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### Historians in the Community: Public History Practicum Projects, History 625 - The Art and Craft of Interpretation

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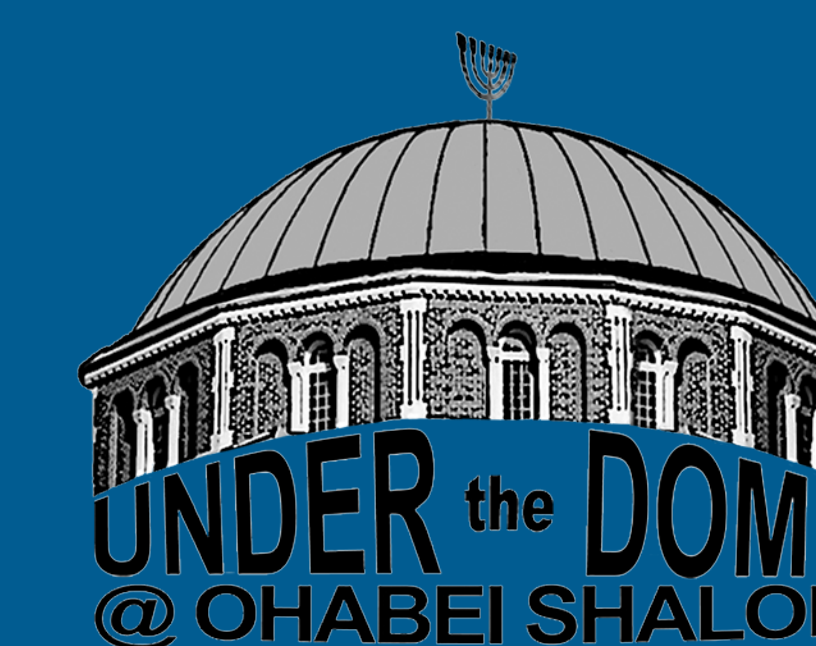
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# Historians in the Community: Public History Practicum Projects

History 625 - The Art and Craft of Interpretation  
Jane Becker , History Department, College of Liberal Arts



## Defending Freedom Smart Phone Tour: *USS Cassin Young*

Every year, over a million visitors to the **Boston National Historical Park** (NPS) come to the Charlestown Navy Yard. Soon, visitors will have access to the park's unique collection of oral histories in exploring the role of the Navy Yard and the *USS Cassin Young* in defending freedom during the Cold War. Working with NPS interpretive rangers, public history students are conducting research in the oral histories and other historical resources to produce content and develop a mobile tour for visitors.



## Practicing Public History

Public historians work among and for the public—they put their skills as historians to work in our communities. Using historical materials, public historians help people understand personal and community histories and their relationships to broader historical contexts.

The Public History Track at UMass Boston serves and supports community endeavors to document, preserve, curate, interpret, and make accessible their various histories, and to connect their pasts with the present. Our partnerships provide graduate students with opportunities to apply theory to practice, and to build their professional networks and portfolios.



## Calf Pasture Pumping Station Blog

The Calf Pasture Pumping Station at UMass Boston is an important historic resource that deserves protection and interpretation; it was built in 1883 to initiate a full public sewage system for Boston, addressing the growing city's environmental and public health challenges.

In partnership with **University Archives & Special Collections**, a student team created a blog to interpret and make accessible the pumping station's histories and historical resources. The blog provides a platform for public contributions and reflections on the site's history. It is a first step in creating a community of advocates with connections to the building and its histories to build a foundation for its future.

<http://blogs.umb.edu/pumpingstation/>



## Revolutionary Characters & *Mapping Revolutionary Boston*

In 2013, a student team partnered with **The Bostonian Society** to explore ways to incorporate historical biographies onto *Mapping Revolutionary Boston*, a website and iPhone app that allows visitors to explore Boston's early history and built environment using an historic map as the primary interface <http://www.bostonhistory.org/?s=education&p=mapping>.



The team researched and created biographies of historical characters to integrate people's experiences and ideas with specific sites on Boston's 18<sup>th</sup> century landscape; they experimented with ways to reveal the multiple perspectives of Boston's 18<sup>th</sup> century citizens, integrating unique experiences onto *Mapping Revolutionary Boston*.

## Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American

In Fall 2014, **Temple Ohabei Shalom** will host a traveling version of the exhibit *Chasing Dreams: Baseball and Becoming American* organized by the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia. The exhibition explores the connections between baseball, national identity, and the story of Jewish immigration and integration in American life.

Public history students are conducting research to identify related local stories, artifacts, photographs, and video materials to supplement the local exhibition of *Chasing Dreams*. They are curating a Tumblr site to engage with the public and collect their stories and materials.

<http://chasingdreamsbaseballboston.tumblr.com/>

