

Syllabus

ANTH 380V Visualizing Differences

Spring 2003

Pam Smart

Office: S1-329

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:30-3:00 or by appointment

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Lectures: Monday and Wednesday 4:40-6:05, LH 004

Course Description:

This course explores the power of the visual to produce gender, racial, and ethnic differences. We will focus particularly on three interlinked spheres of imagery – ethnographic film, world's fairs, and museums – to explore the ways in which 'difference' is produced and rendered intelligible. Attention will be paid to the ways in which specific anthropological approaches have been taken up within each of these domains.

Aims:

- to introduce students to the idea that specific visual regimes both express and generate very particular engagements with the world
- to introduce students to aspects of ethnographic film, world's fairs, and museums as distinctive sites for the production of meaning and affect
- to analyze particular examples of each of these forms in light of the contexts out of which each emerged and has subsequently been received
- to examine these phenomena with reference to key theoretical approaches
- to further students' understanding of the complex relationships between academic theory and popular imagination.

Objectives:

By the end of the course students should have a grasp of the distinctive impact of the visual in the production of meanings and sensibilities. Students should most importantly have had practice in developing written and verbal arguments, and should be able to critically engage with visual and theoretical material.

Required texts:

Three books have been ordered for this course and are available at the Campus Bookstore.

- MacDougall, David, 1998 *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara, 1998 *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Maxwell, Anne, 1999 *Colonial Photography & Exhibitions: Representations of the*

Reserved readings: All the assigned readings (the above required texts and a significant number of readings from other sources) are available on reserve in the Bartle Reserve Room.

All assigned readings must be completed **before** the class for which they are assigned.

Class format: Classes meet twice a week and involve lectures, discussion, and engaging with visual material. Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings before each lecture and be prepared to participate in class discussion. While the lectures work closely with the assigned reading material, doing the readings should not be considered a satisfactory substitute for attending class, nor the class a substitute for the reading. They are designed to complement each other.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade will be based on four elements:

1. Informed Participation (10%)
2. Take-home Test (20%) **Distributed in class 19th Feb and due in class 24th Feb**
3. Exhibition Project (40%) **Due 7th May**
4. Final Exam (30%)

- **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.
- **Take-home Test.** An essay question will be distributed in class and your essay will be due in 5 days later. The question is designed to allow you to reflect on the ideas addressed in Part 1 of the course, on ethnographic film.
- **Exhibition Project.** This project involves the conceptualization of an exhibition. The topic and focus of the exhibition, its message, the audience to which it is addressed, and its location are up to you to decide on. So too are questions of *how* the exhibition should engage its audience and convey its meaning. The point of the exercise is not to design a faultless exhibition but to develop a critical understanding of the ways in which exhibitionary practices establish particular terms of engagement and meaning. Key to the project, therefore, is the critical analysis of the issues that arose throughout the process of exhibition planning, explaining why, at each stage in the process, the decision was made to do things in one way rather than another. This discussion will engage with course material and with supplementary readings. It should be presented in the form of a written document, though visual supporting material is welcomed. A fuller description of the project will be circulated.
- **Final Exam.** Questions for this will be distributed in advance of the exam to enable you to focus your revision and to prepare responses in advance.
- **Plagiarism and Cheating:** Students are expected to abide by the rules of academic honesty. Under no circumstances will plagiarism and/or cheating be tolerated in this course. They are punishable though university regulations. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism consult a copy of the University *Rules and Expectations*, or speak with me.

Week 1

22 Jan

Introduction

Week 2

27 Jan

Appearance and Knowledge – Looking at Faces

Part 1: Ethnographic Film

29 Jan

Screening: *Nanook of the North*, Robert Flaherty, 1922 (79 mins.)

Required Reading:

- MacDougall, David, “The Fate of the Cinema Subject,” in *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Chapter 1., pp. 25-60
- Rothman, William, “Nanook of the North,” in *Documentary Film Classics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp.1-20

Week 3

3 Feb

Visual Narrative and the production of Difference

Required Reading:

- Rony, Fatimah Tobing, "Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography," in *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. Pp. 99-126
- MacDougall, David, "Visual Anthropology and the Ways of Knowing," in *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Chapter 2., pp. 61-92

5 Feb **Screening:** *Les Maîtres Fous*, Jean Rouch, 1955 (35 mins)

Required Reading:

- Stoller, Paul, "Les Maîtres Fous," in *The Cinematic Griot: The Ethnography of Jean Rouch*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. Pp.145-160.
- MacDougall, David, "Ethnographic Film: Failure and Promise," in *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Chapter 8., pp.178-196.

Week 4

10 Feb **Speaking For and Speaking As**

Screening: *N!ai, the story of a !Kung woman*, Adrienne Miesmer and John Marshall, 1980 (59 min.)

Required Reading:

- R Hansen, Christian, Catherine Needham, and Bill Nichols, "Pornography, Ethnography, and the Discourses of Power," in *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991. Pp. 201-228

12 Feb **Personal Testimony**

Required Reading:

- MacDougall, David, "The Subjective Voice in Ethnographic Film," in *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Chapter 3., pp.93-122.

Week 5

17 Feb **Critical Poetics**

Screening: excerpts from *Reassemblage*, Trinh T. Minh-Ha, 1985 (135 mins.)

Required Reading:

- Trinh, T. Minh-Ha and Scott, MacDonald, "Film as Translation: A Net With No Fisherman," in *Framer Framed*. London: Routledge, 1992. Pp.111-133.
- Moore, Henrietta, "Trinh T. Minh-Ha Observed: Anthropology and Others," in *Visualizing Theory*. New York: Routledge, 1994. Pp. 115-125.

19 Feb **Reflexivity and Other Others**

Screening: *Incidents of travel in Chichen Itza*, Jeffrey Himpele and Quetzil Castaneda, 1997 (90 min.).

Required Reading:

- MacDougall, David, "The Subjective Voice in Ethnographic Film," in *Transcultural Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. Chapter 3., pp.93-122.
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Take-home Test

Distributed Wednesday 19th Feb – Due
Monday 24th Feb

Week 6

24 Feb

Required Reading:

- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara 1998 "Destination Museum," *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp.131-176.

Part 2: World's Fairs

26 Feb **The Exhibitionary Complex**

Required Reading:

- Bennett, Tony 1995, "The Exhibitionary Complex," *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. New York: Routledge. Pp.59-88.
- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara 1998 "Objects of Ethnography," *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp.17-78.

Week 7

3 Mar **World's Fairs, Colonialism and Imagined Others**

Required Reading:

- Maxwell, Anne 1999 “The Great Exhibitions, Photography and the Making of European Identities,” *Colonial Photography & Exhibitions: Representations of the ‘Native’ and the Making of European Identities*. London: Leicester University Press. Introduction, pp. 1-14.
- Maxwell, Anne 1999 “The White City and the Midway: Ethnographic Displays, Radical Innocence, and American Imperialism,” *Colonial Photography & Exhibitions: Representations of the ‘Native’ and the Making of European Identities*. London: Leicester University Press. Chapter 3, pp. 73-94.

5 Mar

Required Reading:

- Hinsley, Curtis 1991, “The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893,” in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine, eds. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press. Pp.344-365.

SPRING BREAK

Week 8

17 Mar **The World As Exhibition**

Required Reading:

- Mitchell, Timothy 1988, “Egypt at the Exhibition,” *Colonising Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 1-33.

19 Mar **Primitives**

Screening: The Couple in the Cage, Coco Fusco and Paula Heredia, 1993 (30 min).

Required Reading:

- Fusco, Coco 1998, “The Other History of Intercultural Performance,” in *The Visual Culture Reader*, Nicholas Mirzoeff, ed. New York: Routledge, pp. 363-371

Week 9

24 Mar **Ctd.**

Part 3: Museums

26 Mar **Exhibition Project**

Required Reading:

- Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean, "The Disciplinary Museum," in *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. New York: Routledge, 1992. Pp. 167-190.

Week 10

31 Mar **Narratives of Species, Race, and Gender**

Required Reading:

- Haraway, Donna "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-1936," in *Primate Visions*. New York: Routledge, 1989. Pp. 26-58.
- Gifford-Gonzalez, Diane, "You Can Hide, But You Can't Run: Representation of Women's Work in Illustrations of Paleolithic Life," *Visual Anthropology Review* 9(1)1983:23-41.

2 Apr **Ctd.**

Week 11

7 Apr **Narratives of History: Identification and Audience**

Required Reading:

- 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.

9Apr **Exhibiting Universality: "The Family of Man"**

Required Reading:

- Eric Sandeen, 1995, "Picturing the Exhibition," *Picturing an Exhibition: The Family of Man and 1950s America*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. Pp.39-75.

Week 12 Diversity

14 Apr **International Festivals**

Required Reading:

- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara, 1998 "Confusing Pleasures," *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp.203-248.

16 Apr **No Class – Passover, Easter Break**

Week 13

21 Apr **No Class – Passover, Easter Break**

23 Apr **'Magiciens de la Terre'**

Required Reading:

- Martin, Jean-Hubert and Benjamin Buchloh, "The Whole Earth Show: An Interview with Jean-Hubert Martin by Benjamin Buchloh," *Art in America*. May 1989: 150-213.
- Heartney, Eleanor, "The Whole Earth Show: Part II," *Art in America*. July 1989: 91-96.

Week 14

28 Apr **The 'Art-Culture System'**

Required Reading:

- Price, Sally, "The Universality Principle," in *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. Pp. 23-36.
- Clifford, James, 1988, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

30 Apr **Reimagining Museums**

Required Reading:

- Clifford, James, 1997, "Museums as Contact Zones," *Routes: Travel, and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press. Pp.188-219.

Week 15

5 May **Review**

7 May **Review**

**Exhibition Project Due
Wednesday May 7th**
