

Hist 223 | Environ 223

# TRASHED!

## a history of garbage in the modern world

Fall 2017

Tu | Th 11:30-1:00



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*Trashed!* explores the history of waste since the 19th century. We will trace how garbage – the actual stuff that humans discard – has changed along with methods of production, distribution and consumption. We will think about waste politics and garbage culture. We will examine how waste shapes societies, how it is managed, what roles it plays in different economies, how it integrates into people’s everyday lives, and how it fits into their value systems. Most importantly, we explore how trash connects and divides people in different parts of an expanding and constricting world.

Students are expected to read primary and secondary sources, actively participate in class discussions, and complete regular writing assignments. But we are also going to get our hands dirty! This course invites you to use your analytical skills and your creativity to make tangible connections between global, local, and public history. Since we believe that the materiality of garbage is of profound significance, this course includes active explorative learning. We will touch stuff, talk to people, and go places.

## **Your work**

This is a team-based learning course. You will be assigned to a team and much (though not all) of your learning is interactive and much (though not all) of your submitted work is collaborative.

You will be doing a fair amount of reading and writing in this course. You will be assigned an *average* of 70-100 pages of reading a week (sometimes more, sometimes less; in general the expectation is that you spend 4-6 hours on reading per week). On any given day, you are expected to do *all* the assigned reading listed before class meeting.

There will be short, informal weekly writing assignments that ask you to engage with class materials or write a reflection on an activity. Sometimes, writing is to be done at home, sometimes in class or section.

### **Participation**

Participating in class discussion is an essential part of learning. You are expected to contribute regular, thoughtful comments that reflect completion of the assigned readings and engagement with the material. Active participation will be an important component of your overall grade. Your comments may also draw upon your reading of the week's news or other material, as long as you can make clear the relationship of such material to the topic at hand. Feel free to raise questions about anything in the reading that you didn't understand: such questions are also a valuable way of advancing the discussion. Note that attendance, while essential, is not equivalent to participation.

### **Reading**

Note: in any given week, there may be more reading listed for one day than the other. You should check in advance and plan your time accordingly. We are reading materials from different disciplines.

### **Note-Taking and Questions.**

You are expected to take notes during lectures, on field trips and as you read. Your notes are to capture the main argument or contribution of each text or presentation, help you remember important details, record your own reaction to the text or presentation (did you find the argument convincing? why? why not?) and help you understand the main basis of the evidence that arguments are based on. Please bring your notes to class. We will occasionally review notes or conduct activities that ask you to consult your notes.

Always also write down questions, There are different types of questions and they are all important. Basic I-didn't-understand-this-questions ensure that you get the explanations that help you grasp the material. Factual questions provide ask for more, better or related evidence about the details presented. Conceptual questions engage with the arguments presented, question the reasoning or evidence and allow you to formulate an original response to arguments encountered.

## **Logging**

You are expected to keep a garbage log, your own personal trash diary. Please purchase a little notebook and jot down what you discard each day. Keep the log in your backpack or purse and make sure you take it with you wherever you go over the course of the semester. Of course that includes, bringing it to class every week.

## **Blogging**

Post short reflective pieces to the course blog at the end of every week (between Friday and Sunday) that engage with your garbage log, the readings, our discussions, field trips and world events that relate to the course material. You can share images, news, links and videos that caught your interest – they will ideally built a set of reflections about your group’s topic for the final project. These posts should be short, critical, engaging and reflective. They are essentially an answer to the question “what have you been thinking about this week” and “nothing much” is not an acceptable answer. You will either post an original entry or respond to a post of one of your fellow trashers.

## **Formal Assessment**

You will write **three formal essays** that engage with a questions and formulate an argument based on the readings of the class. These take the place of exams and should be carefully composed, analytical and evidence based.

There will be **three team-based tests** that assess conceptual and factual knowledge from lectures and readings over the course of the semester. These test consist of short answer questions, multiple choice questions, identifications, and fill-in-the-blanks. Teams work collaboratively to complete each test. The weeks leading up to each tests feature short individual readiness assessment quizzes followed by a team-based discussion to prepare each of you and your group for the collaborative work.

Each team will work toward a **final project**. Each project will have an individual component and a group component. Once your teams have formed, you will receive more detailed guidelines.

## **Field Trips**

We will be traveling quite a bit. Please try to block the follow three Fridays in your schedule and let me know if you require me to send a message to your other professors asking to release you from class on those days: September 22, October 6, November 10.

## **Course Materials**

All of our readings will be available on canvas

## **Accommodations**

Students with learning differences or challenges are encouraged to take advantage of university resources. University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at [\(734\) 764-8312](tel:734-764-8312) and <https://>

[caps.umich.edu/](http://caps.umich.edu/) during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs>, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see [www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources](http://www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources). For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>.

Within the first two weeks of class, please inform me as well as your GSI, if you require any accommodations. Documentation is required for all requests. If you will be absent due to observance of religious holidays, please inform the teaching team.

### **Academic Integrity**

This course follows the academic integrity guidelines set forth by the College of LSA [<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/>] and the History Department [see <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/history/undergraduate/courses/guidelinesandpolicies>]. Students should familiarize themselves with both of these documents, which explain the standards of academic integrity and clarify the prohibited forms of academic misconduct. Students should utilize the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#) or [MLA](#) format for all issues of source citation, along with specific guidelines provided in the course assignments. Clarifying the disciplinary standards of research ethics and source citation is part of the educational mission of this course, and students should consult the faculty instructor and/or GSI regarding any questions. The penalties for deliberate cases of plagiarism and/or other forms of academic misconduct will result in no credit for the assignment. All cases of deliberate academic misconduct that result in formal sanctions of any kind will be reported to the the office of the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education, as required by LSA policy, which also ensures due process rights of appeal for students. [This clause is using boilerplate derived from other colleagues with permission]

### **Grades**

Class Participation (includes logs and blogs): 25%  
Essay 1 5%  
Essay 2 10%  
Essay 3 10%  
Test 1 5%  
Test 2 10%  
Test 3 10%  
Final Project 25%

# Schedule

## Part I: Matter and Place

Week 1                      Beginnings

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**Tuesday September 5**                      **Garbage History**  
no reading

**Thursday September 7**                      **The concept of waste**

- Michael Shanks, David Platt, William L. Rathje. "The Perfume of Garbage: Modernity and the Archaeological" *Modernism/Modernity* 11 1 (Jan 2004) 61-87
- Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Routledge, 1966/2002), Introduction (pp. 1-6) and Chapter 2 (pp. 30-41).

Week 2                      Effluvia

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**Tuesday September 12**                      **Shit**

- Pliny, *The Natural History*, Book XXVIII on remedies: urine and other excrement as remedies. Pages 269-271, 275-277, 284-286 in <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015004045350>.
- S. Stevens Hellyer, *The Plumber and Sanitary Houses: A Practical Treatise on the Principles of Internal Plumbing Work, or the Best Means for Effectually Excluding Noxious Gases from our Houses* (1893). TOC and chs. 12 & 13 on water closets (pp. 233-247 of PDF). <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433066423801>
- Dana Simons, "Waste Not. Want Not: Excrement and Economy in Nineteenth-Century France" *Representations* 96 1 (Fall 2006): 73-98.

**Thursday September 14**                      **Municipal Socialism**

- Friedrich Engels, "The Great Towns" (pp. 58-66); Lewis Mumford "What is a City" (pp. 92-7) in *The City Reader*. Richard LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds. (New York: Routledge, 1996).
- Alexander Martin, "Sewage and the City: Filth, Smell and Representations of Urban Life in Moscow, 1770-1880" *The Russian Review* 67 2 (2008) 234-274

Week 3 Scale

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**Tuesday September 19**      **Water**

- Deborah Cadbury, "The Sewers of London." *Dreams of Iron and Steel*, 115-152.
- Romain Garcier, "The placing of matter: industrial water pollution and the construction of social order in nineteenth-century France," *Journal of Historical Geography* 36 (2010) 132–142.

**Thursday September 21**      **Wastes of Scale**

- Blaise Farina, "A Portrait of World Historical Production and World Historical Waste after 1945" *Review* 30 3 (2007) 177-213

**Friday September 22**      **Field Trip 1 Ann Arbor Waste Water Treatment Plant  
12:00pm to 3:00pm**

Week 4 Accumulation

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**Tuesday September 26**      **Pollution, Toxicity, Exposure**

- Rachel Carson, "Silent Spring," *The New Yorker* (1962).
- Nancy Langston, "The Retreat from Precaution: Regulating Diethylstilbestrol (DES), Endocrine Disruptors, and Environmental Health," *Environmental History*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Jan., 2008), pp. 41-65.
- W. C. Hueper, *Environmental Cancer* (National Cancer Institute public information pamphlet, 1950s).

**Thursday September 28**      **Test Part I**  
no reading, just studying

## Part II: Technology and Power

Week 5 Technologies of Disappearance

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**Tuesday October 3**      **Dump**  
Due: Essay #1

- Martin Melosi, "Fresno Sanitary Landfill in an American Cultural Context," *The Public Historian* 34 3 (Summer 2002): 17-35.
- Jeffrey Mervis, "Garbology 101: Getting a Grip on Waste," *Science* Vol 337 (August 10, 2012):668-672.

**Thursday October 5                      WTE**

- Mark Crawford, "Turning Trash Into Treasure" *Mechanical Engineering* 135 5 (May 2013) 42- 47.
- Read the article available through the following link in National Geographic: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2013/08/130801-amager-bakke-europe-waste-to-energy/>
- Please familiarize yourself with these website: <http://www.detroitrenewablepower.com/> and <http://www.atlasholdingsllc.com/business-segments/energy.aspx?id=1>

**Friday October 6                      Field Trip 2 (tentative) Waste Management Facility**  
**10AM at the facility**

Week 6                      Waste Regimes

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**Tuesday October 10                      Totalitarian Waste**

- Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*. "Architectural Megalomania" p 50-70
- Anne Berg, "The Nazi Rag-Pickers and Their Wine: The Politics of Waste and Recycling in Nazi Germany" *Social History* 40 4 (2015) 446-472

**Tuesday October 12                      Imperial Waste**

- Warwick Anderson, "Excremental Colonialism: Public Health and the Poetics of Pollution," *Critical Inquiry* 21 (Spring 1995): 640-669

Week 7                      Waste Regimes II

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**Tuesday October 17                      no class fall break**

**Thursday October 19                      Capitalist Waste**

- Rathje, "The Garbage Decade" *The American Behavioral Scientist* 28 1 (Sep/Oct 1984) 9-30.

- Charles W. Mills, "Black Trash" in *Faces of Environmental Racism: Confronting Issues of Global Justice*. 2nd ed. Laura Westra and Bill E. Lawson. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001)

Week 8 Toxic Power

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**Tuesday October 24 Energy and Waste**

- Valerie Kuletz, *The Tainted Desert: Environmental Ruin in the American West* (Routledge, 1998), ch. 4: "Nuclear Wastelands," pp. 81-120.
- Allison MacFarlane, "Underlying Yucca Mountain: The Interplay of Geology and Policy in Nuclear Waste Disposal" *Social Studies of Science* 33 5 Earth Sciences in the Cold War (October 2003) 783-807
- Kyle Hill, "Chernobyl's Hot Mess, "the Elephant's Foot," Is Still Lethal," *Nautilus*, Blog Post (December 4, 2013). <http://nautil.us/blog/chernobyls-hot-mess-the-elephants-foot-is-still-lethal>
- John Upton, "[Our Nuclear Waste Is a Goldmine](#)," *Nautilus*, Issue 7 (November 7, 2013).

**Thursday October 26 E-Waste**

- Phaedra C. Pezzullo, "What Gets Buried in a Small Town: Toxic E-Waste and Democratic Frictions in the Crossroads of the United States," in Stephanie Foote and Elizabeth Mazzolini eds., *Histories of the Dustheap: Waste, Material Cultures, Social Justice*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012): 119-146.
- Elizabeth Grossmann "Where Computers go to die and kill" *Salon* (April 10, 2006) <http://www.salon.com/2006/04/10/ewaste/>

Week 9 Collateral Damage

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**Tuesday October 31 Waste and War**

- Dorothee Brantz. "Environments of Death" in *War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age* edited by Charles E. Cloosmann (Texas A&M University Press, 2009) 68-91
- Joseph R. Oppong and Ezekiel Kalipeni, "The Geography of Landmines and Implications for Health and Disease in Africa: A Political Ecology Approach" *Africa Today* 52 1 (Autumn 2005) 3-35



- Andrew Jenks. "Model City USA: The Environmental Cost of Victory in World War II and the Cold War" *Environmental History* 12 3 (Jul 2007): 552-577

**Thursday November 2**      **Test Part II**  
no reading, just studying

### **Part III: InJustice and Aesthetics**

Week 10      Dirty Work

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**Tuesday November 7**      **Recycling**  
Due: Essay # 2

- Kathleen Millar, "Trash Ties: Urban Politics, Economic Crisis and Rio de Janeiro's Garbage Dump" *Economies of Recycling* eds., Catherine Alexander and Joshua Reno, (London: Zed, 2012): 164-184.
- Mark Riley, "From Salvage to Recycling - New Agendas or Same Old Rubbish" *Area* 40 1 (Mar 2008) 79-89
- Finn Arne Jørgensen, "Green Citizenship at the Recycling Junction: Consumers and Infrastructures for the Recycling of Packaging in Twentieth-Century Norway," *Contemporary European History* 22 Special Issue 3 (August 2013) 499-516.

**Thursday November 9**      **Waste people**

- Watch *Wasteland* (Walker 2010)
- Elliott Woods, "Garbage City" *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 87 2 (Spring 2011) 6-27

**Friday November 10**      **Field Trip 3 MRF New Boston (tentative)**

Week 11      Talking Trash

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**Tuesday November 14**      **Language, Art and Aesthetics**  
no assigned reading. project reading

**Thursday November 16**      **Environmental Justice and Green Politics**

- Scott Frickel, “Missing New Orleans: Tracking Knowledge and Ignorance through an Urban Hazardscape,” in Stephanie Foote and Elizabeth Mazzolini eds., *Histories of the Dustheap: Waste, Material Cultures, Social Justice*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012): 119-146.
- Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, “The Environmental Movement in Iran: Perspectives from Below and Above” *Middle East Journal* 57 3 (Summer 2003) 432-448.
- Explore the Environmental Justice online atlas. <https://ejatlas.org/> Further details to be announced.

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Week 12 Everyday Garbage

**Tuesday November 21      Plastics**

- Jennifer Clapp, “The Rising Tide against Plastic Waste: Unpacking Industry Attempts to Influence the Debate,” in Stephanie Foote and Elizabeth Mazzolini eds., *Histories of the Dustheap: Waste, Material Cultures, Social Justice*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012): 199-225.
- Elizabeth Grossman, “Bad Plastic,” *Salon* 2008.

**Thursday November 23 no class THANKSGIVING**

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Week 13 Global Commons

**Tuesday November 28      Arctic, Oceans and Global Climate**

- Watch *Chasing Ice* (Orlowski 2012)
- Joshua Ottum, “Sounds Like Garbage: Paddling through an Imaginary Island of Trash Toward a New Sonic Ecology” *Social Alternatives* 33 1 (2014) 52-59

**Thursday November 30      Test 3**  
no reading, just studying

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Week 14 Project Week

**Tuesday December 5**  
Due: Essay # 3

**Thursday December 7**

**Tuesday December 12**

**Ruins and Futures**

Project Fair in class

- Patricia Ard, "Garbage in the Garden State: A Trash Museum Confronts New Jersey's Image" *The Public Historian* 27 3 (Spring 2005): 57-66

**Final Project (Written Component) DUE December 15, 11:59pm**