Introduction to Museum Studies, A503

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Fall Semester, 2011
Thursday, 6:00-8:40 pm
Cavanaugh Hall, Rm. 411
(and area museums)
A503 sect. # 15903, 3 cr.

Course Description:
This survey of museology introduces students to the history of museums and to debates on the philosophical nature of museums. The course covers the types and definitions of museums. It traces the history of museums, discusses contemporary practice in museums, and examines current issues in the profession as it faces the future of museums in the twenty-first century. The course explores museums’ missions and their roles in society through case studies and exhibitions in a variety of museums including art, history, and ethnographic museums.

Course Objectives:
At the end of the course, the student should be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of museum history and professional organizations
- Debate museum ethical issues
- Discuss critically, in written and verbal form, current issues in the philosophy of museums, museum missions, representation of the past, interpretation of cultural objects, and the role of museums in society
- Evaluate critically a museum exhibition
- Locate the core museum studies literature, principal museum organizations, and museum reference sources including on-line resources
- Conduct a literature review and develop a critical assessment of the development and scholarship of an issue or topic in the museum field and present that research in written form and as a PPT-supported oral presentation
- Work collaboratively with others in team based learning and problem solving
- Articulate why museums matter in a self-reflective essay
- Discuss critically his or her own goals and aspirations as a museum professional

Course Requirements:
- Complete assigned readings and web visits
- Attend regularly and participate actively in discussions, presentations, and exercises
- Write five short thought pieces
- Write two reflective essays
- Participate in the Ethics Bowl in capacities of scenario writers, moderators, judges, and debaters (The ethics bowl URL is http://www.iupui.edu/~mstd/a403503/ethicsbowl1.html)
- Develop an annotated bibliography
- Write an exhibit review

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• Research and write a literature review communicate that research in a formal academic paper and in a PPT presentation.
• Reflect on your experiences and ideas in the class by keeping a journal throughout the semester and/or sharing periodic blog posts on OnCourse (available to all class participants).

If you have any questions about any of these assignments, please see Dr. Kryder-Reid well in advance of the due dates.

Course Evaluation: attainment of course learning objectives is assessed through the work student produce in the following individual and collaborative assignments. Grades will be based on a student's total score out of a possible 100 points weighted in the following manner:

Participation in presentations, discussions, blog, journal, exercises 10 pts.
JOTs (Just One Thought) 5 pts.
Annotated bibliography (min.10 entries) 10 pts.
Exhibit Review (750-1,000 words) 15 pts.
Reflective essays (2 @ 10 pts. each) 20 pts.
Ethics Bowl participation and/or essay (see guide for details) 10 pts.
Literature Review Project (30 pts total)
10-13 pp. paper + bibliography 25 pts.
Research presentation 5 pts.

Total possible points 100 pts.

The grading scale:
100-98 = A+
93-97 = A
90-92 = A-
88-89 = B+
83-87 = B
80-82 = B-
78-79 = C+
73-77 = C
70-72 = C-
68-69 = D+
63-67 = D
60-62 = D-
0-59 = F

OnCourse: The class is also supported by a web environment called "OnCourse". OnCourse provides you with an on-line syllabus, grade book, PPTs, a place to submit assignments, and a way of communicating with fellow students through threaded discussions, forums, or e-mail. The grade book is an especially helpful way of checking the status of your assignments. Please check it regularly to see what assignments have been evaluated. If you think you have turned something in and a grade has not been posted within two weeks, please contact me.

The latest Quick Start guide, titled OnCourse CL Quick Start Guide: For Students is linked on the OnCourse CL Training & Support page as a printable PDF file:
http://www.indiana.edu/~ittrain/oncourse/workshops_materials/ONSTU.pdf

Readings: All readings are on-line (on the web or pdf files posted to OnCourse “resources” page organized by weekly readings) unless otherwise noted. The learning objectives in this course are realized through experiential problem-based learning and, through discussion and written analysis, the exploration
and application of ideas and concepts encountered in readings and class presentations. This is a graduate class. For you to be able to discuss, analyze, integrate, and apply the new ideas and concepts it is critical that you read the arguments of the authors closely and critically in advance of the class where we discuss them. The class only meets once a week, so leave yourself time to read and digest the material each week. In short - DO THE READINGS.

**Web site visits:** Students must visit the web sites listed in the syllabus and be prepared to comment in class on the sites’ relevance to the issues being addressed in that week’s discussion or, where noted, be familiar with the site as a professional resource.

I encourage you, if you're not doing this already, to join and contribute to one or more museum networking site. I particularly like Museum 3.0 at [http://museum30.ning.com/](http://museum30.ning.com/) as a place for debate on current issues and topics. The Emerging Museum Professional site is also a great resource for building your professional network. There’s no local chapter, yet, but you could be an instigator and form one! ([http://www.aam-us.org/getinvolved/emp/index.cfm](http://www.aam-us.org/getinvolved/emp/index.cfm)).

**Museum Visits:** In addition to the class meetings in museums, you are required to visit museums on your own to complete assignments. Local museums are one of our greatest teaching resources for the class, so please allow enough time to look, listen, think, and learn.

**The Ethics Bowl:** The ethics bowl is designed as a fun, team-based way to connect the principles of ethical museum practice to the realities of museum work. We will discuss more details in class and you can also consult the web site: [http://www.iupui.edu/~mstd/a403503/ethicsbowl1.html](http://www.iupui.edu/~mstd/a403503/ethicsbowl1.html)
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<tr>
<th>WK</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Location/Time</th>
<th>Assignments DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug. 25</td>
<td>Introduction - how we think about museums and why they matter; What do museum people do?</td>
<td>CA 411/6:00</td>
<td>• Team presentations</td>
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<td>• 1 page JOT – &quot;My dream museum job&quot;</td>
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<td>• Create blog and introduce yourself</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>What is a museum?: Legal, historical, and organizational contexts and missions;</td>
<td>CA 411/6:00</td>
<td>• 1 page JOT – &quot;My dream museum&quot;</td>
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<td>• Visit &quot;The Power of Children&quot; exhibit at The Children’s Museum prior to class</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>Museums and communities: stakeholders, &quot;civic engagement&quot; and the power of museums [Rachael Matthews] Special presentation by Tina Baich: &quot;Resources for museum research&quot;</td>
<td>CA 411/6:00</td>
<td>• 1 page JOT - &quot;Connection&quot;</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>CASE STUDY: Thornton Dial Exhibit VIDEO: Mr. Dial Has Something to Say (outside of class) [exhibit closes 9-18-11]</td>
<td>IMA/ 6:00</td>
<td>• Essay #1: Museums and authority</td>
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<td>• Lit. Review topic due (post to OnCourse forum)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sept. 22</td>
<td>Representing the past: museums, history, and heritage</td>
<td>CA 411/6:00</td>
<td>• 1 page JOT - &quot;Curiosity&quot;</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>CASE STUDY: Indiana Historical Society, [Trina Nelson Thomas and Eloise Scroggins]</td>
<td>CA435/6:00</td>
<td>• Visit the “Indian Experience” at the Indiana History Center by Sept. 29th (comp tickets)</td>
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<td>• Post 1st 5 annotated bibliography entries to Zotero</td>
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| 7  | Oct. 6     | Who owns the past: Cultural property, cultural patrimony, repatriation; Introduction to the Ethics Bowl; VIDEO: Minik: The Lost Eskimo; | CA 411/ 6:00   | • 1 page JOT - "Museum pain"
• Questions for ethics panel - post to OnCourse Forum |
| 8  | Oct. 13    | Museum ethics – panel and (joint w/A403)                              | CA 435/6:00   | • Exhibit review “trade and grade” due to team                          |
| 9  | Oct. 20    | Objects and contexts: exhibiting the “other” VIDEO: (In and Out of Africa) | CA 411/ 6:00   | • Scenario drafts for Ethics Bowl                                       |
|    |            |                                                                        |               | • Post min. of 10 entries to Zotero                                      |
|    |            |                                                                        |               | • Prepare for Ethics Bowl (on-going)                                     |
| Oct 21 | ROAD TRIP! – Chicago History Museum | Details TBA | • Meet with curators of “Out in Chicago” and behind the scenes tour |
| 10 | Oct. 27    | CASE STUDY: African Art at the IMA                                   | IMA / 6:00    | • Exhibit review “trade and grade” comments due to indiv. authors       |
|    |            |                                                                        | Meet in main entrance lobby | • Prepare for Ethics Bowl (on-going)                                     |
| 11 | Nov. 3     | CASE STUDY FTNS @ Conner Prairie                                      | CA411/6:15 .... | • Exhibit review due
• FTNS waiver & $19 check payable to Ind. Univ. |
| 12 | Nov. 10    | Ethics Bowl                                                           | Cavanaugh –   | • Ethics bowl                                                           |
|    |            |                                                                        |               | • Symposium attendance STRONGLY encouraged                                |
| Nov. 12 | (Sat.) | EITELJORG FELLOWSHIP FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FINE ART | Eiteljorg Museum | • Essay #2: Why museums matter |
| 13 | Nov. 17    | CASE STUDY: The Eiteljorg Museum - Native American Contemporary Fine Art [Jennifer Compo-McNutt and Ashley Holland] | Eiteljorg Museum/6:00 | • Presentations (turn in pdf of PPT presentation and any handouts) |
| Nov. 24 | THANKSGIVING (no class) |                                        |               | • Final Literature Review paper and bibliography
• Journal, blog posts, missing assignments, etc. |
| 14 | Dec. 1     | Graduate research presentations (May require extended time for class) | CA411/6:00-9:00? | • Journal, blog posts, missing assignments, etc. |
| 15 | Dec. 8     | Concluding discussion                                                 | CA411/6:00    | • Final Literature Review paper and bibliography
• Journal, blog posts, missing assignments, etc. |
| Dec. 12 | All final written work due |                                                                 |               | • Journal, blog posts, missing assignments, etc. |

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Tentative Schedule of Classes and Assignments

AUGUST 25: Week 1 — Introduction to course goals and structure; how we think about museums and why they matter? What do museum people do?

Divide into 3 teams for 9/2 presentations (this will also be your “trade and grade” team for the exhibit review assignment).

SEPTEMBER 1: Week 2 — What is a museum? Legal, historical, and organizational contexts; Missions and mission statements,
DUE: JOT - “my dream museum job,” in-class team presentations; create a Blog on OnCourse, and write a brief self-introduction

Three teams (formed on 8/25) will present in class:
Each team will visit web sites from museums that interpret the same or similar subject (Trains, Civil War, or Thomas Edison). The purpose is to compare their presentations and to analyze the perspective of the museums focused on the same topic. The presentations should BRIEFLY summarize each museum and then present a succinct analysis of the museums, comparing and contrasting their mission, interpretive stance, and the relationship of that interpretation to its particular context (location, mission, governance, target audience, and other community stakeholders). The presentations should be concise (no more than 10 minutes) and visual (either PPT or with live feed to the web sites), so divide the work and coordinate your presentation.

Team A: Railroads
- Museum of the American Railroad: http://www.museumoftheamericanrailroad.org/
- B&O Railroad Museum: http://www.borail.org/
- California State Railroad Museum: http://www.csrmf.org/

Team B: Civil War related museums
- Museum of the Confederacy: http://www.moc.org
- Gettysburg National Battlefield Park http://www.nps.gov/archive/gett/home.htm
- Colonel Eli Lilly Civil War Museum: http://www.ai.org/iwm/civilwar/

Team C: Thomas A. Edison related museums
- Edison Birthplace Museum: http://www.tomedison.org/
- Edison National Historic Site: http://www.nps.gov/edis/
- Edison-Ford Winter Estates: http://www.efwefla.org/

Readings:
American Association of Museums (AAM): What is a museum?
http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/whatis.cfm
American Association of Museums, *Excellence and Equity*, pp.3-15


**Recommended readings in museum history** (may be useful for essay due 9/15)


Eric Hobsbawn, “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in *Representing the Nation: A Reader; Histories, Heritage and Museums* (David Boswell and Jessica Evans, eds.) (Routledge, 1999), pp. 61-86.


**Recommended museum sites** Try to find the mission statement and then explore how they realize that mission through their spaces, programs, collections, exhibits and other activities.

- El Museo del Barrio: [http://www.elmuseo.org/home.html](http://www.elmuseo.org/home.html)
- The Exploratorium: [http://www.exploratorium.edu/](http://www.exploratorium.edu/)
Lower East Side Tenement Museum: http://www.tenement.org/
The Metropolitan Museum of Art: http://www.metmuseum.org/
Science Museum of Minnesota: http://www.smm.org/
The Tech Museum of Innovation, San Jose, CA: http://www.thetech.org/

Web Sites: (for general familiarity with professional organizations and resources)
  o International Coalition of Sites of Conscience:
    http://www.sitesofconscience.org/en
  o AAM American Association of Museums: (for general resource and ref.)
    http://www.aam-us.org
  o ICOM International Council of Museums (for general resource and ref.)
    http://icom.museum/
  o Association of Midwest Museums
    http://www.midwestmuseums.org/
  o Association of Indiana Museums
    http://www.indianamuseums.org/

SEPTEMBER 8: Week 3 — Museums and communities: who are stakeholders and what is their "stake"? "civic engagement," relevance, and the power of museums;
Guest speaker - Rachael Matthews, The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis
Special presentation by Tina Baich: "Resources for museum research"
Due: visit "The Power of Children" exhibit at The Children's Museum prior to class
Due: JOT - "my dream museum"

Exercise for in-class discussion:
Prior to class, use the web to locate your nominations for each of the categories below. Check
out each museum's mission statement, as well as their activities, programs, and collections,
and have specific reasons for your choices. In class, we'll talk about your selections and your
rationales.
  1. Museum you think provides the greatest benefit to its community (define
     "community" however you want)
  2. Museum that you think shouldn't exist or is the most irrelevant
  3. Museum you find most inspiring
  4. Museum you would most like to work in

Readings: (note – there are more readings than usual, but they are mostly shorter ones and
these will be fodder for our discussion about the Dial exhibit next week as well)

American Association of Museums, MAP – Governance Critical Issues Checklist
American Association of Museums, “Public Trust and Accountability,” National
AAM, Mastering Civic Engagement (selections)

Duncan F. Cameron, “The Museum, a Temple or Forum” Reinventing the Museum, pp.61-79.


Read at least one of the following case studies to draw on as examples in our discussion of civic engagement:

1) The Mattatuck Historical Society
   - see also the web site about the project: http://www.fortunestory.org/

2) Fred Wilson:
   - Cultural Trail_ E Pluribus Unum:
     http://www.indyculturaltrail.org/E_Pluribus_Unum.html

3) District Six Museum:
• District Six Museum: http://www.districtsix.co.za/frames.htm “Stan’s Walk” and "Timeline" recommended

4) Slave Galleries Project, St. Augustine Church, NY
• See also Slave Galleries Project - http://www.staugsproject.org/index.html

Web Site: (visit some of the sites in the coalition for familiarity with the organizations and for use in your thinking about the value and purpose of museums)
irst International Coalition of Sites of Conscience:
http://www.sitesofconscience.org/en

• For those interested in following up some of the work Janes refers to, see Maxwell Anderson’s “Measuring Success” and Douglas Worts, “Measuring Museum Meaning” articles posted to OnCourse.

SEPTEMBER 15: Week 4 CASE STUDY: Hard Truths: The Art of Thornton Dial
DUE: Assignment #1 - Museums and authority essay
Meet: The Indianapolis Museum of Art, main lobby entrance by 6:00 (if you are late, come to the Dial exhibit entrance.)
Guest Speakers: Carol White, Assistant Director of Education, Indianapolis Museum of Art

Readings:


Joanne Cubbs, “On the Importance of Dial’s Art To a Wide Public Audience. (one page statement, posted to OnCourse)


Indianapolis Museum of Art, Dial exhibit microsite:
http://www.imamuseum.org/art/exhibitions/dial
➢ view videos: http://www.imamuseum.org/art/exhibitions/dial/video
Video - watch “Mr. Dial Has Something to Say” posted to OnCourse. Note this is a large file, and you may find it easier to watch from a campus computer or to download it directly from a campus workstation.

Recommended Reading

SEPTEMBER 22: Week 5: — Representing the past: history and heritage; DUE: JOT - connections


Read one of the following case studies based on alphabetical listings below. Be prepared to summarize it for the rest of the class and to discuss it in the context of our conversation about museums' representation of the past:

Last names beginning with A-B read:
“West as America”
Robert Hughes, "How the West was Spun" Time Magazine Monday May 13, 1991 http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,972933-2,00.html


Last names beginning with C-H read:
“Enola Gay”

_Last names beginning with J-L read:_
“Interpreting slavery”


_Last names beginning with M-S read:_
Interpreting sexual orientation

Hide/Seek, National Portrait Gallery
  - Tyler Green - Blog" - "Smithsonian releases report on visitor reaction to NPG’s ‘Hide/Seek’"
  - Smithsonian Institution Office of Policy and Analysis, "Hiding in Plain Sight: A Visitor Study of Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture at the National Portrait Gallery" (pdf on OnCourse)
  - If you want to follow the press more closely, see links posted to OnCourse

**Web Sites**
For familiarity with professional organizations and resources related to history museums visit:
- American Association of State and Local History: [http://www.aaslh.org/](http://www.aaslh.org/)
SEPTEMBER 29: Week 6 — CASE STUDY: Indiana Historical Society
Guest Speaker: Trina Nelson Thomas and Eloise Scroggins
[meet in CA435 – we’ll be with the undergraduates]
DUE: JOT - "Curiosity"; Post 1st 5 annotated bibliography entries to Zotero

Museum Visit
Prior to class time VISIT IN PERSON – the Indiana Experience exhibit at the Indiana History Center. It is imperative that you see it “live” and in action. For directions and background on the exhibit visit the IHS web site and especially: http://www.indianahistory.org/indiana-experience. The IHS is generously providing free admission – tickets distributed in class.

Readings:
Indiana Historical Society, Annual Report (pdf on OnCourse) and general background, http://www.indianahistory.org/
- Indiana Historical Society Description of “Destination Indiana”: http://www.indianahistory.org/indiana-experience/destination-indiana-1


David Carr, “Museums and Public Trust” The Promise of Cultural Institutions, (Walnut Creek, Alta Mira, 2003), pp.109-130.

Dialogue materials – From “Using the Past to Shape the Future: Addressing Civic Issues at Historic Sites, Museums, and Cultural Centers,” Jane Addams Hull House Museum, Nov. 18-19, 2004

OCTOBER 6: Week 7 — Who owns the past?: Cultural Property, Patrimony, and Repatriation; Ethics bowl introduced: http://www.iupui.edu/~mstd/a403503/ethicsbowl1.html
DUE: Questions for ethics panel
DUE: JOT - Museum Pain

Video: Minik: The Lost Eskimo (view prior to class - downloadable file on OnCourse)

Readings:
Maxwell Anderson, “Ownership isn’t everything—The future will be shared” The Art Newspaper, issue 216, September 2010


NAGPRA Website: http://www.nps.gov/nagpra/ - an extensive and rich source. Read esp. for 1) basic information about what NAGPRA is (FAQs are a good place to start); 2) the wording of the legislation itself; 3) examples of NAGPRA reports; and 4) an understanding of the various processes for compliance with NAGPRA.


ACCP Editorial Board, “Conclusion: Museums at the Center of Public Policy” In Who Owns the Past?: Cultural Policy, Cultural Property, and the Law, edited by Kate Fitz Gibbon (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005), pp.319-326. [note: the ACCP group, now seemingly disbanded, was formed in 2002 by a group of collectors, lawyers, and museum professionals]


Donny George Youkhanna, "What are we showing in our museums?” In Beyond the Turnstile: Making the Case for Museums and Sustainable Values, edited by Selma Holo and Mari-Tere Alvarez, (Lanham: Alta Mira, 2009), pp.27-29.

Web Sites: (read for understanding of museum ethics codes, what they cover, and how they vary among organizations)
  o ICOM Code of Ethics (for familiarity with topics covered by the code) http://icom.museum/ethics.html#intro
  o AAM Code of Ethics (for familiarity with topics covered by the code) http://www.aam-ус.org/museumresources/ethics/index.cfm
  o World Archaeological Congress Code of Ethics http://www.worldarchaeologicalcongress.org/site/about_ethi.php
  o AASLH Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics (see esp. position papers) http://www.aaslh.org/ethics.htm
  o College Art Association: http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/museums
OCTOBER 13: Week 8 - Museum Ethics Panel  
Participants TBA  
DUE: exhibit review "trade and grade/comment" to peer group

OCTOBER 20: Week 9 — Curatorial Practice: Thinking about objects and contexts  
DUE: Scenario drafts for ethics bowl; Post min. of 10 entries to Zotero

Videos: In and Out of Africa (in-class viewing)

Readings:

James Clifford, “Museums as Contact Zones” In Representing the Nation: A Reader (London: Routledge, 1999), 435-457.


Susan Vogel “Always True to the Object, in Our Fashion.” Exhibiting Cultures, pp.191-204


Recommended Readings:


October 21 – ROAD TRIP! Chicago History Museum – “Out in Chicago” exhibit

OCTOBER 27: Week 10 -- CASE STUDY: Curators, Exhibits and Objects: African Art at the Indianapolis Museum of Art
Meet: We will meet at IMA’s main entrance at 6:15 and then proceed to the African Art Gallery and the Ife exhibit

Readings:


For familiarity with professional organizations and resources related to art museums, curators, and exhibits visit:
- NAME (National Association of Museum Exhibition): http://name-aam.org
- Curator’s Committee (an SPC of AAM): http://www.curcom.org/
- Association of Art Museum Curators: http://www.artcurators.org/
- College Art Association: http://www.collegeart.org/
- Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD): http://www.aamd.org/

NOVEMBER 3: Week 11 — Case Study - Conner Prairie Follow the North Star
Details TBA [$19 fee and waiver required; make checks payable to “Indiana University” and give to Liz or Becky]
DUE: Exhibit review to Prof. Kryder-Reid on OnCourse Assignment page

Readings:
Scott Magelssen, ”This Is a Drama. You Are Characters”: The Tourist as Fugitive Slave in Conner Prairie’s "Follow the North Star" Theatre Topics, (March 2006), 16 (1): 19-34.

NOVEMBER 10: Week 12 — Ethics Bowl
Meet in CA411 and proceed to various locations in the building

NOVEMBER 12 - Saturday - Eiteljorg Fellowship for Native American Fine Art Symposium – details TBA; attendance STRONGLY encouraged

NOVEMBER 17: Week 13 — CASE STUDY: The Eiteljorg Native American Fellowship
Meet at the Eiteljorg Museum front entrance at 6:00

Guest Speaker: Jennifer Compolo-McNutt, Curator of Contemporary Art and Ashley Holland, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art

Readings:
Additional readings may be announced


Juane Quick-to-See Smith, keynote address, Eiteljorg Fellowship, 2007 (see also interactive timeline) http://fellowship.eiteljorg.org/#forum::Landing

Paul Chaat Smith, Everything You Know About Indians is Wrong (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 69-102

Eiteljorg Fellowship web page Forum (note – posting requires creating a user profile and signing in)
http://fellowship.eiteljorg.org/#forum::Forum?value=2

Web Visits: (for familiarity with museum’s mission and history and the background on the Fellowship)

NOVEMBER 24: NO CLASS  Happy Thanksgiving!

DECEMBER 1: Week 14 — Graduate literature review presentations.
Please bring refreshments to share and celebrate your work!
DUE: presentations

DECEMBER 8: Week 15 — Concluding discussion
DUE: Final literature papers including bibliography

Readings: (note – these readings may change based on issues that surface during the semester)


Angelina Russo, “Agents of Cultural Change” April 20, 2009 Guest blogger posting on Digital Heritage: Centre for Museology, University of Manchester http://digitalheritage.wordpress.com/ [see copy on OnCourse if blog is no longer available online]


Take-home assignments

A503 - Introduction to Museum Studies

Journal and Blog

To support your self-reflection throughout the semester, maintain a journal (for thoughts you want to share only with Liz) and/or a blog (for thoughts you want to share with the class). You can take it in whatever direction you like - observations of the museum world, thoughts about readings and discussions, musings on your own goals and changing perceptions of the field..... Just give yourself the time and space to think about everything you're encountering in the class, and the discipline to sit and write about it. I will read the blog entries throughout the semester and the journal at the end of the semester (you can, of course, extract anything in the journal you don't want me to see). You may find this record is helpful when you start to pull together your e-portfolio at the end of your time in the program.

JOTS

The purpose of the JOTS is two-fold: 1) to give me a chance to get to know you and better understand where you're coming from, and 2) for you to begin to frame your goals, aspirations, experiences, and thoughts about museums. These are also good warm-up writing exercises.
ESSAY #1 - MUSEUM AUTHORITY
Due: September 15, 2011 (submit electronically OnCourse Assignments page)
Points: 10
Length: (3-4 pages / ~750-1,000 words)
Directions:
Historically museums have been associated with governmental and institutional authority (royalty, the state, elites, the church, universities, etc.). More recently museums have claimed their value is derived from the communities they serve and are supported by. In your essay, please respond to the question "Where do museums derive their authority?" Feel free to agree or disagree with this characterization of museum history (and use specific examples to support your position). You are welcome to offer your own definition of authority or invoke someone else’s, but you must be explicit about what you mean by authority. You should support your argument with some specific examples, from readings or your own experience visiting museums.

Literature Review
This is the semester-long project. The goals are 1) to increase your mastery of the museum literature in a focused area or issue, 2) develop your research skills in locating sources, 3) develop your writing skills, and 3) develop your critical thinking skills in analyzing and synthesizing information.

Due: varied dates for separate deliverables (see below)
Points: 40 (including annotated bibliography, paper, and presentation)
Length: (10-13 pages; 2500-3250 words)

Directions:

1. Select a topic or issue of relevance to the museum field. Topic due by Sept. 15 to Forum
   a. To select a topic, you will need to first explore the literature on the subject. The choice is wide open but you must be able to locate a minimum of ten sources. To get ideas, you might want to browse the conference proceedings of museum associations such as AAM – sessions are often organized around “hot topics”. Similarly browsing Museum News will give you a sense of what people are writing and thinking about in the profession.
   b. Topics such as museums and sustainability, conscience, social justice issues, diversity, accessibility, colonialism, commercialization, consumerism, intangible heritage, semiotics, intellectual property, ethics, antiquities trade, authenticity, spectacle, memory, indigenous museums, repatriation, public value, cultural tourism, material culture, new media, citizen curators, intangible heritage, deaccessioning, nationalism, exhibiting sexuality, etc.) will make for more interesting essays than a technical topic (integrated pest management, for example).
   c. When you have decided on a topic, post it to the OnCourse forum by Sept. 15. Make sure no one else in the class has picked the same topic, or you'll be competing for the same sources.
   d. If you aren't familiar with literature reviews, please consult the supporting guidelines posted in the OnCourse resources folder (Assignment resources>Literature Review). You should also read some literature reviews. Most disciplines have them (for example, Annual Review of Anthropology) and students writing theses and dissertations have to do a literature review to demonstrate their mastery of the literature in the field that pertains to the selected problem and situates his or her proposed research within that literature.

2. Develop a bibliography for your subject
   a. You must complete a minimum of 10 annotated bibliography entries (1st 5 due 9/29 and next the 5 are due 10/20 to be posted to LibGuide). Details on LibGuide will be presented by Tina Baich in class on Sept. 8th. You can annotate sources that you don’t end up using for your final paper, if you want.
   b. Your final bibliography size depends on the scope of the topic and how much has been published on it, but only 10 entries must be annotated (you can do more if you want).

3. Present your review orally with a supporting PPT presentation. Due December 1st.

4. Write a literature review essay (see separate guidelines). Due December 8th.

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Exhibit Review
Due: November 3, 2011 (submit electronically - OnCourse Assignments page)
Points: 10
Length: (3-5 pages/750-1,000 words)
Directions:
1. Visit an exhibit in a museum of your choice, ideally one that you can visit more than once. Write a review of the exhibit, and consider in your critical assessment some or all of the following:
   - What is the main message of the exhibit?
   - How does this message relate to the broader mission of the museum or current issues in the field?
   - What are the contexts created by the exhibit’s curators? How is the exhibit organized? How are the objects presented, physically, intellectually, ideologically, etc.?
   - How are the messages most effectively communicated? How are they least effective? (i.e. what works and what doesn’t)? Using observations of visitors in the exhibit may help support your points, as well as your own reactions to the exhibit.
   - Whose voice or voices are heard in the exhibit?
2. By Oct. 13 share a draft of your review with your team for “trade and grade” comments
3. By Oct. 27 send all your “trade and grade” comments to the review authors.
4. Submit final review to Assignment page by Nov. 3, 2011

You may find it helpful to read some exhibit reviews, such as those published in Museum Anthropology, the American Quarterly, or the New York Times, and to read the exhibit review guidelines from various journals that are posted in the OnCourse Resources> Resources for assignments> exhibit review folder.

ESSAY # 2: WHY MUSEUMS MATTER
Due: November 17, 2011 (submit electronically - OnCourse Assignments page)
Points: 10
Length: (3 pages/750 words)
Directions: This reflective essay asks you to respond to two questions: 1) “Why do museums matter?” or, to rephrase it, are museums relevant and, if so, how so or why not? And 2) “How do you want your work to matter for museums and their communities?” You should draw on the authors we have read and the museums you’ve visited, as well as other sources that have inspired or discouraged you. In addition to submitting your essay for me to read, please post it to OnCourse so your colleagues in the class can read it and we can refer to our different perspectives during the discussion of the panels in the last class.
Recommended resources in preparation for Chicago visit:


Curation: Responsibilities, Constraints and Controversy
What is the public and professional responsibility of the curator in art, science, history and culture? What is included and excluded in exhibitions and why? Do curators and museums censor—how so? When does judgment become self-censorship? Should curators and museums address controversial subjects?

Representing Sensitive Topics: Gender and Sexuality
What particular issues of curatorial responsibility have emerged with regard to representations of gender and sexuality in museums, including the recent “Hide/Seek” exhibition?

Curation: Listening to Artists, Scientists, Public Figures, Cultural Communities
What is the role of the curator vis-à-vis the artist and the presentation of work? What is the role of the curator in presenting scientific findings? To what extent do public figures have a say in how they are presented? How do we listen to cultural communities and account for their sensibilities and sensitivities?

Exhibitions in National Museums and Public Institutions
What are the special characteristics of national and public museums with regard to sensitive topics/treatments and controversial issues? Should there be? How do politics affect curation? What accountability do curators, museum directors and boards have, and to whom?

Museum Stakeholders and Curation
What stakes and roles do funders, boards, critics, museum audiences and other constituents have in curation? How specific are those roles with regard to influencing, approving, supporting exhibitions?