

**HST 195 The History of Treasure**  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:50AM – 1:05PM in RRL 456

**Instructor:** Jeff Baron

**Office Hours:** M/W 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM and by Zoom appointment (email me to set up an appointment and receive a Zoom link)

**Email:** jbaron4@ur.rochester.edu

**Course description:**

The History of Treasure will broadly survey all kinds of treasures in Europe and the Americas from over two thousand years of history. Readings and lectures will span a variety of senses and definitions of the term, from biblical and literary metaphor to tangible stashes of wealth. The course will begin in prehistory and antiquity by introducing treasures in their most literal sense, examining who buries or hides wealth and why, then spend considerable time in the Middle Ages and early modern periods, and end in modernity, discussing questions of law, archaeological patrimony, and museum repatriation. This course will trace two millennia of laws, literature, searches, and excavations, to explore why treasure looms large in European and American culture, why it has long been the source of deep contention, and why it remains a term that signifies the most precious things.

**Units:** 4 Semester Units

**Required text:**

All required readings are available on Blackboard (learn.rochester.edu) and Perusall (more on Perusall below).

**Electronic Devices:**

Because our course text and all other required readings are available online, I encourage you to bring your laptop or tablet to class for discussion and note-taking. Your phone also works, but is more difficult to view and comment on the readings. We will regularly discuss the course readings in class, and I strongly encourage you to have a device, a printed copy, or at least some detailed notes on hand to be able to refer to and quote from. A major part of this course involves commenting on the readings through a website called Perusall, which is best accessed by laptop or computer, but may also be done (with some difficulty) by smartphone. If you have any trouble accessing an electronic device for this course, please let me know.

**Course Requirements (500 points total in the class – grades will not be curved)**

- 1. Attendance and Discussion (15% of grade – 75 points)**
- 2. Perusall (25% of grade – 5 points per reading assignment, 125 points total)**
- 3. Midterm Exam (20% of grade – 100 points)**
- 4. Media Analysis Assignment (15% of grade – 75 points)**
- 5. Final Exam (25% of grade – 125 points)**

**Attendance and Discussion (15% of grade – 75 points)**

Attendance on time is required.\* My lectures and our class discussions are designed specifically to help you get a good grade in this course. In class sessions we will discuss the assigned readings, and **each student will lead the class discussion twice, once on the assigned readings, and once in relation to your Media Analysis Assignment (see below).**\*\* The

lectures and our discussions will help you make sense of the sources we read, which are the fundamental key to this course and the assignments and exams you'll be graded on. I will introduce all of our sources in lecture and explain how they fit in to the overall arch of the history of treasure, then we will discuss them together in class. In this way, regular class attendance will leave you well-prepared to use the sources in assignments and exams.

\*You are allowed two (2) unexcused absences, additional unexcused absences will lower your attendance and discussion grade. If you are regularly late or leave early without talking about it with me, this will also lower your grade. Even if you are absent, you are still responsible for submitting comments on Perusall for the assigned readings that day.

\*\*If you happen to miss class on the day(s) you are assigned to lead discussion, I'll reassign you to a different day. The sign-up sheet where you'll choose a class session in advance to lead discussion is on Perusall. If you do not lead discussion on your assigned day, your attendance and discussion grade will drop significantly.

### **Perusall (25% of grade – 5 points per reading assignment, 125 points total)**

**Perusall.com - Class Code:** BARON-E6ZG3

Before most class sessions, you will be required to **comment at least once on** each assigned readings on Perusall. With the exception of Week Two, the **Perusall comments are due before the start of class** (they are date- and time-stamped) on the corresponding day indicated on the syllabus. Late Perusall comments posted after the start of class will not receive full credit, and you are still responsible for posting Perusall comments on time even if you are absent. To comment, you simply highlight a part of the text you are responding to, and a panel will pop up on the right where you can type in your comment. If it makes more sense to form your comment as a reply to somebody else's previously posted comment, feel free to do that as well. These comments will be graded (out of 5 points) based on your efforts to respond to the questions below and produce a meaningful contribution to class discussion, something beyond "I found this interesting" or "what does this part mean?" (though finding something interesting or having a question can certainly be a part of your comment). For this part of the course, I'm asking you to write something useful for each reading assigned for that day. This is very open-ended, and the types of comments you might form will be different based on whether the assigned reading is a primary source (a historical document), or a secondary source (a modern interpretation of history). I am grading based on your effort to understand the text and engage with it, and that can be done in a variety of ways, but I expect you to thoroughly engage with at least one of the questions below for a 5-out-of-5-point comment:

If the reading is a **primary source**:

- Who is writing this text? What kind of person might the author be? How does this author's position in society shape their point-of-view? Why is the author writing this document?
- Why might this document survive today? Why might it have been preserved for centuries, allowing us to read it now?
- Who is the intended audience for this document? How do you think the audience might have interpreted it?
- What does this document tell us about treasure more generally? What kind of larger themes or key terms in our course does this document speak to or represent? Why might I have assigned this document?

If the reading is a **secondary source**:

- What is this author arguing? What are they trying to communicate about treasure in this chapter or article? Why is this useful to our course?
- What surprised you about this reading? Does the author's perspective differ from what you previously knew about treasure? Does it differ from or expand upon what has been presented in lecture?
- What types of evidence is the author using to make their point? Do you find these pieces of evidence compelling?
- Does this reading make you want to learn more about some part of the history of treasure? What do you wish the author might have written more about in this chapter or article?

Perusall Grading:

- **A 5/5 comment:** Demonstrates considerable effort in trying to understand the reading and connect it to larger class themes; responds to questions from one of the bullet points above; and draws detailed connections between the reading and lectures or other previously assigned readings.
- **A 4/5 comment:** Demonstrates some effort in making sense of the reading and connecting it to other material in the course; integrates questions from or similar to the bullet points above but considers them in less depth; draws loose connections between the reading and lectures or other previously assigned readings.
- **A 3/5 comment:** Demonstrates the reading was read but either does not make an effort to integrate the questions above or respond to similarly detailed questions or does not draw connections to lectures or other readings.
- **A 2/5 comment:** Demonstrates minimal effort on completing the assigned reading and developing thoughts about it or connecting it to lectures or other readings.
- **A 1/5 comment:** Does not make it clear that you completely read the assigned reading.

**Midterm Exam (20% of grade – 100 points)**

The Midterm will be given **in class** during Week 8, on **Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>**. The exam will consist of two **(2) mini-essays** (chosen from 5 potential questions). These essay questions will ask you to write 2-4 paragraphs in response to a general question about the history of treasure and I will require you to refer **to at least two (2) assigned readings** we have discussed so far. No notes, phones, laptops, etc. allowed for the midterm, and the exam will be due at the end of class at 1:05PM.

Midterm grading:

- The Mini-essays are worth up to 50 points for 100 points total.
  - o For each essay, the question will be broad and not have one single correct answer. Instead, you will be graded on how well you integrate at least one assigned reading in each of your responses to the questions and describe how something from that text supports your answer. Full credit will be given for formulating a clear answer in response to the question and explaining how you developed that answer based on specific and relevant details from our assigned primary or

secondary sources. No direct quotes are necessary, and you only need to incorporate one source in each answer to receive full credit.

### **Media Analysis Assignment (15% of grade – 75 points)\***

There will be one assignment in this course, due by email before the start of class at 11:50AM on **Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>**. The Media Analysis Assignment will be assigned with more detailed instructions after the Midterm Exam. The assignment will help prepare you for the final exam, but it will also be an exercise in historical analysis more generally, allowing you to consider how our assigned readings and lectures can be used to contextualize and interpret current events. You will be required to present your analysis to the class in April.

As we've seen in this course, "treasure" means many things in popular media. For this assignment, I want you to select two (2) news or magazine articles in which something is being referred to as a "treasure," and use our assigned readings to explore these modern uses of the term. You should be able to tell me for each article: What kind of treasures are being discussed? What do these "treasures" consist of? Would the label "treasure" make sense in the context of the historical uses of the term we have seen in the class so far? Why is the object being called "treasure"? Is it old, rare, monetarily valuable, historically significant, etc.? How did it become a treasure? Where does it come from originally? Who does/should it belong to, and who is it important to? What are the legal, cultural, or religious connotations of calling this object a treasure? Are these articles referring to treasures similar or different from the ones we've seen in our course readings, and how are they similar/different? Which of our assigned readings can best offer historical insights into the nature of these "treasures"? You will choose **two (2) news media articles**, from 2010 to the present, each about a different "treasure." In an essay of **four or five (4-5) double-spaced (12 pt. Times font) pages**, use **at least two (2) of the sources** we have read together to analyze these newspaper or magazine articles in the context of our course materials. Late Media Analysis assignments will not receive full credit. You will be required to present your analysis to the class in April.

#### Media Analysis Assignment grading:

- An A-level media analysis will select and clearly analyze two articles in detail. This analysis will be firmly supported by specifics from at least two of our assigned readings and respond to all of the guiding questions listed above. Good use of our assigned readings might take the form of well-chosen quotes or detailed paraphrasing, but for an A-level analysis, it will be clear to me what parts of the sources you are using and why you chose these readings to support your analysis. The entire assignment will contain useful and relevant material and analysis, with no filler or extra paragraphs intended only to reach the page requirements.
- A B-level media analysis will be somewhat lacking in either analysis or use of assigned readings. The paper might reflect a shallower level of analysis that either restates the articles and surface-level facts, or states a personal belief or preference unsupported by our readings. Or, the articles and course readings might only be described or mentioned without sufficient detail and not be fully integrated in a way that supports the analysis.
- A C-level media analysis will not analyze two articles in sufficient detail OR will not adequately integrate at least two assigned readings. Use of course materials may be shallow and not detailed enough to fully support your analysis. An otherwise decent

paper that falls significantly short of the page-length requirement may also fall into the C-level category.

- A D-level media analysis will lack both adequate analysis of two articles and sufficient use of course materials. An otherwise C-level analysis that falls significantly short of the page-length requirement may also fall into the D-level category.

### **Final Exam (25% of grade – 125 points)\***

The Final Exam will be a take home essay, given in the last week of class, in which you will assemble a selection of the primary and secondary readings and lectures we have had in this class to make sense of a primary source that we have not examined together. Unlike the open-ended structure of the Media Analysis Assignment, in the final exam I will provide **four (4) primary sources from which you will choose one (1) to analyze**. The goal is to identify in your chosen source themes we have covered in lectures, class discussions, and primary and secondary sources throughout the course. Similar to the Media Analysis Assignment, I want to know how the term "treasure" is being used in your chosen source. What kind of treasures are being discussed? What do these "treasures" consist of? Why is the object being called "treasure"? Is it old, rare, monetarily valuable, historically significant, etc.? How did it become a treasure? Where does it come from originally? Who does/should it belong to, and who is it important to? What are the legal, cultural, or religious connotations of calling this object a treasure? How does your chosen primary source relate to the rest of our course readings, and how is the treasure in the source similar or different from others we have examined in this class? Which of our assigned readings can best assist in analyzing your chosen primary source? You will be required to analyze one new primary source in an essay of **five to six (5-6) double-spaced (12 pt. Times font) pages** by contextualizing and comparing it with our assigned readings in detail. I will expect you to draw quotes from both your chosen primary source as well as our course readings to directly support your analysis. You are required to make use of and incorporate **two (2) quotes each from at least three (3) different assigned readings, primary or secondary (so, at least 6 quotes total)**, in a manner that demonstrates you understand them and how they support your analysis (citing page numbers is required). You are welcome to draw from more than three sources, but an A can be attained with the careful and insightful use of only three. The Final Exam will be **due Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM**. Late Final Exam submissions will not receive full credit, and because the final exam is due at the end of the semester near the deadline for final grade submission to the Registrar's Office, late submissions might not receive credit at all.

### Final Exam grading:

- An A-level final exam demonstrates a detailed and insightful understanding of all relevant course material and an ability to deploy that material in analyzing the chosen source. It will draw at least six useful and well-chosen quotes out of three relevant assigned readings and integrate them in a way that clearly contextualizes and makes sense of the chosen primary source.
- A B-level final exam demonstrates a good understanding of the relevant course material and a considerable effort to arrange that material in analyzing the chosen source. It will draw two relevant quotes and details from each of the three sources, but one or more of the sources might not be sufficiently integrated or considered in adequate detail. An otherwise strong exam that falls short of the page-length requirements may also fall into the B-level category.

- A C-level final exam demonstrates some understanding of the relevant course material but fails to arrange that material clearly in analyzing your chosen primary source or does not draw enough or sufficiently detailed quotes or information from the assigned readings. An otherwise B-level exam that falls short of the page-length requirement may fall into the C-level category.
- A D-level final exam does not clearly analyze the chosen primary source or does not draw enough relevant quotes from at least three assigned readings. An otherwise C-level exam that falls significantly short of the page-length requirement may fall into the D-level category.

**\*The Media Analysis Assignment and Final Exam should be submitted to me by email. They should be double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, with no extra spacing between paragraphs. Block quotes (longer than a couple lines) should follow the Chicago Citation Style and be separated from the body paragraph, indented 0.5" (so, the same as the first line in a paragraph), and single-spaced. Your citations of quotes and readings from our class should be parenthetical and abbreviated, just a few words from the title that makes it clear which document you are referring to, followed by the page number. For example, after each quote or paraphrasing, it would look like: (Smith, "Pyramids," 3) or (*Siete Partidas*, 835).\*** If you need any help with this formatting, please let me know. I do not encourage you to draw information from any sources beyond our course, but if you choose to do so, these sources must be cited accurately in Chicago Style so that I can verify them.

**Accommodations:** I encourage you to talk with me about any concern or situation that affects your ability to complete your academic work successfully. Students requiring classroom accommodations should contact the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, 1-154 Dewey Hall, 585-275-9049. You can learn more about the process at: [www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/undergraduate/disability](http://www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/undergraduate/disability).

**Academic Honesty:** All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: [www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/](http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/). This is a collaborative course and you are encouraged to discuss course readings and assignments with your fellow students. However, all written work must be done independently and not in collaboration with another.

**Writing Help:** We will discuss each writing assignment in detail during class. I am also always willing to talk about writing assignments individually. I encourage all students to take advantage of this by scheduling a meeting in office hours. Another resource is the UR Writing and Speaking Center, which is dedicated to helping writers at all skill levels to improve. You can reach them at 585- 273-3577 or at <http://writing.rochester.edu/help/index.html>.

**Kelly Family Book Fund:** The history department's Kelly Family Book Fund can assist students with financial need by purchasing materials for history courses. This fund was established to provide support for course materials for students in need who are pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in history. All students taking a history course may apply; preference will be given to those who are majoring in history. To apply for assistance in

purchasing your textbooks, use the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScxPwiai1gQMlnU5\\_Vae458UzwgEZNIBR6Dy53aqBYEnhg-cg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScxPwiai1gQMlnU5_Vae458UzwgEZNIBR6Dy53aqBYEnhg-cg/viewform)

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 INTRODUCTION & PERUSALL

**Wednesday, January 17th, 2024**

- **No reading this week**, just make sure you can access Perusall before next week.

### Week 2 ORIGINS AND DEFINITIONS OF TREASURE

**Monday, January 22nd**

- **Read and comment before Friday 1/26 at 5:00PM:** Qin, "Tomb Robbing, Perilous but Alluring, Makes Comeback in China" in *New York Times*. [secondary source]

**Wednesday, January 24th**

- **Read and comment before Friday 1/26 at 5:00PM:** Gansell, "Identity and Adornment," in *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*. [secondary source]

### Week 3 TREASURE LORE

**Monday, January 29th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Coghill, trans., "The Pardoner's Tale" in *The Canterbury Tales*. [primary source]

**Wednesday, January 31st**

- **Read and comment before class:** Lindow, "Swedish Legends of Buried Treasure," in *The Journal of American Folklore*. [secondary source]

### Week 4 TREASURE LAW

**Monday, February 5th**

- **Read and comment before class:** "Title XV: Concerning Treasure Trove" in *Justinian Code* AND "Law XLV: To Whom a Treasure Belongs" in *Siete Partidas* [primary sources] AND Burns, "Chapter VI: Treasure, Tithe, Fees, and Miscellany" in *Medieval Colonialism*. [secondary source] [secondary source]

**Wednesday, February 7th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Lafferty, "*Ad sanctitatem mortuorum*: Tomb raiders, body snatchers and relic hunters in late antiquity" in *Early Medieval Europe*. [secondary source]

### Week 5 RELICS

**Monday, February 12th**

- **Read and comment before class:** de Voraigne, "Of the Invention of the Holy Cross," in *The Golden Legend*, vol. 3. [primary source]

**Wednesday, February 14th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Geary, "The Professionals," in *Furta Sacra*. [secondary source]

### Week 6 MAGICAL TREASURES

**Monday, February 19th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Attrell, trans., selections from *Picatrix: A Medieval Treatise on Astral Magic* [primary source]

**Wednesday, February 21st**



- **Read and comment before class:** Dillinger, "The Good Magicians: Treasure Hunting in Early Modern Germany" in *Everyday Magic in Early Modern Europe*. [secondary source]

#### Week 7 TREASURE-HUNTING IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

##### **Monday, February 26th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Klaassen and Wright, trans. "Chapter 3: The Fellowship of the Mixindale Hoard: The Legal Documents" in *The Magic of Rogues*. [primary source, with secondary source introduction]

##### **Wednesday, February 28th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Ramírez, "Chapter 5: Huaca Looting on the Peruvian North Coast: A Tale from Two Perspectives." in *The World Upside Down*. [secondary source]

#### Week 8 TREASURE-HUNTING II

##### **Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup> \*MIDTERM REVIEW\***

- **Read and comment before class:** El Daly, "Chapter 3: Treasure Hunting" in *Egyptology: The Missing Millennium*. [secondary source]

##### **Wednesday, March 6th \*MIDTERM EXAM\***

- **No reading this session**

#### **Week 9 \*SPRING BREAK\***

##### **Monday, March 11th NO CLASS**

##### **Wednesday, March 13th NO CLASS**

#### Week 10 TREASURE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

##### **Monday, March 18th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Selections from Venuti, *A Description of the First Discoveries of the Ancient City of Heraclea*. [primary source]

##### **Wednesday, March 20th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Bahn, "Chapter 1: The Archaeology of Archaeology: Premodern Views of the Past" in *The History of Archaeology* AND Howgego and Wilson, "Coin Hoards and Hoarding in the Roman World" [secondary sources]

#### Week 11 PIRATE TREASURE

##### **Monday, March 25th**

- **Read and comment before class:** "John Esquemeling's Account of the Pirate Nicknamed "El Brasiliano" AND "William Dampier's Account of the Disruption of Spanish Commerce at Panamá, 1685." [primary sources]

##### **Wednesday, March 27th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Flemming, "Chapter 10: Pirate Executions and Pirate Treasure" in *At the point of a cutlass*. [secondary source]

#### Week 12 NINETEENTH-CENTURY TREASURE

##### **Monday, April 1st**

- **Read and comment before class:** Dillinger, "Treasure Hunts in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" in *Magical Treasure Hunting in Europe and North America*. [secondary source]

**Wednesday, April 3rd \*MEDIA ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT DUE\***

- **Read and comment before class:** Fischer, "Treasure-Hunters" in *Picture of Valencia* [1811]. [primary source]

Week 13 TREASURE IN LITERATURE

**Monday, April 8th \*MEDIA ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS\***

- **Read and comment before class:** *Beowulf* selections [primary source]

**Wednesday, April 10th \*MEDIA ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS\***

- **Read and comment before class:** Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, Ch. 1-4. [primary source]

Week 14 TREASURE IN POPULAR MEDIA

**Monday, April 15th \*MEDIA ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS\***

- **Read and comment before class:**

Pirates of the Caribbean Wiki: <https://pirates.fandom.com/wiki/Treasure>

Mario Wiki: [https://www.mariowiki.com/Treasure\\_chest](https://www.mariowiki.com/Treasure_chest) (also in PDF) [secondary source]

**Wednesday, April 17th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Holtorf, "Popular Culture and Archaeology," in *Encyclopedia of Archaeology*. [secondary source]

Week 15 LOOTING AND REPATRIATION

**Monday, April 22nd**

- **Read and comment before class:** NAGPRA sections 10.1, 10.2, 10.10 [primary source]

**Wednesday, April 24th**

- **Read and comment before class:** Gaitán Ammann, "Golden alienation: The uneasy fortune of the Gold Museum in Bogotá" in *Journal of Social Archaeology*. [secondary source]

Week 16 EXAM REVIEW AND END OF CLASS

**Monday, April 29th**

- **Read:** Trejo, "The 2012 Field Season of the 1630-31 New Spain Fleet Archaeological Project in the Gulf of Mexico" in *2016 Underwater Archaeology Proceedings*. [secondary source]

\*\*Perusall is extra credit this week – up to 5 points if you post before Friday, May 3rd at 5:00PM\*\*

**Wednesday, May 1st NO CLASS**

**\*FINAL EXAM PERIOD BEGINS\***

**\*FINAL EXAM ESSAY DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 8th at 11:59PM\***