

Topics in the Anthropology of Art and Museums

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Office Hours: Thursday 11:00-1:00 pm and by appointment

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Seminar: Wednesday 6:00-9:00

Course Description:

This course engages with art largely through the institutional frame of the museum, seeking to understand art's social agency. Our examination of museums as distinctively modern social formations will address not only art museums, but also museums of ethnography, and science, and the various imperatives with which they are entangled.

Required Reading:

All assigned reading **must** be completed by the date for which it is assigned. Completion of the readings is essential to your understanding of the lecture material, to your ability to be an active participant in class, and to your enjoyment and sense of achievement in the course.

The required texts available in the bookstore:

- Marcus, George E and Fred Myers, eds. *The Traffic in Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- MacDonald, Sharon, *Behind the Scenes at the Science Museum*. New York: Berg, 2002
- Price, Sally, *Paris Primitive: Jacques Chirac's Museum on the Quai Branly*. University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Karp, Ivan, et al, eds., *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006.
- Winegar, Jessica, *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt*. Stanford University Press, 2006

In addition, there are a number of required readings that will be available either in hard copy or electronically through the reserve library. We will discuss how to access these in class. Occasionally I will make articles available from my office.

I will draw your attention to useful supplementary readings via Blackboard as we proceed through the course.

Blackboard:

The course will utilize Blackboard in several ways. The syllabus will be available on Blackboard, along with access to electronic reserves (ERes). I will use it for distributing messages to the class, including details of assignments and reminders of deadlines. I will also use it to draw your attention to useful resources. I will show you how to access it in class.

Class format:

Classes will take the form of discussions. Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings before each lecture and be prepared to participate in class discussion. Class preparation and active participation are required for the satisfactory completion of the course.

Office Hours:

I am available to meet with students during my scheduled office hours (Thursday 11:00-1:00) and at other times by appointment.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade will be based on two elements:

1. Participation (15%) This involves consistent participation in class discussion, informed by the assigned reading and by your reflection upon it. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and should be prepared to make an informed contribution to class discussion. The grade will be assigned on the basis of the consistency and quality of participation. Each week students will be responsible for introducing discussion questions.
2. Research Proposal (85%)
 - Define a research area and build an annotated bibliography (25%). Due March 12
 - Research proposal using form I will distribute to you (60%).

Informed Participation. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and should be prepared to make an informed contribution to class discussion. The grade will be assigned on the basis of the consistency and quality of participation. Course requirements have been designed with a view to encouraging conversation and thinking aloud. Students need not worry that they will be graded on everything they say. Grading of oral participation will be based on evidence of a good-faith effort to be a prepared, thoughtful, and generous participant in the conversation of the seminar.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism means copying or paraphrasing someone else's work and presenting it as one's own or without sufficient acknowledgement of another person's work. Plagiarism is a form of cheating even if there is no intent to deceive.

Copying from textbooks or articles without sufficient acknowledgement is plagiarism. Paraphrasing a book or article without sufficient acknowledgement is plagiarism. Copying another person's unpublished work is plagiarism.

Students are encouraged to discuss work and assignments with me and with each other but *any assignment or research paper you present must be your own work.*

I recommend that you read the Student Academic Honesty and Integrity Code in the Bulletin (<http://bulletin.binghamton.edu/>). Knowing what constitutes academic dishonesty will enable you to identify it and thereby avoid such practices.

Seminar Schedule

Week 1 January 30 Introduction

Week 2 February 6 Perspectives on the Field

- Marcus, George, and Fred Myers, "The Traffic in Art and Culture: An Introduction," in *The Traffic in Culture*, George E Marcus and Fred Myers, eds. Pp. 1-51. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Winegar, Jessica, *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt*. Stanford University Press, 2006. Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-87.

Week 3 February 13 Artworld Ethnography

- Winegar, Jessica, *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt*. Stanford University Press, 2006. Chapters 2-6, pp. 88-325.

Week 4 February 20

- **Screening: tba**

Week 5 February 27 Art as Ethnography

- Foster, Hal, "The Artist as Ethnographer," in *The Traffic in Culture*, George E Marcus and Fred Myers, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Pp. 302-309.
- Calzadilla, Fernando, and George Marcus, "Artists in the Field: Between Art and Anthropology," in *Contemporary Art and Anthropology*, Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright, eds. New York: Berg, 2006. Pp. 95-115.
- Thomas, Nicholas, "The Case of Tattooing," in *Contemporary Art and Anthropology*, Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright, eds. New York: Berg, 2006. Pp. 177-189.
- Buntinx, Gustavo, "Communities of Sense/Communities of Sentiment: Globalization and the Museum Void in an Extreme Periphery," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds., *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 219-246.
- Schneider, Arnd, "Appropriations," in *Contemporary Art and Anthropology*, Arnd Schneider and Christopher Wright, eds. New York: Berg, 2006. Pp. 29-51.

Week 6 March 5 Museum Exhibition

- Kirshenblatt-Gimblet, Barbara, "Exhibitionary Complexes," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds., *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 35-45.
- Bennett, Tony, "Exhibition, Difference, and the Logic of Culture," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds., *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 46-69.
- Fraser, Andrea, "Isn't it a Wonderful Place? (A Tour of the Guggenheim, Bilbao)," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds., *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 135-160.

Week 7 March 12 Museums as Counter-Worlds?

- Fisher, Philip, "Art and the Future's Past," in *Making and Effacing Art: Modern American Art in a Culture of Museums*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. Pp. 3-29.
- Huyssen, Andreas, "Escape From Amnesia," in *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Pp. 13-35.
- Smart, Pamela, tba.

Annotated Bibliography Due

Week 8 March 19 Repositioned Objects 1

- McEvelley, Thomas, "Doctor Lawyer Indian Chief: Primitivism in 20th Century Art at the Museum of Modern Art," *Artforum* 23 (3): 54-61.
- Molly Mullin, "The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art "Art, Not Ethnology," in *The Traffic in Culture*, George E Marcus and Fred Myers, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Pp. 166-198.
- Hart, Lynn, "Three Walls: Regional Aesthetics and the International Art World," in *The Traffic in Culture*, George E Marcus and Fred Myers, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Pp. 127-150.
- Myers, Fred, "The Complicity of Cultural Production: The Contingencies of Performance in Globalizing Museum Practices," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 504-535.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara, "Secrets of Encounter," in *Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts*, Bettina Messias Carbonell, ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004. Pp. 576-580.

Spring Recess March 21-30

Week 9 April 2 Museum Ethnography 1

- Price, Sally, *Paris Primitive: Jacques Chirac's Museum on the Quai Branly*. University of Chicago Press, 2007

Week 10 April 9 Problematic Histories

- Rogoff, Irit, "From Ruins to Debris: The Feminization of fascism in German-History Museums," in *Museum Culture*, Daniel Sherman and Irit Rogoff, eds. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994. Pp. 223-249.
- Bunn, David, "The Museum Outdoors: Heritage, Cattle, and Permeable Borders in the Southwestern Kruger National Park," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 357-391.
- Ruffins, Fath Davis, "Revisiting the Old Plantation: Reparations, Reconciliation, and Museumizing American Slavery," in Karp, Ivan, et al, eds. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Duke University Press, 2006. Pp. 394-434.

Week 11 April 16 Education and Audiences**Guest Lecture by Katherine Somerville Howorth Bouman**

- Heath, Christian, and Dirk von Lehn, "Configuring Reception: (Dis)Regarding the 'Spectator' in Museums and Galleries," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2004, 21(6): 43-65.
- tba

Week 12 April 23 Museum Ethnography 2

- MacDonald, Sharon, *Behind the Scenes at the Science Museum*. New York: Berg, 2002

Week 13 April 30 Note: 5:15 meeting time for VizCult Seminar

- **Haidy Geismar, Assistant Professor, Program in Museum Studies and the Department of Anthropology, New York University**
"The Photograph and the Malangan: Rethinking Images in Vanuatu"
Reading to be assigned.

Week 14 May 7 Review