

**Occidental College ARTH 254**  
**Critical Perspectives in Museum Studies**  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:05 to 11:30 AM  
Choi Auditorium (Johnson 200)  
**Fall 2015**

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Office hours: Mondays 4:00 to 6:00 PM, 115 Weingart

**Course Description:** This course critically analyzes how the museum enterprise reflects and informs public culture. Students will gain an understanding of historical and current trends in museum studies and how these movements are impacted by shifting professional and popular standards. Topics include the collection and display of human beings as objects, the politics of national museums, racist memorabilia, indigenous curation methods, commodification and consumerism, repatriation, censorship and contested ideas about authenticity and authority. Case studies are drawn primarily from the United States and Canada and include the plantation museum, American Indian cultural centers, the Autry National Center exhibit *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West* and performance art. The relationship of the museum to a diverse public with often-contested agendas will be explored through class discussions, independent student projects and written assignments.

**CORE REQUIREMENT MET:** Fine Arts, US, US Diversity

**Required texts:**

**Eichstedt**, Jennifer L. and Stephen Small. *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002). ISBN: 1-58834-096-1

**Lonetree**, Amy. *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012). ISBN: 978-0-8078-3715-3

**Scharff**, Virginia, ed. *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West*. (Los Angeles, CA: Autry National Center of the American West in association with the University of California Press, 2015). ISBN: 978-0-520-28126-4

**Learning Outcomes:** Critical thinking, visual literacy, and creative use of multidisciplinary sources will be enhanced through course writing exercises (including use of an Oxy-provided i-Pad for the first three weeks of class), class discussion and original research. The course will strengthen student skills in writing, speaking and reading critically and effectively in peer group and independent projects. Evaluations will be conducted via the format of three *Response essays*, a *Midterm*, a *Research Paper* and *Group Projects*.

**Teaching Philosophy and Strategies:** I strive to create a participatory learning setting in which students model for their peers a spirit of intellectual inquiry and where current knowledge is constantly examined and expanded, based on new knowledge. Active learning is sought, meaning honest self-reflection, questioning and real-world application grounded in careful reading and examination of the required texts, web references and films.

*Please note that the course addresses painful and sensitive issues of racism, sexism and genocide. In order for the course to be successful, students will be expected to exercise a high degree of intellectual and emotional maturity, respect for others and tolerance for diverse opinions. Civil discourse skills are required.*

Students wishing to explore more fully the issues of cultural competency and building inclusive environments may find resources with Occidental's Office of Intercultural Affairs. Contact: <http://www.oxy.edu/intercultural-affairs>, phone (323) 259-2522, location 1501 Campus Road.

Students seeking support for processing painful issues raised may call, email or visit the Emmons Student Wellness Center (323) 259-2657, [oxywell@oxy.edu](mailto:oxywell@oxy.edu). A 24/7 hotline is available for students to gain immediate counseling and resources – (323) 341-4141.

**Assessment:** Three *Response Essays* (20% each or 60%); *Midterm* (15%), *Final Research Paper* (20% final submission, 5% proposal or 25%).

**Guidelines for all assignments are available online.** There is no final exam for this course.

*Each student will be expected to attend all classes and participate in class discussions. Two or more absences will be grounds for subtracting points from your overall average. As a rule, I do not accept late work. In the rare and extenuating instance in which I may accept late work, the paper will be marked down accordingly. Extra credit is not offered.*

**Course resources:** All course readings and materials are available on the Moodle homepage. All technical problems should be reported to [helpdesk@oxy.edu](mailto:helpdesk@oxy.edu).

*Access to RESERVES is restricted to students in this course. Students may not copy, share, distribute or otherwise allow or facilitate any unauthorized access to the content or the passwords issued. Individuals who violate this provision will be subject to disciplinary action under the Occidental Academic Misconduct guidelines.*

**Research Paper Style:** I am not wedded to any specific style guideline (Chicago, MLA or APA) as long as students are consistent in their usage. Style guidelines may be accessed here:

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

**Response Essays** do not require a formal bibliography, although you should indicate the author's name and title of work referenced. **Final Research Papers** do require citations of sources and a bibliography.

**Academic Ethics:** Please review Occidental College's Statement on Academic Ethics found in the Student Handbook and here: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics/academic-ethics>. RE: "Academic misconduct occurs when a student misrepresents others' work as her/his own or otherwise behaves so as to unfairly advantage her/himself or another student academically."

**Digital Etiquette:** My classroom laptop and electronic device usage policy is that technology is OK as long as you are actively engaged with the course materials and do not distract your fellow classmates. I reserve the right to ban electronics if classroom respect is jeopardized by over-usage or abuse of laptop privileges.

While I do not prohibit laptop or I pad use in the classroom, I expect that when I am lecturing, presenting a powerpoint or using a film clip, that students are engaged with me and each other in this exercise, not surfing the web, texting or communicating on Facebook. I may often ask that students turn off or put away their electronics when we are engaging together in group discussions.

Classroom time is an occasion to think together about a particular problem or text. Because we need to be able to engage with each other, it matters how you treat other people and how you focus.

I am aware that students with differently-abled learning styles may have accommodations that require the use of a laptop, tape-recorder, or other technological tool for note taking. These students must also, however follow the guidelines set above for respectful use of their computer.

**Electronic communication policy:** Although I typically respond to student emails within a 24 hour period, students shouldn't expect to get a response from an email query for 48 hours. This standard response time is only operable during the weekdays and before 9 PM. If you have an emergency that needs immediate attention, label the subject line – emergency issue.

Emails should open with a salutation (Nancy, Professor Mithlo) and the body of the message should convey the student's full name and class title. To make email communication more productive, I encourage you to be specific about your inquiry or request and to keep the communication thread brief. I encourage students to take advantage of office hours for longer communication needs. Because my classes may be scheduled back to back, I am not always available for one on one in person communication directly before or after class.

**Student Services:** Students who are differently abled have certain rights and responsibilities, as do their professors. Please review the college's guidelines here: <https://www.oxy.edu/disability-services/rights-responsibilities/students>. If you are eligible for services or have questions, please contact the Accessibility office on campus, phone: (323) 259-2969, [accessibility@oxy.edu](mailto:accessibility@oxy.edu), location: Arthur G. Coons Building, Room 111. Students who are requesting accommodations should present me with their documentation of need within the first two weeks of class. Typical accommodations may include extended text time or an alternative location for testing. I am happy to also work with students who may need additional help during my office hours.

The Center for Academic Excellence offers faculty writing specialists and student writing advisors. Please visit their website here: <https://www.oxy.edu/center-academic-excellence/three-guidelines-10-tips>. Phone: (323) 259-2545. Location: Academic Commons, Ground Floor.

### **Technical Questions?**

Contact the Information Technology Help desk: [helpdesk@oxy.edu](mailto:helpdesk@oxy.edu), or call 323-259-2880.

### **Course web resources:**

Smithsonian Institution Museum Studies:  
[museumstudies.si.edu](http://museumstudies.si.edu)

International Council of Museums:  
<http://icom.museum/>

American Alliance of Museums:  
<http://www.aam-us.org/>

Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums:  
<http://www.atalm.org/>

Association of African American Museums:  
<http://www.blackmuseums.org>

Institute of Museum and Library Services:  
<http://www.ims.gov/>

Concepts of Museology:  
[http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/Key\\_Concepts\\_of\\_Museology/Museologie\\_Anglais\\_BD.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Key_Concepts_of_Museology/Museologie_Anglais_BD.pdf)

The Institute of Museum Ethics:  
<http://museumethics.org/about/>

National Council on Public History  
<http://ncph.org/cms/>

Autry National Center collections:  
<http://collections.theautry.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=ks>

National Park Service Museum Handbook:  
<http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/handbook.html>

Society for American Archivists:  
<http://www.archivists.org>

Western Museums Association:  
<http://www.westmuse.org>

Characteristics of Excellence for U.S. Museums:  
<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/characteristics-of-excellence-for-u-s-museums>

Code of Ethics for Museums:  
<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/code-of-ethics>

Professional Practices for Art Museum Curators:  
[http://www.collegeart.org/pdf/AAMC\\_Professional\\_Practices.pdf](http://www.collegeart.org/pdf/AAMC_Professional_Practices.pdf)

**Course schedule:** This course is organized into seven two-week learning modules. Each learning module contains an introduction to the learning focus of the module, reading assignments, links to online learning activities, assignment directions and due dates.

The first week of each learning module is time for you to watch the films, read, prepare for online activities, and work on assignments. The second week of each learning module will usually be the time when we interact through in class discussion, interactive activities, short writing assignments and critical cumulative assessment.

**NOTE: Class will be required to meet twice outside the regularly scheduled class.**

**On Sunday September 13th, students will travel to the Autry National Center (10:30 AM to 2:00 PM transportation supplied) to meet with *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West* curator Carolyn Bruckner and participate in i-Pad generated exercises.**

**On Sunday November 8th, students will attend the Autry National Center's American Indian marketplace (transportation supplied).**

**Module #1: August 27, September 1, 3: What are museums? What is “Museum Studies?”**

First day of class August 27<sup>th</sup> - *For a Love of His People: The Photography of Horace Poolaw* at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, NYC:  
<http://nmai.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/item/?id=899>

September 1<sup>st</sup> – Christopher Gilman, Associate Director of the Center for Digital Liberal Studies at Occidental. Dr. Gilman will direct the distribution of i-Pads to all students enrolled in ARTH 254, including registration and downloading of programs.

- **Required reading:**

Definition of Museum and Museum Studies:  
[http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/Key\\_Concepts\\_of\\_Museology/Museologie\\_Anglais\\_BD.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Key_Concepts_of_Museology/Museologie_Anglais_BD.pdf)

**Scharff**, Virginia. “Introduction.” In *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West*. (Los Angeles, CA: Autry National Center of the American West in association with the University of California Press, 2015). pp. 1-8.

**Anderson**, Gayle. KTLA broadcast April 29, 2015.  
<http://ktla.com/2015/04/29/civil-war-at-the-autry/>

- **Recommended reading:**

American Alliance of Museums: <http://www.aam-us.org/>  
International Council of Museums: <http://icom.museum/>

**Ames**, Michael M. “The Development of Museums in the Modern World: Tensions Between Democratization and Professionalization,” in *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), 15-24.

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**Module 2: September 8, 10, 15, 17: *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West***

**On Sunday September 13, students will travel to the Autry National Center (10:30 AM to 2:00 PM) to meet with *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West* curator Carolyn Bruckner and participate in i-Pad generated exercises.**

**\* *Response Essay #1 due September 20th by midnight.* Discussion guidelines provided in Moodle online.**

- **Required reading:**

**Object list** for *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West* at the Autry National Center. Uploaded to Moodle.

**Tepper**, Sheila. *Arts Alive* Interview. May 11, 2015.

<http://www.kusc.org/blog/artsalive/blogentry.aspx?BlogEntryID=10671167>

***Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West*** - Selected chapter. Each student will be assigned to a group that will be tasked with writing and presenting on a specific chapter from *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West* catalogue.

- **Recommended reading:**

**Arenson**, Adam and Virginia Scharff. "The End of the War in the West." *The New York Times*, May 15, 2015. [http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/05/15/the-end-of-the-war-in-the-west/?\\_r=1](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/05/15/the-end-of-the-war-in-the-west/?_r=1)

**Sullivan**, Meg. "Q&A: Rethinking the history of the American West with UCLA professor Stephen Aron Aron reveals how Manifest Destiny influenced the Nazis and talks about the evolution of scholarship about the West." UCLA Newsroom May 8, 2015. <http://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/q-a-rethinking-the-history-of-the-american-west-with-ucla-professor-stephen-aron>

**KPCC Airtalk**. "Sneak Peek at The Autry's 'Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West' exhibit." April 23, 2015. <http://www.scpr.org/programs/airtalk/2015/04/23/42537/sneak-peek-of-the-autry-s-empire-and-liberty-the-c/>

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**Module #3: September 22, 24, 29: Performance art in museum settings: Passionate Irreverance**

**NO CLASS OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup> – Professor chairing a panel and presenting a paper at the Native American Art Studies Association Meeting:**  
<http://nativearts.org/conferences/>

- **Required reading:**

**Film: Fusco**, Coco and Paula Heredia. *The Couple in the Cage: a Guatinaui Odyssey* (New York: Third World Newsreel, 1993). <http://vimeo.com/79363320>

**Film: Fraser**, Andrea. Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk Conducted at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, February, 1989.

**Fraser**, Andrea. "Isn't This a Wonderful Place? (A Tour of the Guggenheim Bilbao)." In *Museum Frictions: Public Culture/Global Transformations*. Eds Ivan Karp, Corrine A. Kratz, et all. (Durham: Duke University Press, 20016) pp. 135-160.

- **Recommended reading:**

**Fraser**, Andrea. Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk Author(s): Andrea Fraser Source: October, Vol. 57 (Summer, 1991), pp. 104-122. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/778874>

**Cameron**, Duncan F. "The Museum, a Temple or the Forum," in *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, ed. Gail Anderson, (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004), 61-73.

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**Module #4 October 6, 8, 15 – Race and Representation in Popular Culture and Museums**

**Pilgrim**, David and Clayton Rye. *Jim Crow's Museum*. Big Rapids, MI: Ferris State University, Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia, 2004. <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>

**Film: Ethnic Notions** - In class film October 8<sup>th</sup>  
<http://newsreel.org/video/ethnic-notions>

**NO CLASS OCTOBER 13<sup>th</sup> – FALL BREAK**

**\* Midterm in class October 15**

**\* Response Essay #2 due October 18<sup>th</sup> by midnight** Discussion guidelines provided in Moodle online.

- **Required reading:**

**Goings**, Kenneth W. "The Birth and Adolescence of Aunt Jemima and Uncle Mose: Collectibles as Personifications of Stereotypes," in *Mammy and Uncle Mose: Black Collectibles and American Stereotyping* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 1-18.

- **Recommended reading:**

**Bonilla-Silva**, Eduardo. "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation." *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (Jun., 1997), pp. 465-480.

**Fusco**, Coco. "Passionate Irreverence: The Cultural Politics of Identity," in *Art Matters: How the Culture Wars Changed America*, eds. Julie Ault, Brian Wallis, Marianne Weems, Philip Yenawine (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 62-73.

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**Module #5: October 20, 22, 27, 29: Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums**

October 22<sup>nd</sup> guest lecture by Aleksandra Sherman, Assistant Professor of Cognitive Science, Occidental College. Sensory exhibit techniques.

October 29th guest lecture by Eric Doehne:

[http://www.conservationciences.org/Conservation\\_Sciences/Welcome.html](http://www.conservationciences.org/Conservation_Sciences/Welcome.html)

<http://www.scrippscollege.edu/events/noon-academy/eric-doehne>

Oct. 29 5-7 PM Art History Visual Arts Open House

- **Required readings:**

**Eichstedt**, Jennifer L. and Stephen Small. *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002).

- **Recommended reading:**

**Harrison**, Faye V. "The Persistent Power of 'Race' in the Cultural and Political Economy of Racism." *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 24 (1995): 47-74.

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**Module #6: November 3, 10, 12: Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums, Pt. 1**

\* **Research Paper Proposal due November 4<sup>th</sup>**. Ryan Brubacher, MLS Visual Resources Curator, Arts and Humanities Specialist visits class.

**No class on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Professor presenting at the University of Oklahoma:**  
<http://www.ou.edu/content/fjjma/learn/talks/lectures.html>.

**On Sunday November 8th students will attend the Autry National Center's American Indian marketplace (transportation supplied). This is a required event.**

**Tuesday November 10, 2016 Guest lecture by museum professional Justin Estoque**

\* **Response Essay #3 due November 15th at midnight.** Discussion guidelines provided in Moodle online.

**Individual meetings with professor on research paper**

- **Required readings:**

**Lonetree**, Amy. "Introduction" and Chapter 3 In *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

- **Recommended reading:**

**Mihesuah**, Devon A. "American Indians, Anthropologists, Pothunters, and Repatriation: Ethical, Religious, and Political Differences," in *Repatriation Reader: Who Owns Indian Remains?* ed. by Devon A. Mihesuah (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 95-105.

**Module #7: November 17, 19, 24 December 1: *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums, Pt. 2***

**NO CLASS NOVEMBER 26<sup>th</sup> – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

*Final Research Paper due December 3<sup>rd</sup> midnight*

- **Required reading:**

**Lonetree**, Amy. "Conclusion" and Chapter 4 in *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

- **Recommended reading:**

**The Ford Foundation**, organized by the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change at the Field Museum With cooperation from the Children's Museum, Boston. "The Exhibiting and Dissemination of Knowledge on Race, Racism, and Identity." White papers. April 2003

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There is no final exam for this course.