

## **APPROPRIATION....**

Graduate Seminar in Art History and Critical Theory

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Fall 2017

### ***Description***

Within U.S. art-historical discourse, “appropriation” often refers to a brand of photo-based practice associated with the work of white women artists such as Cindy Sherman who emerged in the New York art world of the late 1970s. In this exploratory graduate research seminar, we will aim to historicize, contest, and expand this mobilization of the term by considering how various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences have differentially conceived of appropriation as well as how forms of “borrowing” and theft—whether of images, artifacts, bodies, or lands—continue to shape the politics of cross-cultural encounter in the Americas and beyond.

*All readings will be available for free via Canvas.*

### ***Assignments and Evaluation***

1. The seminar requires mandatory attendance at, robust participation in, and careful preparation of assigned materials for all class meetings *by all course members*.
2. Each week one or two students will give brief presentation(s)—no more than 10 minutes—on a work of art identified on the syllabus as key to the week’s readings. In selecting and researching a cultural object, students should aim to historicize the work and to articulate its relationship to relevant lines of argumentation encountered in the readings. Students are strongly encouraged to consult the instructor and are required to send along any relevant materials—PowerPoints, handouts, etc.—to him by 8PM the day before seminar or to post them to the course slide file by that time.
3. Except when presenting, every week students will be required to frame and articulate a response that critically explores a problem, thematic, or thread encountered in *the majority* of that week’s readings. This paper should be no more than 3 double-spaced pages and must be posted to the appropriately labeled Canvas “Discussions” thread for that week by 8PM the day before each seminar. Students should be sure to consult each other’s responses before class begins.
4. For their final papers students are required to submit a 12-15-page fully illustrated and documented research paper using a recognized citational system (Chicago Style footnotes are preferred). Students may write on any topic of their choosing that speaks to the concerns of the course.
5. By the middle of the term, students will also need to provide the instructor with a one-page research proposal outlining their topic and plan along with a preliminary bibliography and set of images. These materials should also be posted to the “Discussions” thread of the Canvas site.
6. During the last class, each student will give a brief illustrated PowerPoint presentation that lays out the thesis of their final paper. The PowerPoint file—with a clearly articulated thesis statement on the 1<sup>st</sup> slide—must be emailed to the instructor by 8PM on the day before class presentations and the revised abstract should be posted to the “Discussions” thread for

review by your peers at that same time. On the last day of class, each student will have 10 minutes to engage questions, comments, and criticisms on their final paper.

*All papers should be double-spaced and typed in 12-point font with 1-inch margins on all sides of each page. As goes without saying, plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.*

### **Course Schedule**

*In the schedule below, recommended—not required—materials are listed at the end of each week and marked with an \*. While these texts are optional for the group, students presenting should make sure to engage these materials.*

#### **Week 1: Introductions**

#### **Week 2: As Art-Historical Consideration**

##### **Presentation: Pablo Picasso, Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.), 1907**

Dale Kinney, "Introduction," in *Reuse Value: Spolia and Appropriation in Art and Architecture from Constantine to Sherrie Levine*, ed. Richard Brilliant and Dale Kinney (New York: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 1-11.

Robert Nelson, "Appropriation," in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 116-128.

W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 5-34.

Hal Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art," *October* 34 (Autumn 1985): 45-70.

Anne M. Wagner, "(De) Generation," in *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 193-243; 286-293.

Yve-Alain Bois, "On the Uses and Abuses of Look-alikes," *October* 154 (Fall 2015): 127-149.

\*Simon Gikandi, "Picasso, Africa, and the Schemata of Difference," *Modernism/Modernity* 10.3 (September 2003): 455-480.

#### **Week 3: As Feminist Practice**

##### **Presentation: Sherrie Levine, After Walker Evans, 1981**

Douglas Crimp, "Pictures," *October* 8 (Spring 1979): 75-88..

Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 57-83.

Jean Baudrillard, "The Ecstasy of Communication," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 145-154.

Benjamin Buchloh, "Allegorical Procedures: Appropriation and Montage in Contemporary Art," *Artforum*, September 1982, 43-56.

Douglas Crimp, "Appropriating Appropriation," in *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 126-136.

Johanna Burton, "Cultural Interference: The Reunion of Appropriation and Institutional Critique" and Anne Ellegood, "Mourning in America," in *Take It or Leave It: Image, Institution, Ideology* (Los Angeles: Hammer Museum, UCLA, 2014), 15-38.

Scott Rothkopf, "Glenn Ligon: AMERICA," in *Glenn Ligon: AMERICA* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art; New Haven, Yale University Press, 2011), 15-49.

José Esteban Muñoz, "'The White to Be Angry': Vaginal Davis's Terrorist Drag," *Social Text*

52/53 (Autumn and Winter 1997): 80-103.

\*Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text" and "The Death of the Author," in *Image Music Text*, ed. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142-148; 155-164.

#### **Week 4: As Racial Non/Event**

##### **Presentation: Eleanor Antin, Being Antinova, 1983**

Huey Copeland, "Some Ways of Playing Antinova," in *Multiple Occupancy: Eleanor Antin's "Selves"*, ed. Emily Liebert (New York: Columbia University, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Gallery, 2013), 30-40.

Brenda Dixon Gottschild, "Stripping the Emperor: George Balanchine and the Americanization of Ballet," in *Digging the Africanist Presence in American Performance: Dance and Other Contexts* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 59-79.

E. Patrick Johnson, "'Blackness' and Authenticity: What's Performance Got to Do with It," in *Appropriating Blackness: Performance and the Politics of Authenticity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 1-16; 315-318.

Saidiya V. Hartman, "Innocent Amusements: The Stage of Sufferance," in *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 17-48; 208-215.

Stephen M. Best, "Fugitive Sound: Fungible Personhood, Evanescent Property," in *The Fugitive's Properties: Law and the Poetics of Possession* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 29-98; 280-306.

Frank B. Wilderson, III, "The Ruse of Analogy," in *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 36-53; 345-346.

\*Eleanor Antin, *Being Antinova* (Los Angeles: Astro Artz, 1983).

#### **Week 5: And Settler Societies**

##### **Presentation: Jimmie Durham, Self-Portrait, 1986**

Coco Fusco, "The Other History of Intercultural Performance," *TDR* 38.1 (Spring 1994): 143-167.

Scott Lauria Morgensen, "Conversations on Berdache: Anthropology, Counterculturalism, Two-Spirit Organizing," in *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 55-87; 241-44.

Diana Taylor, "Acts of Transfer," in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 16-33; 280-85.

Serge Gruzinski, "Introduction" and "Mélange, Chaos, and Westernization" in *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1-78; 209-219.

Carolyn Dean and Diana Leibsohn, "Hybridity and its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America," *Colonial Latin American Review* 12.1 (2003): 5-35.

\*Philip J. Deloria, "Countercultural Indians and the New Age," in *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 154-180; 236-241.

#### **Week 6: And Critical Anthropology**

##### **Presentation: Trinh T. Minh-Ha, Reassemblage, 1982**

Johannes Fabian, "Time and the Emerging Other" in *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 1-36; 187-191.

- Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1970), 1-13.
- Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness," in *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. Richard G. Fox (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1991), 17-44.
- William Pietz, "The Problem of the Fetish, I," *RES Anthropology and Aesthetics* 9 (Spring 1985): 5-17.
- James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 215-251.
- Hal Foster, "The Artist as Ethnographer," in *The Return of the Real: Art and Theory at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 171-203; 274-283.
- \*Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Reassemblage: From the Firelight to the Screen*, 40 min, 16mm, Jean-Paul Bourdier, 1982.

### **Week 7: And Postcolonial Critique**

#### **Presentation: Kader Attia, Untitled (Ghardaïa), 2009**

- Frantz Fanon, "On National Culture," in *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 145-180.
- Homi Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency," in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge Press, 2004), 171-197; 269-271.
- Edward Said, "Overlapping Territories, Intertwined Histories," in *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 1-61; 335-340.
- Sarah Nuttall, "Introduction" and "Entanglement," in *Entanglement: Literary and Cultural Reflections on Post-Apartheid* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009), 1-32; 161-164.
- Kader Attia, "Signs of Reappropriation," in *Colonial Modern: Aesthetics of the Past, Rebellions of the Future*, ed. Tom Avermaete (London: Black Dog Architecture, 2010), 50-58.
- \*Gayatri Spivak, "Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value," in *Literary Theory Today*, eds. Peter Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 239-244.

### **Week 8: Contemporary Contestations, Disciplinary Differences**

#### **Presentation: Theaster Gates, An Overlapping Love, 2014**

- Salome Asega, Homi K. Bhabha, Gregg Bordowitz, Joan Kee, Michelle Kuo, Ajay Kurian, and Jacolby Satterwhite, "Cultural Appropriation: A Roundtable," *Artforum*, Summer 2017,, 266-277.
- Huey Copeland and Hannah Feldman, eds., "Tactical Presents, Everyday Futures: Art and the Institutions of Public Space," *The Brooklyn Rail*, May 3, 2016, 62-67.
- Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16.1 (Spring 1986): 22-27.
- John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?" in *The Animals Reader: The Essential Classic and Contemporary Writings*, ed. Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2007), 251-261.
- D. W. Winnicott, "The Use of an Object and Relating through Identifications," in *Playing and*

*Reality* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 115-127.  
Karen Barad, “Agential Realism: How Material-Discursive Practices Matter,” in *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 132-185.

**Week 9: NO CLASS (Independent Research)**

**Week 10: PRESENTATIONS**