Accohannock Tribes, the Nanticokes of the Eastern Shore, and vibrant communities of Lumbees and Cherokees, who migrated to Maryland from North Carolina.

Pandemic Protocols

We are **still** working in the middle of a pandemic, a time of continued distress and uncertainty that has now stretched on since early 2020. It is my priority to support your physical and mental health as well as your learning. As masking and occasionally meeting online makes it even harder to know how people are doing, please be in touch with me to let me know if there is anything you need. If

you are feeling ill, please stay home and rest—if you feel well enough to join us via zoom, let me know and I will make this happen.

Course Description and Learning Goals

We explore the possible futures of cultural heritage and museums in times of accelerating climate change, pandemics, armed conflict and political and social turmoil by examining past and contemporary events. This is a course on crises and disasters and their effects on institutions, sites and objects of cultural heritage but I hope that it will give us ways to navigate what we'll need as we face what feels like an increasingly uncertain future. We'll question whether we are indeed facing an increasingly uncertain future, and how we can perhaps re-cast these futures given the new frameworks and skills we'll learn in this course.

The main learning goals for this class are:

- Further develop critical thinking, reading and listening skills
- Work in an intentionally multidisciplinary mode that allows us to learn different perspectives on the same topic
- Practice speaking and writing persuasively but always with a willingness to engage with different points of view
- Learn ways of engaging with speakers and colleagues by asking more—and more thoughtful—questions
- Learn more evaluative and strategic ways to think about the futures of cultural heritage

A few attunements:

This course examines the most urgent concerns in the preservation of art and cultural heritage in times of crises and disasters and takes an expansive view of “preservation.” Instead of assuming that this is work that is only done by a small number of specialists, this course seeks to broaden our understanding of what cultural heritage is, and who is privileged and responsible for its preservation and futurity.

Our readings are primarily in English, which limits what and whom we can learn from. I am also particularly interested in archaeological cultural heritage, and as someone who works in both the US and the ancient Mediterranean, I tend to gravitate towards scholarly works in these regions. A specific intention of this course is to read and engage with practitioners who are outside the geographic regions of Europe and North America, and/or self-identify as women, Black, Indigenous or people of color (BIPOC) people, and LGBTQIA+ people. I will bring poems that relate to our topics to class each week and we will read them out loud in class. This makes people uncomfortable at first, but trust me, it does something and is a worthwhile experiment.

Content warning: We are going to spend the semester learning about some difficult topics that force us to confront the extent to which crises and disasters deepen a sense of human and non-human suffering and raise a lot of upsetting questions. I will do my best to prepare you in advance about the kinds of information you will encounter, and I understand if some material is not ok for you to engage with. However, if a lot of this material is not something you wish to delve into, take care of yourself and choose another course. Your health and safety is more important than any course.

Course Requirements

Covid numbers willing, we will (hopefully!) meet in person at the Archaeological Museum (Gilman 150) on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10:30 to 11:45.

For the first two weeks of class, and also on days when we have guest speakers joining us remotely, we will meet on Zoom.

Please join with your preferred name. If you need a place to join class from on “zoom days”, let me know and we can figure something out.

When we meet in the Archaeological Museum, it will be in the main museum space which is a [bit of a fishbowl](#). It is a public space so people will likely be in and out of it as we hold class; we have to work with a more ad hoc computer monitor screen set up; and masking makes it more difficult to hear each other—hopefully this will work, but we will evaluate this together. If something is not working or you need additional support, please let me know what I can do to make the class conditions easier for you to participate—I am absolutely open to suggestions.

We have several sessions with guest speakers, and on those occasions, we will likely meet by Zoom so that the speakers can see your faces and we can utilize live captioning as well.

The format of our sessions will vary by the day/week, but for each week, expect a lecture, discussion time, a possible visit with a speaker, and collaborative work time. During class, we’ll experiment with Google Jamboard. More on this in class.

Your grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

Class attendance and participation	10%
Writing exercises	40%
Brief presentation of final paper	10%
Final paper/exercise revisions	20%
Leading discussion with invited speakers	10%
Transcript from speaker visits	10%

Come to class having completed all the readings for that day. Let me know if you have any problems accessing the required work for the week; all should either be available online or through Blackboard. Everything assigned should have captions or transcripts—please let me know if you can’t access them.

Weekly Writing Exercises/Final Paper: You will receive specific instructions per class meeting. You will be writing approximately a single page in response to a prompt that relates to the readings for that week. This is the majority of your grade, and your final paper will be based on your weekly assignments, so please stay current with them. Let me know if you are having trouble doing so, and we will figure things out together. More information about the final paper (5-7 pages in length, plus revisions of your weekly exercises) will be shared later, but start to think about how you will develop your own “disaster recovery kit” for your own cultural heritage.

Discussion/Transcript Work:

You will be asked to lead discussion with our speakers—more on this in class. In small groups, you will develop questions that you'd like to ask, take notes from the conversation and gather together a summary of what we learned from the session. This will be used to build up a “to do” and “not to do” list on Jamboard over the course of the semester.

An “A” is awarded for exceptional performance in class. Simply completing the assignments as required will result in a “B” grade. Please let me know if you are having any trouble completing the work, or have questions; we can come up with workable solutions together.

Course Ethics and Policies

Our classroom is a space for rigorous and thoughtful discussion and debate. You are expected to respect and support the class community and its members as we delve into contentious and emotionally charged issues around cultural heritage. We agree to communicate our ideas clearly, listen patiently and disagree respectfully and constructively.

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. See the guide on [“Academic Ethics for Undergraduates”](#) and the Ethics Board Web site for more information.

Usually, this class would be held in the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum and we will limit our digital devices when we meet in person. When we meet online, let's do our best to minimize digital distractions. If you can, please keep your cameras on and stay engaged as possible. If you need a zoom break or a physical break when we're in person, please do what feels appropriate. Let's just be patient and good humored as possible.

If you need any accommodations in order to feel supported in our class, please be in touch. Additionally, you can also ask for the assistance of Student Disability Services, at (410) 516-4720, or studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction

Jan 25

Jan 27

- ICCROM, [How Can you Save Cultural Heritage in An Emergency?](#) (running time 2:52)
- [Interview with Scott Knowles](#) (running time 6 mins)
- [“How Indigenous Communities Respond to Disasters”](#) (2020)
- Perry, [“New Orleans Is a Place Where There is Violence in the Sweetness, Horror in the Beauty”](#) (2022)

Week 2 How Do We Think about Disasters and Crises?

Feb 1

- Gould, “Disaster”, *Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Contemporary World*, 2013, p1-17.

- Selections from ICCROM's [First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis Handbook](#) (2018)

Feb 3

- Balachandran, "[Welcome to the Museum of the Future](#)," *Hyperallergic*, 2021.
- Selections from ICCROM's [First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis Toolkit](#) (2018)

Week 3 Planning for Futures Anyway

Feb 8 Guest speaker: [Matt Finch](#)

- Finch and Moody, "[Even in the worst-case scenario: exploring libraries' social role in crises real and imagined](#)," *Public Libraries*, 2020: 31-38.
- Finch, "[Mapping the Future: Scenario Planning for the Post-Pandemic Library](#)," 2020. 21 pages.

Feb 10

- "[Saving History with Sandbags: Climate Change Threatens the Smithsonian](#)." *The New York Times*, Nov 25, 2021.
- Marschall, "'Memory objects': Material Objects and Memories of Home in the Context of Intra-African Mobility." *Journal of Material Culture* 24, 3, 2019: 253-269.
- Selection from Clarke, *Mission Improbable: Using Fantasy Documents to Tame Disaster*, 1999.

Week 4 Migration

Feb 15

- Visit to and participation in the Hostile Terrain exhibit, Eisenhower Library
- Gokee, Stewart, and De León, "Scales of Suffering in the U.S./Mexico Borderlands." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 24, 2020: 823-851.

Feb 17

- Cameron, C. 2013. "How People Moved among Ancient Societies: Broadening the View." *American Anthropologist* 115(2): 218–231.
- Greene et al, "Ephemeral Heritage: Boats, Migration, and the Central Mediterranean Passage." *American Journal of Archaeology*, 126, 1, 2022: 79-102.

Week 5 "Natural" Disasters and Connected Crises

Feb 22

- Knowles, Introduction, *Disaster Experts: Mastering Risk in Modern America*, (2011), 1-21.
- Dintwa et al, "Vulnerability Perception, Quality of Life and Indigenous Knowledge: A Qualitative Study of the Population of Ngamiland West District, Bostwana," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 70, 2022, 15 pgs.
- Sultana, "Understanding the economic dimensions of women's vulnerability during cyclones: The Bangladesh perspective." *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 70, 2022, 13 pgs.

Feb 24

Guest speaker: [Judith Mitrani-Reiser](#)

- Peruse selections from [Learning from Hurricane Maria's Impacts on Puerto Rico](#), Jan 2021
- Helgeson and Dillard, "[The Trials and Triumphs of a Small City's Hurricane Recovery Could Help Other Communities Bounce Back](#)," National Institute of Standards and Technology, Jan 2022.

- Fire and NIST Research twitter thread:
<https://twitter.com/NISTPublicSafeT/status/1453813017662025760>

Week 6 Colonialism, Imperialism and Indigenous Futures

Mar 1 Guest speaker: [endawnis Spears](#)

- Spears, *TBA*.
- [Dana Tizya-Tramm](#) of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation at the Global Climate Summit (running time 2:24)
- Kisha Supernant: "[Indigenous Archaeologist Searches for Graves of Missing Children](#)," 2021 (running time 5:36)
- Deerinwater, "[Colonial Forces of Environmental Violence on Deaf, Disabled, & Ill Indigenous People](#)," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 41, 4, 2021.

Mar 3 Guest speakers: [Julia Lum](#) and [Alan McFetridge](#)

- Lum, "[Fire-Stick Picturesque: Landscape Art and Early Colonial Tasmania](#)," *British Art Studies*, 10, 2018.
- Peruse McFetridge's [photographic work on fires in Australia](#)
- Macedo and Pereira, "[We Know How to Stop The Fires](#)," *The New York Times*, Oct 20, 2020.

Week 7 "Human" Disasters

Mar 8 Guest speaker: [Alexis Boutin](#)

- Crowe, "Anthropologists Face a Grim Task: Identifying Human Remains After California's Fires." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Nov 29, 2018.
- "[Forensic Anthropology in a Changing Climate](#)," *Anthropology News*, April 2020.
- Boutin and Callahan, "Increasing Empathy and Reducing Prejudice: An Argument for Fictive Osteobiographical Narrative," *Bioarchaeology International* 3, 1, 2019: 1-10.

Mar 10

- Lazer et al, "[Inside the Casts of the Pompeian Victims: Results from the First Season of the Pompeii Cast Project in 2015](#)," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 89, 2021: 101-36. (You do not need to see images of the human remains if you would prefer not to—we can also come up with alternative reading).
- Finn, "[Pompeii Should Teach Us to Celebrate People's Lives, Not Mock Their Death](#)," *The Conversation* (2018).

Week 8 Disaster Landscapes

Mar 15

- Brown, "Learning to Read the Great Chernobyl Acceleration. Literacy in the More-than-human Landscapes." *Current Anthropology*, 60, 20, 2019: S198-S208.
- "[Defend Chernobyl During an Invasion? Why Bother, Some Ukrainians Ask](#)." *The New York Times*, Jan 22, 2022
- Schlanger et al, "Year 5 at Fukushima: a 'Disaster-led' Archaeology of the Contemporary Future." *Antiquity* 90, 350, 2016: 409-424.

Mar 17

- Arensen, "Living with Landmines: Inhabiting a War-Altered Landscape." *Journal of Material Culture*, 2021: 1-25.
- Monument Lab, [National Monument Audit](#), 2021.

Week 9 **No Class—Spring Break week**

Mar 22

Mar 24

Week 10 **Armed and Political Conflict**

Mar 29 Guest speaker: [Katharyn Hanson](#)

- Kurin and Hanson, "[Why We Need to Fight to Save Mosul's Cultural Heritage](#)," 2017
- Al Quntar, Hanson, Daniels and Wegener, "Responding to a Cultural Heritage Crisis: The Example of the Safeguarding the Heritage of Syria and Iraq Project." *Near Eastern Archaeology* 78:3 (2015): 154-160.
- Isakhan and Shahab, "The Islamic State's Destruction of Yezidi Heritage: Responses, Resilience and Reconstruction After Genocide." *Journal of Social Archaeology*, 2019: 1-33.

Mar 31

- Atkinson, Yates and Brooke, "'Now That You Mention It, Museums Probably are a Target': Museums, Terrorism and Security in the United Kingdom." *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 35, 2, 2020: 109-124.
- Geller and Marcelin, "In the Shadow of the Citadel: Haitian National Patrimony and Vernacular Concerns," *Journal of Social Archaeology*, 20, 1, 2020: 49-73.
- Trouillot, "Epilogue," *Silencing the Past*, 1995: 154-156.

Week 11 **Pandemics, Epidemics and Health Inequities**

Apr 5 Guest speaker: [Lydia Pecker](#)

- Pecker, Reading *TBA*.
- Charters and Heitman, "[How Epidemics End](#)," *Centaurus* 63, 2021: 210-224.
- Imada, "[Family History as Disability History: Native Hawaiians Surviving Medical Incarceration](#)," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 41, 4, 2021.

Apr 7

- Lynteris, "Plague Masks: The Visual Emergence of Anti-Epidemic Personal Protective Equipment." *Medical Anthropology* 37, 6, 442-457.
- Twitter thread on cholera: <https://twitter.com/AlexPetrovnia/status/1485451794251759620>
- Schofield et al, "'[COVID waste' and social media as Method: An Archaeology of Personal Protective Equipment and Its Contribution to Policy](#)." *Antiquity* 95, 380, 2021: 435-449. covid waste

Week 12 **Reconstructing the Past, Imagining Futures/Fictions**

Apr 12

- Hartman, "[Venus in Two Acts](#)." *Small Axe*, 26, 12, 2, 2008: 1-14.

- Odewale, "An Archaeology of Struggle: Material Remnants of a Double Consciousness in the American South and Danish Caribbean Communities," *Transforming Anthropology*, 27, 2: 114-132.
- Parshina-Kottas and Singhvi, "[How We Reconstructed the Neighborhood Destroyed by the Tulsa Race Massacre](#)," *The New York Times*, July 2, 2021.

Apr 14 Guest speaker: [Malka Older](#)

- Older, Twitter thread: https://twitter.com/m_older/status/1484240508918681601
- Older, "Disaster Response as Secondary Hazard," in *Disaster Research and the Second Environmental Crisis* (2019): 277-293.
- Older, "[Earthquake Relief. Mexico. 2051.](#)" *The New Humanitarian*, 2021.

Week 13 Foresight and Futurism

Apr 19 Guest speaker: [Nicole Ivy](#)

- Ivy, Reading *TBA*.
- Fenell, "[Sarah Saartjie Baartman](#)" from the podcast *Stuff the British Stole*, 2021.
- Franklin et al, "The Future is Now: Archaeology and the Eradication of Anti-Blackness." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 24, 2020: 753-766.
- Stodhill, "[Harriet Tubman's Path to Freedom](#)," *The New York Times*, Feb 24, 2017.

Apr 21

- Anderson, Ben. "Emergency Futures: Exception, Urgency, Interval, Hope" *The Sociological Review* 2017, Vol. 65(3) 463–477.
- Ngamassi et al, "Text Mining Hurricane Harvey Tweet Data: Lessons Learned and Policy Recommendations." *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 70, 2022, 11 pgs.
- Kumar, "Twitter, Disasters and Cultural Heritage. A Case Study of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake." *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 28, 2020: 453-465.

Week 14 Final Week

Apr 26 Work session for final papers

Apr 28 Brief presentations on final papers

(Wed) May 11 Final paper due by midnight. Feel free to submit it before this date.