AM ST 531

AMERICAN MATERIAL CULTURE
AND FOLKLIFE

American Studies Program, Penn State Harrisburg
Summer 2015, Second Summer session (7/1-8/12), MW 6-9 p.m., Schedule # 457684
Location: Olmsted Building, 310E (East)

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http://sites.psu.edu/bronner (Blog & Editorial Site)
http://www.facebook.com/simon.bronner (Facebook)
http://twitter.com/simbron (Twitter)
https://pennstate.academia.edu/SimonBronner (Academia)
http://www.pinterest.com/simon_bronner (Pinterest)
http://www.linkedin.com/simon-bronner (LinkedIn)
http://google.com/+SimonBronner (Google+)

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This course offers research perspectives on **American material culture**, defined as the *interconnection of tangible, human-made forms representing cultural ideas and traditions*. The forms receiving emphasis in this course are folk art and architecture. The course’s theme is one of *locating experience through objects*: the course sets folk art, craft, food, dress, and architecture as special evidence of sociocultural connection to, and expression of, *location*—in community, region, nation, ethnicity, and individuality—within American experience. The seminar centrally questions the symbols, identities, and functions that diverse groups have created “on the move” in that American experience. The structure of the course is as follows:

1. The course begins with an overview of American material culture and ways of documenting it. Emphasis is given to fieldwork techniques from folklife (historical and ethnographic) for method, and *theoretically* for perspectives labeled “textual” (or formalistic), “contextual,” and “behavioristic.”
2. Presenting a “textual approach” to study emphasizing a combination of historical and geographic perspectives, the course follows with a regional survey of folk architecture, and then with attention to a “contextual approach,” an ethnographic consideration of other ways of organizing folk architectural study by community, ethnicity, and occupation.
3. The next section emphasizing a “behavioristic approach” takes up contemporary craft and art that can be psychologically integrated with and applied to aspects of material culture such as food, furnishing, and clothing.

Students will engage folk art and architecture in the field as well as in the classroom. Weather permitting, two meetings will be held at historic material culture sites in Middletown near the campus to gain practice in documentation and interpretation. As a seminar, the course will encourage presentation and exchange of research among students. Accordingly, the course includes activities such as bringing in a folk artifact from home to discuss in terms of symbol, function, and context and giving a précis of the student’s research to colleagues in class. The course will utilize multiple media and computer resources, including an ANGEL web site for the course at [cms.psu.edu](http://cms.psu.edu).
OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will:

1. define “material culture” as a concept of cultural research and an interdisciplinary subfield of American Studies.
2. know practices of textual, contextual, and behavioristic approaches to material culture research and use one or more of these approaches in writing and bibliographic projects.
3. comprehend theories of American (a) historical regional development, (b) social functionalism and identity in traditional arts, and (c) psychological projection and gendered behavior in expressive culture.
4. use taxonomies of folk architecture and techniques of survey/documentary/cataloguing work in artifact, architecture, and cemetery inventory projects.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Effective teaching expands what students know and gives them ideas and skills to put knowledge into practice. I strive to develop multiple competencies in students, including visual and oral communication, in addition to writing and reading. I build the classroom experience on the idea of a dialogue in directed discussion, and hands-on activities, culminating in the achievement of learning goals. Toward that end, much of the model of teaching follows ideas of “practice” and “performance.” It is practice in the sense of being repeated (and it is hoped, both innovative and traditional) activities that enhance active learning and builds community. It is performance in the sense of being rehearsed with the goal of reaching students aesthetically and emotionally. It should be the kind of practice and performance that is engaging, inspiring, and evocative. I also adhere to a pragmatic philosophy that students respond to structure for their learning and derive educational benefits from direct hands-on experience with their subject, including opportunities to engage in the practices they need as professionals such as surveying, drafting, presentation, and interpretation. Even if they do not pursue a career in material culture and folklife, they will know outcomes and products that can be applied to different occupations and will be useful in life-long learning.
Required Texts (Available in PSH Bookstore and Other Outlets)


Supplementary Texts (PDF files on ANGEL):


California." *Western Historical Quarterly* 32: 149-73.


**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Grading** is determined by evaluating the student’s demonstration of scholarship and communication skills in written presentations. Forty percent of the grade consists of evaluation of an “annotated project abstract and bibliography” (July 16), “artifact report” (due July 30), and “oral/Powerpoint-Prezi presentation” (August 10). These assignments lead to the final project (due August 13) which consists of your answers to a questionnaire (referred to as the “interpretation project”). It is worth 40 percent of the grade. The interpretation project extends the work on the artifact report by demonstrating interpretation of a collection of artifacts, artifacts in ethnographic context, or a behavioral/psychological study of a maker. Forms and guidelines for the assignments will be posted to Angel. **Submissions will be done through the electronic “Drop Box” on Angel;** students will be shown how to complete this process in the computer workshop on July 1.

**Summaries of Assignments**

**The artifact report** entails completing a worksheet on one of the following types of artifacts: (1) work of craft, art, or food; (2) building or standing structure (e.g., hay derrick); (3) gravestone or memorial site (e.g., roadside marker). Students will be given twelve questions to answer on a worksheet, and they will be expected to provide visual as well as written documentation. **To answer the questions adequately, the minimum length of the report will be five pages.**

**The abstract and annotated bibliography** is an abstract of less than 200 words describing your project followed by an annotated bibliography of at least ten analytical sources relevant to your project. An abstract must be a fully self-contained, capsule description of the paper. This is the kind of abstract you would write for a conference paper proposal or in an expanded form, your thesis and/or dissertation. Each citation (use Chicago or MLA citation styles) in the bibliography is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. It also should be useful to you in your research as a master list of research that is relevant to your project. The annotations, therefore, should address the needs of your project. Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise exposition, succinct analysis, and informed library research.

**The oral/Powerpoint presentation** is a talk accompanied by Powerpoint or Prezi slides that summarizes the interpretation project. The presentation should not be longer than fifteen minutes and might be shorter, depending on the number of students in the course. Students
will give descriptions of their research project that will include: (1) summary of the problem, (2) evidence gathered and/or fieldwork conducted, and (3) findings and/or hypotheses addressed. Students should not read from a paper or script; the presentation is meant to be practice for presentations at public venues, conferences, and classrooms. Students will receive feedback from peers and professor on organization, communication, and command of software/technology.

The interpretation project should use one of the approaches to interpreting artifacts: *textual* (by reference to a comparative collection of objects analyzed textually, typologically, and stylistically often using historical, aesthetic, and/or geographic interpretation), *contextual* (by reference to an artifact ethnographically examined in a social situation often using sociological and anthropological interpretation), or *behavioral* (by reference to interview with makers and/or users and/or observation and interpretation, typically using psychological interpretation of behavioral/formative processes). The project should utilize artifactual evidence in relation to American folk culture. The assignments in the class take you through the research and writing process, with feedback from the instructor at each step. Students must use Word or Word Perfect for essays (*Works* is not supported). *To answer the questions adequately, the minimum length of the project will be seven pages.*

**GRADING RUBRICS**

**Written Assignments (artifact report, oral presentation, and abstract/annotated bibliography) Grading Rubric (20 points each):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student followed guidelines and instructions of assignment (e.g., length, theme, timeliness)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student contribution is thorough and properly documented</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student contribution demonstrates knowledge and/or research of subject</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student contribution demonstrates insight and understanding</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Written or visual contributions are clear, well composed, and logical in sequence and content | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | Subtotal | 20

Interpretation Project Grading Rubric (1 @ 40 points each):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory or Incomplete</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Composition</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Clarity and Tone</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Mechanics</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Strength of Documentation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Scholarship</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Design of Topic and Research Problem</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Application of Analytical Tools and Strength of Interpretation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Use of Scholarly Sources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total possible points</td>
<td>60 (A)</td>
<td>54(B+ to B-)</td>
<td>48(C+ to C-)</td>
<td>42(D)</td>
<td>36 (F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Assignments (in alphabetical order), Dates Due, and Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assignment</th>
<th>Date and Time Due</th>
<th>Maximum Course Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract/Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>July 16, noon</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact Report</td>
<td>July 30, noon</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>August 10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation Project</td>
<td>August 13, noon</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Points Conversion to Grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality of Performance (for Graduate Work)</th>
<th>GPA Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Exceptional Achievement</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Excellent Achievement</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Good Achievement</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Acceptable Achievement</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Below-Average Achievement</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Below-Average Achievement</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Below-Average Achievement</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Inadequate for Graduate Work</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Did not complete requirements of class</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XF</td>
<td>Academic Dishonesty</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regular attendance and effective participation in class discussions by students are important to the effectiveness of the class. If the student cannot attend classes, he or she should report problems to the instructor and arrange to make up the work. Penn State Policy states that a student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, may run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower
grade than the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance. I interpret this policy to mean that students who miss more than a quarter of class meetings (3 of 12 meetings) can fail even if they complete written assignments. Note that the participation grade includes activities that must be completed in class. Behavior of students in class cannot be disruptive or offensive to other class members. See university policies on attendance for more information and note the summary of policies on attendance, academic honesty, and access at the end of this syllabus.

**Technological Requirements:** You should have an access account allowing you to log on to the Penn State network. You can use computers on campus at various lab locations or use a laptop/tablet/smartphone on campus that logs into the wireless system (see http://wireless.psu.edu). If you are using a computer at home to access ANGEL or Penn State resources, a broadband connection is essential. Most databases require a PC platform; the following chart summarizes the technical needs, which are usually standard on consumer computers. Please note that Chrome, Safari, and some versions of Firefox browsers do NOT perform all ANGEL functions at the present time. In word processing Microsoft Works is NOT supported. For a site to retrieve free Penn State downloads, see https://downloads.its.psu.edu/. An Office suite is available from Webapps.psu.edu. For technical assistance with Penn State computer resources, contact: helpdesk@psu.edu or look at the guide to information technology posted at http://css.its.psu.edu/internet/ For local help, you can visit: Instructional and Information Technologies, E303 Olmsted Building (717-948-6188). http://hbg.psu.edu/its/index.htm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating System</th>
<th>Windows Vista, Windows 7 or above.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Processor</td>
<td>500 MHz or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>256 MB or more of RAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drive Space</td>
<td>500 MB or more free disk space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browser</td>
<td>Windows: Internet Explorer 9 or higher OR Windows Firefox 25.0 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plug-ins (free)</td>
<td>Adobe Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flash Player</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quicktime Player</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real Player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Software</td>
<td>Microsoft Word or Word Perfect, Powerpoint, Excel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Connection</td>
<td>Broadband connection; Wireless 2.0 service on campuses (<a href="http://wireless.psu.edu">http://wireless.psu.edu</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AMST 531 students conducting architectural fieldwork at the Star Barn site. Information gathered on the buildings was instrumental in the preservation of the site at a new location in Elizabethtown, PA.

DESCRIPTIIONS OF MEETINGS

1. Wednesday, July 1

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE
HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF MATERIAL CULTURE STUDIES

The first session will cover the significance of material culture and folklife in American Studies, the requirements of the course, and the course web site. The session will cover the rise of material culture studies and significance of the artifact as intellectual evidence in the nineteenth century and its changing purposes in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The directions for material culture studies in the twenty-first century will be discussed and an outline of sources for material culture will be provided. The research project and the steps leading to it: artifact report, abstract, annotated bibliography, and interpretation project will be explained. In the second part of the class, we will meet in a computer lab (C12 basement) to have a hands-on workshop on electronic resources in material culture studies.
2. Monday, July 6

FOLK AND POPULAR OBJECTS
MODELS OF INTERPRETATION

This session will discuss the analytical distinctions of folk, popular, and elite in material culture studies. It will introduce models of interpretation under the general categories of textual, contextual, and behavioral approaches and their relations to American Studies. Historical, sociological, geographical, anthropological, and archaeological concerns will be discussed in the rise of an interdisciplinary material culture field. This session will cover the distinctive challenge and potential in conducting field work in material culture, and the skills and tools needed. The requirements of the interpretation project, following guidelines in material culture scholarship, will be discussed. We will also discuss resources for American fieldwork. The applications as well as research of material culture in public and academic fields will be discussed.

READING:

Background to Material Culture and Folk Objects
Bronner, “Folk Objects” in Oring, Folk Groups and Folklore Genres
Bronner, “Material Culture”

Textual Approach
Deetz and Dethlefsen, “Death’s Head, Cherub, Urn and Willow”
Fleming, “Artifact Study: A Proposed Model”

Contextual Approach
Bronner, “Folklife Movement” in American Folklore: An Encyclopedia
Sciorra, “Yard Shrines and Sidewalk Altars of New York’s Italian Americans”

Behavioral Approach
Jones, “Why Make (Folk) Art?”
Jones, “Applying Event Analysis to Material Behavior”

3. Wednesday, July 8

NATIVE, TRANSPLANTED, AND ADAPTED FORMS OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

These sessions emphasize the taxonomy of American folk architecture based upon floor plans
and elevations. The theoretical basis of the comparison of forms to arrive at a regional cultural geography based upon a morphology of forms and diffusion of cultural ideas will be explained. We cover the definitions of “folk” and “vernacular” architecture and their relations to “folklife” and “popular culture.” Students will discuss Native-American architecture and the settlement patterns and architecture types brought by European settlers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly in New England. The hybridization and adaptation of forms will be discussed. Students will bring in “traditional” artifacts for the class to analyze orally in terms of context, symbol, and function.

READ:
Noble, Allen and Gayle A. Seymour, “Distribution of Barn Types in Northeastern United States”

REVIEW:

4. Monday, July 13

DEVELOPMENT AND DIFFUSION OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE IN AMERICAN MATERIAL CULTURE: THE SOUTH

--This meeting will show the uses of folk architecture to identify cultural geographical
movements, landscapes, and regions in the United States. Beginning with the earliest American regions that formed, this session will take up the distinctive settlement and architectural patterns of the South. Issues of subregional development (Appalachia, Creole Region of Louisiana, Carolina Low Country) and racialized material culture (African-American and Native-American suppression and expression) will be discussed.

READ:


N.B. CONFER WITH YOUR PROFESSOR ON TOPIC FOR INTERPRETATION PROJECT

5. Wednesday, July 15

THE SPECIAL PROBLEM OF A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY: PENNSYLVANIA

–Pennsylvania is a special problem in American material culture studies because it was arguably the last region to form and it reflected mixed ethnic influences more than other regions. Among the influences are German, English, Scots-Irish, Swedish, French, and Welsh. These sessions will explore the process of hybridization and adaptation in Pennsylvania with the examples of the barn, house, and town. In the latter part of the evening session, students will also have hands-on instruction in manually drawing floor plans and elevations.

READ:

Falk, Cynthia G. 1998. “Symbols of Assimilation or Status?”
McMurry, Sally, 2009, “The Pennsylvania Barn as a Collective Resource”
Pillsbury, Richard, 1977, “Patterns in the Folk and Vernacular House Forms of the Pennsylvania Culture Region,”

ARTIFACT REPORT DUE (use Drop Box in ANGEL). July 16, before noon

6. Monday, July 20

--In this session, we will have an on-site experience to learn the historical and social context of the “Grosh House” (29 E. Main Street) in Middletown, Pennsylvania, an eighteenth-century property (1755 first deed to George Fisher), which has had multiple uses through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The name of the “Grosh House” derives from the last occupant, dentist Thomas Grosh III. The Middletown Borough Council approved purchase of the property for use by the Middletown Historical Society in 2014. We will practice documentation at the historic site, including measuring and drafting. We will return to the computer lab (C12 basement) to use electronic drawing tools to prepare floor plans and elevations.
Grosh House, 29 East Main Street, Middletown, PA


MEET AT 6 P.M. AT THE GROSH HOUSE, 29 E. Main Street, MIDDLETOWN, PA. AFTER FIELD PRACTICE, RETURN TO COMPUTER LAB in C12.
7. Wednesday, July 22

DEVELOPMENT AND DIFFUSION OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE IN AMERICAN MATERIAL CULTURE: THE WEST AND BEYOND

—Henry Glassie’s book and many historical-geographic approaches to folklife stop at the Mississippi River, and the question arises about extending coverage to the West and off-shore areas of the United States. In this meeting, we examine architectural patterns of the “Mormon Culture Region,” “the Great Plains,” and “California Ranch and Hispanic Culture” as examples, and discuss the importance of “context” and “landscape” in analyzing material culture.

READ:

Brack, Mark L. “Domestic Architecture in Hispanic California,”
Fife, Austin, and James M. Fife, “Hay Derricks of the Great Basin and Upper Snake Valley.”
Meinig, D.W. The Mormon Culture Region
Pitman, Leon, “Tank Houses”
Welsch, Roger, “Sod Houses”

8. Monday, July 27

URBAN AND COMMUNITY ISSUES IN FOLK ARCHITECTURE AND CRAFT: MATERIAL CULTURE OF IMMIGRANT, RELIGIOUS, OCCUPATIONAL, RECREATIONAL, AND OTHER FOLK COMMUNITIES

OTHER MATERIAL CULTURE GENRES: FOOD, LANDSCAPE, AND DRESS

—in this session, we will examine the variety of forms and functions exhibited by folk communities, including communal societies, immigrant groups, occupational groups, and age groups, toward an ethnography the social process of architecture in material culture. Bringing the study of folk architecture up to the present, we consider emergent forms of vernacular architecture such as the case study of a gentrifying neighborhood in Harrisburg. We will discuss the distinctions often given between art and craft, and the definitional controversies over locating an American “folk art.” We examine the way that folk art was a constructed category in the twentieth century that became contested. In the last part of the session, other material culture genres in relation to architecture and craft will be discussed: food, landscape, and dress.
READ:


REVIEW:


Food Timeline: http://www.foodtimeline.org/

Online Archive of American Folk Medicine link—http://www.folkmed.ucla.edu/

*Encyclopedia of American Folklife* Online—craft, dress, folk art entries

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9. Wednesday, July 29

FOLK CRAFT AND ART IN A BEHAVIORAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

This session takes up behavioral perspectives on folk art and craft, particularly consideration of the individual uses of tradition in building identity, adapting to age and environment, and responding to expressive needs. The example for discussion is woodcarving by elderly men in Indiana and urban “environmental” artists in Pennsylvania. Social psychological interpretations of individuals using folk traditions and “performing” identity and creativity will be discussed.

READING:

Bronner, *Carver’s Art*

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ABSTRACT AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FINAL PROJECT DUE BEFORE NOON, JULY 30
10. Monday, August 3

FOLK CRAFT AND ART: HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES

--This session considers folk craft and art in relation to economic and social history, particularly the role of gravestones and cemeteries in American culture. We consider the changes in material forms over time and place, and the ideas and beliefs they represent. This discussion also leads us to discuss the interplay between mass production, new technology, and folk ideas about death and mourning. We also examine instances when public needs for material expressions of mourning come into conflict with institutional and governmental control such as roadside crosses and school shooting memorials.

The class will begin with an on-site consideration of folk art (gravestones) in historical and social perspective by examining the graveyard of St. Peter’s Church, established 1769.

READ:

Bronner, “Elaborating Tradition”
Everett, Holly, “Roadside Crosses.”
Grider, “Public Grief and the Politics of Memorials.”

REVIEW:

Historic American Buildings Survey: St. Peter’s Church:
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/pa0399/
Find A Grave: Saint Peter’s Church Cemetery
http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=1978072
Association for Gravestone Studies: https://www.gravestonestudies.org/

Meet at St. Peter’s Kierch (Church), Spring and North Union Streets, Middletown, 6 p.m.
11. Wednesday, August 5

MATERIAL FOLK PRACTICES IN MODERN CONTEXTS

In this session, we discuss the interrelation of modernity, marketplace, and public culture with folk artistic production. We examine several examples such as transnational refugee arts, material culture of the Internet, creative uses of dress as religious expression, and foodways in a “popular culture world” as markers of individual and group identity in response to modern contexts.

Adler, “Making Pancakes on Sunday”
Blank, “Hybridization of Folk Culture.”
Milligan, “Wearing Many Hats: Hair-Covering among Orthodox Jewish Women in Amish Country.”
Newton, “The Jell-O Syndrome.”
Peterson, “Translating Experience and the Reading of a Story Cloth”

12. Monday, August 10

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations on interpretation projects using Powerpoint or Prezi (no reading of papers or scripts).
13. Wednesday, August 12 (Last Class Meeting)

THE APPLICATION & FUTURE OF MATERIAL CULTURE SCHOLARSHIP

READING:

Based upon themes and theses we locate from those examples, we will discuss needs in material culture research and forecast its future, especially in American Studies.

Dewhurst, “Folklife and Museum Practice.”
Toelken, “The Heritage Arts Imperative.”

REVIEW:
www.pioneeramerica.org [Pioneer America Society]
http://www.winterthur.org/?p=655 [Winterthur Portfolio]
http://www.h-net.org/~material/ [H-Material Culture Discussion List]
http://www.theasa.net/caucus_material/ [material culture caucus-American Studies Association]
http://www.afsnet.org/?SectionList [American Folklore Society sections, including folk art]
http://mcu.sagepub.com/ [Journal of Material Culture]

N.B. INTERPRETATION PROJECT DUE by Noon, August 13
(Use Interpretation Questionnaire template in Assignments folder, under Lessons tab; place completed project in drop box in Angel)
**POLICY STATEMENTS:** (1) Academic Freedom; (2) Academic Integrity; (3) Attendance; (4) Cancellations due to Weather, Emergencies, and Campus Closing; (5) Confidentiality; (6) Disability Services; (7) Emergency Procedures, (8) Personal Digital Devices

1. **Academic Freedom:** According to Penn State policy HR64, “The faculty member is expected to train students to think for themselves, and to provide them access to those materials which they need if they are to think intelligently. Hence, in giving instruction upon controversial matters the faculty member is expected to be of a fair and judicial mind, and to set forth justly, without supersession or innuendo, the divergent opinions of other investigators.” See [http://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr64.html](http://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr64.html).

2. **Academic Integrity:** According to Penn State policy 49-20, Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an education objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. The instructor can fail a student for major infractions. For more information, see [http://www.psu.edu/dept/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20](http://www.psu.edu/dept/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20). The instructor reserves the right to use Turnitin as a plagiarism detection tool.

3. **Attendance:** Students are expected to complete every lesson in the course and are held responsible for all work covered in the course. A student whose irregular attendance causes him or her, in the judgment of the instructor, to become deficient scholastically, may run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade than the student might have secured had the student been in regular attendance. Participation by students in the course should not be disruptive or offensive to other class members. See [http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/42-00.html#42-27](http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/42-00.html#42-27). I interpret this policy to mean that students who miss more than one quarter of the course or 3 classes can fail the course even if the student has passed written assignments.

4. **Cancellations Due to Weather, Emergencies, or Campus Closing:** When the Provost and Dean makes the decision to close the Harrisburg campus or delay the start of classes, the regional media will be notified at least two hours prior to the standard 8:00 a.m. reporting time for staff and before the start of the earliest scheduled class. The college will make its announcement in the following ways:
   a. The college's web page at [www.hbg.psu.edu](http://www.hbg.psu.edu) will carry a message regarding the
status of classes.

b. The university's email system will also be used to notify email subscribers about the weather emergency. Additionally, students, faculty, and staff are invited to register for PSUAlert (or other reason for severe alerts). The service features enhanced messaging capabilities through smartphones and more robust integration with the University’s other communications platforms. Go to https://psualert.psu.edu/psualert/ to register.

c. An announcement will be placed on the college's AUDIX telephone system at the 948-6000 and 948-6029 numbers.

d. For information on the campus’s weather emergency policy, including media outlets carrying cancellation notices, see http://www.hbg.psu.edu/hbg/weather.html

5. Confidentiality: The right of students to confidentiality is of concern to your instructor and to the University. According to Penn State policy AD-11, "The Pennsylvania State University collects and retains data and information about students for designated periods of time for the expressed purpose of facilitating the student's educational development. The University recognizes the privacy rights of individuals in exerting control over what information about themselves may be disclosed and, at the same time, attempts to balance that right with the institution's need for information relevant to the fulfillment of its educational missions. Student educational records are defined as records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by The Pennsylvania State University or by a person acting for the University pursuant to University, college, campus, or departmental policy. Exclusions include: Notes of a professor concerning a student and intended for the professor's own use are not subject to inspection, disclosure, and challenge." For more information, see http://guru.psu.edu/policies/Ad11.html.

6. Disability Services and Accessibility: Any student who cannot complete requirements of the class because of physical disabilities should make circumstances known to the instructor. In cases where documentation of disability is available, alternative ways to fulfill requirements will be made. For more information, see Penn State’s disability services handbook at http://www.hbg.psu.edu/studaf/disability/dshandbook.htm

7. Penn State Harrisburg Emergency Procedures: Penn State Harrisburg has an Emergency Response Plan for various disturbances and unusual events such as fires, spillage of hazardous materials, and violent behavior. For more information, see http://www.hbg.psu.edu/EmergencyProceduresflyer.pdf (Emergency Procedures-Quick Reference) and http://php.scripts.psu.edu/dept/iit/hbg/police/erp.php (Emergency Response Plan). Note the phone number for Police Services in the event of an emergency: 717-948-6232. In extreme emergencies, call 911. Offices that can provide assistance are Safety/Police Services at 717-979-7976 and Physical Plant at 717-948-
6235. For campus safety policies and initiatives, see http://btmt.psu.edu and http://www.police.psu.edu.

8. **Personal Digital Devices**: Personal digital devices such as cell phones, smartphones and personal digital assistants (e.g., itouch, droids), laptop and netbook computers, ipads and tablet computers can help students in academic settings but can also distract from learning. As a matter of policy, I insist that cell phones be turned off or silenced; texting and other communication on the cell phone are strictly prohibited in class. Laptops, netbooks, and tablet computers enabling notetaking and viewing of course materials are permitted but students must not engage in non-classroom tasks such as emailing, web browsing, e-shopping, and social networking in class. If they do not abide by this guideline, use of their devices in class will be prohibited.

For other policies relating to campus life and academic participation, see http://guru.psu.edu/policies.

Penn State Harrisburg website: http://hbg.psu.edu. Penn State website: http://psu.edu

Penn State libraries: http://libraries.psu.edu

American Studies Program website http://harrisburg.psu.edu/hum/amst
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Number and Date</th>
<th>Title (Summaries Below)</th>
<th>Student Tasks</th>
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</table>
| 1 Wednesday July 1     | Objectives, Goals, and Resources of Course  
History and Philosophy of Material Culture and Folklife Studies | Read syllabus, including course policies  
Review course schedule  
**Meet in computer lab C12, second half of class.** |
| 2 Monday, July 6       | Differentiating Between Folk and Popular Objects;  
Models of Identification and Interpretation | READ:  
**As Background of Material Culture and Folklife Approaches:**  
Bronner, “Folk Objects”  
Bronner, “Material Culture”  

**As Textual Approach**  
Deetz and Dethlefsen, “Death’s Head, Cherub, Urn and Willow”  
Fleming, “Artifact Study: A Proposed Model”  
Prown, “Style as Evidence”  

**As Contextual Approach:**  
Bronner, “Folklife Movement”  
Sciorra, “Yard Shrines and Sidewalk Altars”  

**As Behavioral Approach:**  
Jones, Why Make (Folk) Art?  
Jones, “Material Behavior” |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>3 Wednesday, July 8</th>
<th>TEXTUAL APPROACHES TO DIFFUSION AND CULTURAL DOMAIN OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE: Native, Transplanted, and Adapted forms of Folk Architecture in the US: New England Extended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READ:</td>
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<td>Noble and Seymour, “Distribution of Barn Types in Northeastern United States”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Zelinsky, “New England Connecting Barn”</td>
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<td>REVIEW:</td>
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<td>Vernacular Architecture Forum:</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.vernaculararchitectureforum.org/">http://www.vernaculararchitectureforum.org/</a></td>
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<td>4 Monday, July 13</td>
<td>Development and Diffusion of Folk Architecture: <em>The South</em></td>
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<td>READ:</td>
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<td>Confer with Professor on topic for interpretation project (by office appointment, phone, email, skype, Facebook, or AIM). See folder under “Assignments and Guides” for samples, forms, and guides</td>
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<td>5 Wednesday, July 15</td>
<td>Special Problems of a Pluralistic Society: <em>Pennsylvania</em></td>
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<td>Falk, “Assimilation or Acculturation”</td>
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<td>Weaver, “Pennsylvania German House”</td>
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<td>Zelinsky, “The Pennsylvania Town”</td>
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<td>McMurry, “The Pennsylvania Barn”</td>
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<td>Artifact Report (Worksheets available in “Assignments and Guides” folder under Lessons tab) DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT, JUNE 5,</td>
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| 6 Monday, July 20 | Visit to Grosh House and Tools for Research (Computer Lab) | REVIEW: 
**Location:** 29 East Main Street, Middletown, PA  
Return to computer lab C12 (basement), second half of 
Review Interpretation Questionnaire in Assignments and Guides folder under Lessons tab |
| 7 Wednesday, July 22 | Development and Diffusion of Folk Architecture: The West and Mormon Culture Region, with case studies of Stone, Adobe, and Sod Houses, and related regional material on the landscape (fences, derricks, gravestones) | READ: 
Brack, “Domestic Architecture in Hispanic California”  
Faragher, “Bungalow and Ranch”  
Fife, “Hay Derricks of the Great Basin”  
Meinig, “Mormon Culture Region”  
Pitman, “Tank Houses”  
Turner, “Sod Houses”  
**Annotated Project Abstract/Bibliography, Due Midnight, June 12** (see folder under “Assignments and Guides” for samples, guides, and drop box) |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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</table>
Food Timeline: http://www.foodtimeline.org/  
Online Archive of American Folk Medicine link-- http://www.folkmed.ucla.edu/  
*Encyclopedia of American Folklife Online*-- http://www.sharpe-online.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/SOLR/a/searchtitle/1 |
<p>| Wednesday, July 29 | Folk Art and Craft: BEHAVIORAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES | Bronner, <em>Carver’s Art</em> |</p>
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<tr>
<th>10</th>
<th>Monday, August 3</th>
<th>Folk Craft and Art: Historical and Social Perspectives</th>
<th>Meet at St. Peter’s Kierch, Spring and North Union Streets, Middletown, 6 p.m.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>READ:</td>
<td>Bronner, “Elaborating Tradition”</td>
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<td>Milspaw, “Plain Walls and Little Angels”</td>
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<td>Everett, “Roadside Crosses”</td>
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<td>Grider, “Public Grief and the Politics of Memorial”</td>
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<td>REVIEW:</td>
<td>Historic American Buildings Survey: St. Peter’s Church:</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/pa0399/">http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/pa0399/</a></td>
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<td>Find A Grave: Saint Peters Cemetery</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&amp;CRid=1978072">http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&amp;CRid=1978072</a></td>
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<td>Association for Gravestone Studies:</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.gravestonestudies.org/">https://www.gravestonestudies.org/</a></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Wednesday, August 5</td>
<td>Material Folk Practices In Modern Contexts</td>
<td>Adler, “Making Pancakes on Sunday”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Blank, “Hybridization of Folk Culture.”</td>
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<td>Milligan, “Wearing Many Hats: Hair-Covering among Orthodox Jewish Women in Amish Country.”</td>
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<td>Newton, “The Jell-O Syndrome.”</td>
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<td>Peterson, “Translating Experience and the Reading of a Story Cloth”</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Monday, August 10</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td>Oral Presentations of Interpretation Projects Using Powerpoint or Prezi</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Wednesday, August 12</td>
<td>The Application &amp; Future of Material Culture Scholarship</td>
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<td>Thursday, August 13</td>
<td>Interpretation PROJECT Due AUGUST 13, before NOON (see folder under “Assignments and Guides” for samples, guides, questionnaire form, and drop box)</td>
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**LAST CLASS!**

READ:
Dewhurst, “Folklife and Museum Practice”
Toelken, “The Heritage Arts Imperative”

REVIEW:
[www.pioneeramerica.org](http://www.pioneeramerica.org) [Pioneer America Society]
[http://www.winterthur.org/?p=655](http://www.winterthur.org/?p=655) [Winterthur Portfolio]
[http://www.theasa.net/caucus_material/](http://www.theasa.net/caucus_material/) [material culture caucus-American Studies Association]
[http://www.afsnet.org/?SectionList](http://www.afsnet.org/?SectionList) [American Folklore Society sections]

**N.B. Schedule Subject to Change**