

Cultural Otherness And Art Historical Values

ARTH 571

Instructor: Charlotte Townsend-Gault
Fall 2004

Description

It has become almost impossible to consider, or to define, art that is said to lie outside the canon of western art history without invoking 'culture'. This second part of the Methodology syllabus explores some of the valences around the current, protean usages of the term 'culture' - visibility, performativity, space, sensory apprehension and material embodiment amongst them - as they inform discourses of art. It will also contend with the political economy of race, property, and the market forces that are inseparable from the articulation and circulation of culturally-based 'art'.

Each reading should be understood as opening into a wider field of enquiry of which it is a part. In order for our discussions to take this into account it will be helpful if the two students who are presenting on a given week can work together, or at least have some conversations before the class, to bring out some of the shared references, areas of overlap or disjuncture between their given texts.

The mark for this graduate seminar will take into account participation in class discussion (20%), two presentations (30%) and a final paper (50%).

NB. All the books from which the readings are taken are on Course Reserve in the Library. In most cases a second, photocopy, of the reading itself is also on reserve.

January 17: What is cultural otherness? Is it race? Where does 'art' come in?

Robert J.C.Young 1995. Ch. 'Culture and the History of Difference', in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London: Routledge. 29-54. (See also Ch.1 'Hybridity and Diaspora'. 1-28.)

Marcia Crosby. 2004. 'Haidas, Human Beings, and Other Myths', in *Bill Reid and Beyond: Expanding on Modern Native Art*. K. Duffek and C. Townsend-Gault eds, Douglas & McIntyre. 108-132

January 24: History of a binary: Modernism / Primitivism

Charles Harrison. 1996. 'Modernism', and Mark Antliff and Patricia Leighton 'Primitive', in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Schiff. Chicago. 142-155

Hal Foster. 1985. 'The "Primitive" Unconscious of Modern Art'. *October* 34. 58-70

January 31: A different binary: Modernity / Indigeneity

Charles Taylor. 1999. 'Two Theories of Modernity'. *Public Culture*. Vol II.I. 153-174

Elizabeth Povinelli. 2001. 'Settler Modernity and the Quest for an Indigenous Tradition', in *Alternative Modernities*. Ed. D. P. Gaonkar. Duke. 24-57

February 7: What is the relationship between indigenous autonomy and nationalism?

Michael Rowlands. 2002. 'The Power of Origins: Questions of Cultural Rights', in *The Material Culture Reader*, ed. Victor Buchli. Berg. 115-134

Deborah Doxtator. 1994. 'The Implications of Canadian Nationalism for Aboriginal Cultural Autonomy', in *Curatorship: Indigenous Perspectives in Post-colonial Societies*. Mercury. 56-76

February 14: Reading Week February 21: Can cultural authenticity be accounted for by 'aura'?

Walter Benjamin. 1968 (1936). 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations*. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Schocken. 217-251

Christopher Steiner. 1999. 'Authenticity, Repetition and the Aesthetics of Seriality', in *Unpacking Culture, Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*. California. 33-50

February 28: Culture – given, taken or sold?

Susan Buck-Morss. 1991. 'Dream World of Mass Culture', in *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. MIT. 252-286

Michael F. Brown. 2003. 'Sign Wars', in *Who Owns Native Culture?* Harvard. 69-94

March 7: Looking, seeing and visibility have histories

Bruce Braun 2002 'BC Seeing / Seeing BC: Vision and Visibility on Canada's West Coast', in *The Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture and Power on Canada's West Coast* Minnesota. 156-212

Rosalind Morris. 1994. "'Persistence of Vision'", and 'Through a Glass Darkly', in *New Worlds from Fragments: Film, Ethnography and the Representation of Northwest Coast Cultures*. Westview. 1-18

March 14: Performing self and performing culture

Judith Butler. 1990. 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', in *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*. Ed. Johns Hopkins. 270-282

Ruth B. Phillips. 2001. 'Performing the Native Woman: Primitivism and Mimicry in Early Twentieth Century Visual Culture' in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*. Toronto. 26-49

March 21: There is no such thing as (culturally) empty space

Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson. 2001. 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference', in *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Duke. 33-51

Miwon Kwon. 2002. 'From Site to Community in New Genre Public Art: The Case of "Culture in Action"', in *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. MIT. 100-137

March 28: Feeling the way

Laura Marks. 2002. 'Introduction' and 'How Electrons Remember', in *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minnesota. ix- xxii, 161-176

Albena Yaneva. 2003. 'Chalk Steps on the Museum Floor: The "Pulses" of Objects in an Art Installation'. *Journal of Material Culture*. 8(2). 169-188

April 4: When difference lies in differential access

Thomas Crow. 1999. 'A Forest of Symbols in Wartime New York', in *The Intelligence of Art*. Chapel Hill. 25-50

Crisca Bierwert. 1999. 'Knowledge and Power in Salish Ritual Practice', in *Brushed by Cedar, Living by the River: Coast Salish Figures of Power*. Arizona. 160-196

Supernumerary class: Back to the image and the artist's object

Fredric Jameson. 1998. 'Transformations of the Image in Postmodernity', in *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983-1998*. Verso. 93-135

Laura Mulvey. 1994. 'Changing Objects, Preserving Time' in Jimmie Durham. Phaidon. 34-75