

Dialogues in Heritage Science

Yale *Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage*

Dr. Donna Yates

Lecturer in Social Sciences and Arts at the University of Glasgow

“Tracking Stolen Gods: Using criminological tools to prevent antiquities trafficking”



Tuesday, November 24th, 2015 at 3:00PM

Location: Sterling Memorial Library, Memorabilia Lecture Hall,
128 Wall St Entrance, New Haven

Host: Prof. Dr. Stefan Simon

Contact: laurie.batza@yale.edu

Donna Yates is a Lecturer in Social Sciences and Arts at the University of Glasgow. An archaeologist by training, Yates is based out of a criminology department and is one of the members of the Trafficking Culture Project at the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research. Her research broadly focuses on social aspects of antiquities trafficking, art crime, and related cultural property issues.

For decades now, illicit traffic of cultural objects has been a core challenge for cultural heritage preservation. The looting of sites is destructive and the grey market for stolen antiquities is exploitative. It has been 45 years since the drafting of the 1970 UNESCO convention, yet looting and smuggling persist and the antiquities market remains unregulated. Our current cultural property regulatory system has failed and we must find out why. Since 2012, the Trafficking Culture Project at the University of Glasgow has been working to understand this regulatory shortfall. The talk will present some of the core findings of project through case studies from Cambodia and India. By going through the stages of these crimes, we will explore how the criminal networks functioned, what factors facilitated the crime, and identify 'weak links' in the smuggling chain where we could intervene in the future to protect other cultural objects from being stolen.