MUSE E-160/W  Spring 2008
Repatriation and the Modern Museum
Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30 PM, Harvard Hall Room 103
http://courses.fas.harvard.edu/ext/22785
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Course description
This course explores the historical, legal, ethical, and practical aspects of repatriation, one of the most challenging issues facing modern cultural institutions. Themes of the course include: colonialism and power; representation and identity; ownership; and reparation. Students will understand the historical roots of the repatriation movement in the US and elsewhere, including the collecting practices by which human remains and cultural property were (and are) separated from their home cultures and distributed around the globe. Through case studies and literature review, students will gain comparative and critical perspectives on current international approaches to repatriation. They will engage with different sides of this complex, often controversial, subject through lectures, readings, discussions, and assignments. The class has four modules: I. Museums, collections, modernity; II. Repatriation in the US; III. International perspectives; IV. Repatriation and the postmodern museum. This is a writing intensive course.

Assignments and grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grading:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Weekly précis of readings</td>
<td>A = 100–93%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Discussion</td>
<td>A− = 90–92%</td>
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<td>o Discussion leadership</td>
<td>B+= 87–89%</td>
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<td>o Attendance</td>
<td>B− = 80–82%</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>Position Papers</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>Final paper proposal &amp; reference list</td>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>Final paper</td>
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grading:

A = 100–93%  C+ = 77–79%
A− = 90–92%  C = 73–76%
B+= 87–89%  C− = 70–72%
B = 83–86%  D = 60–69%
B− = 80–82%  F = <60%

§ A and A− grades represent work whose superior quality indicates a full mastery of the subject and, in the case of A, work of extraordinary distinction. There is no grade of A+.
§ B+, B, and B− grades represent work of good to very good quality; however, it does not merit special distinction.
§ C+, C, and C− grades designate an average command of the course material.
§ D+, D, and D− grades indicate work that shows a deficiency in knowledge of the material.
§ E is a failing grade representing work that deserves no credit. E may also be assigned to students who do not submit required work in courses from which they have not officially withdrawn by the withdrawal deadline. There is no "incomplete" grade.

Course work

I. Museums, collections, modernity

Jan 30 — Introductions
- IN CLASS: The Mummy who Would be King viewing/written response/discussion

Feb 6 — Colonialism & collecting
- Précis 1 due
- Museum Studies pp. 23–43

Feb 13 — Museums & modernity
- **Précis 2 due**
- John Cotton Dana, Chpt. 2 in *The New Museum: Selected Writings* (1999)

Feb 20 — Legal & ethical displacements
- **Précis 3 due**
- **Position paper 1 DRAFT due**
- *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution* pp. 1–14, 47–65

II. Repatriation in the US: policies and practices

Feb 27 — NAGPRA: history & regulations
- **Précis 4 due**
- *The Dead and Their Possessions* pp. 17–23

Mar 5 — NAGPRA: impacts
- **Précis 5 due**
- *The Dead and Their Possessions* pp. 160–169
- *Stewards of the Sacred* pp. 167–175

Mar 12 — PAPER PROPOSAL MEETINGS: Students will sign up for one-on-one sessions with the instructor during class time to discuss their Final Paper Proposals
- **NO précis!**
- **Position paper 1 FINAL due**

Mar 19 — FIELD TRIP to PMAE
- **NO précis!**
- **Final Paper Proposals due**
III. International perspectives

Mar 26 — NO CLASS: Spring Break

Apr 2 — Central and South America
- **Précis 6 due**
- **Position paper 2 DRAFT due**

Apr 9 — Australia and New Zealand
- **Précis 7 due**
- *The Dead and Their Possessions* pp. 25–40, 63–83, 284–291

Apr 16 — Africa and Europe
- **Précis 8 due**
- *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution* pp. 65–113

Apr 23 — FIELD TRIP to MFA
- **NO précis!**
- **Position paper 2 FINAL due**
- *Stewards of the Sacred* pp. 33–40, 47–50

IV. Repatriation and the postmodern museum

Apr 30 — New museum models: beyond repatriation
- **Précis 9 due**
- *Stewards of the Sacred* pp. 19–25, 123–128
- *Imperialism, Art, and Restitution* pp. 37–46

May 7 — Presentations

May 14 — Presentations
- **Final paper DUE**
Primary course texts

- Cressida Fforde et al. (editors). The Dead and Their Possessions (2002). Recommended.

Readings on reserve at Grossman library

- Cressida Fforde, Jane Hubert, and Paul Turnbull (editors). The Dead and Their Possessions: Repatriation in Principle, Policy, and Practice (2002).

Readings on the course website

- All other readings will be available on the course website as .pdf files or links to .pdf files.

Assignment details

All assignments are to be produced in 12-point Times or similar scale font, double-spaced, no blank lines between paragraphs, with 1 in. page margins. Title pages, references cited pages, and figures do not count toward page totals. Students may choose to use either MLA style or American Anthropological Association style (see: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf) in their written assignments (please be consistent). All assignments must exhibit proper spelling, grammar, and formatting, and they should present logical arguments and a good communication style. Grading for all students will be based on these elements. Graduate students will be held to higher standards than undergraduates and are expected to show a deeper understanding of issues and a more critical engagement with materials. Assignments should be received in physical or digital form by 5:30 PM on the due date. Students will lose 1/3 of a letter grade for every day late (except for late précis). If a student is unable to meet these deadlines due to extenuating circumstances, he or she should contact the instructor immediately. Due to a strict reporting deadline for final grades, Final Papers will not be accepted after 5:30 PM on May 15th. No extensions will be given on the Final Paper. Because there is no "incomplete" grade, students who do not submit all required work may receive an E.

Weekly critical précis (10%): 8 of 9 @ 1–2 pp.

There are roughly 50–60 pages of reading assigned per week, primarily short chapters in edited volumes and articles. Weekly readings relate to each other through topics, themes, and arguments. Each week, students will write a critical précis of AT LEAST ONE of that week's reading assignments. A précis is a written summary that re-states the argument of the original. The general format of your précis will be: 1) a summary of content and argument; 2) a critical response to the reading, its evidence, and its argument (for example, do you agree or disagree and why? what does the author fail to consider?). These précis are designed to encourage critical engagement with reading materials, creative and independent thought, and active in-class discussion. Précis are graded pass/fail and are accepted until 5:30 PM on April 30th with no penalty for lateness. They are not accepted after 5:30 PM on April 30th. Students are forgiven for missing ONE précis.
Weekly discussion: participation and leadership (20%)
Discussion is a major component of this seminar-style course. Class meetings will generally be divided into an hour of lecture and an hour of student-led discussion. Repatriation is a complex and contentious issue, and students are encouraged to develop their own perspectives on it. To this end, they are expected to participate in weekly class discussions. This is predicated on regular attendance. ALSO: **Students will sign up to lead AT LEAST ONE in-class discussion.** Scheduling may require students to pair up as discussion leaders or take more than one turn (in which case the poorest performance will be forgiven). Leaders must engage the rest of the class in discussing the week's topics and readings. They may wish to focus on select readings and/or to introduce outside sources, such as current news items, museum exhibition catalogues, digital images, or additional articles. Discussion leaders are also encouraged to utilize innovative activities, such as mock debates, small group exercises, or survey response. Students are encouraged to consult with the teaching fellow or instructor prior to their turn as discussion leader.

**Position Papers (40%): 2 @ 4–6 pp.**
Students will write two position papers during the semester. These are not research papers. They will integrate experiences in area museums and personal opinions with knowledge gleaned from lectures and class readings.

  - Students are asked to visit the PMAE on their own time.
  - Is the PMAE a modern museum? In this paper, you will explore the topic question by comparing and contrasting two exhibit spaces in an anthropological museum: the Oceania Gallery (4th floor) and the Hall of the North American Indian (1st floor).
  - Your paper should be structured roughly as follows:
    - ¶1: What is a "modern museum"?
    - ¶2 & 3: What specifically about each of the galleries at the PMAE is modern, or not? Consider architecture and layout, as well as signage and other content.
    - ¶4: Should the PMAE better express modernity, and/or post-modernity, within its exhibit spaces? If yes, why and how? If not, why not?
    - References cited.
  - Consider perspectives on sacredness, ownership, authority, power, repatriation, and modernity presented in class and in readings.

- **Position Paper 1 FINAL (5–6 pp.) – DUE 3/12**
  - Students are asked to visit the PMAE on their own time.
  - Is the PMAE a modern museum? Students will REVISE their original paper on this topic based on instructor comments.
  - Students will ADD the following sections:
    - ¶5: Have questions of reflexivity, cultural sensitivity, repatriation, and/or repatriation affected public spaces at the PMAE? How? Mention at least ONE specific object, case, and/or text within the Hall of the North American Indian and describe it in detail.
    - ¶6: How does this display choice express the PMAE's modernity, or not?
  - Consider perspectives on sacredness, ownership, authority, power, repatriation, and modernity presented in class and in readings.

  - Students are asked to visit the MFA on their own time.
  - Finding "cultural items" at the MFA. As an intellectual exercise, students will apply NAGPRA definitions of "human remains," "funerary objects," "sacred objects," and/or "objects of cultural patrimony" to a radically different context: non-Native North American collections within an art museum. Students will evaluate two objects, each from a different exhibit space on this list: Ancient American; African; Oceanic; Asian; Greek; Etruscan; Egyptian; or Medieval.
Your paper should be structured roughly as follows:

- ¶1–2: Describe the first object in detail. In which gallery is it? How is the gallery organized and how are objects presented? What does the object look like? Based on label text, what is its origin, history, and significance? Which NAGPRA definition of "cultural item" does it meet, or come close to meeting? How?
- ¶3–4: Describe the second object in detail. In which gallery is it? How is the gallery organized and how are objects presented? What does it look like? Based on label text, what is its origin, history, and significance? Which NAGPRA definition of "cultural item" does it meet, or come close to meeting? How?
- ¶5: What effect does applying definitions of NAGPRA on non-Native North American objects have on your experience within an art museum?
- ¶6: Is it appropriate to apply NAGPRA outside of Native North American contexts? Is NAGPRA a good model for an international repatriation law?

References cited.

Consider perspectives on art vs. artifact, sacredness, ownership, authority, power, reparation, and modernity presented in class and in readings.

- Position Paper 2 FINAL (5–6 pp.) – DUE 4/23
  - Students are asked to visit the MFA on their own time.
  - Finding "cultural items" at the MFA Students will REVISE their original paper on this topic based on instructor comments.

Final Paper Proposal (not graded) – discussion 3/12; DUE 3/19

Your final paper is your chance to dig deeply into one of the topics presented in class. It will demonstrate a mastery of the issues of repatriation in a given context, critical engagement with the topic, significant research outside of class readings, and creative and independent thought. You may undertake an issue review, policy review, museum review, case study, exhibit study, object study, etc. The week before submitting the proposal (March 19th), the student will discuss the topic and approach with the instructor during class time (March 12th). The final paper proposal will include the following sections:

- Preliminary title and abstract: ¶1 summarizing the main topic/question, data/sources, interpretive approach, and preliminary argument or expected conclusion.
- Outline: major section headings only.
- Preliminary bibliography: list at least FIVE sources you expect to utilize in developing your argument. No more than TWO of these may be drawn from course readings.

Final Paper and Presentation (30%) – DUE 5/14

UNDERGRADUATES: your final paper will be 8–10 pp. long. It will include at least 7 references, including at least 3 that are academic sources not included in your assigned course readings.

GRADUATES: your final paper will be 10–15 pp. long. It will include at least 10 references, including at least 5 that are academic sources not included in your assigned course readings.

Expectations

Students are expected to be familiar with and to uphold the Harvard Extension School Student Responsibilities (http://www.extension.harvard.edu/2007-08/register/policies/responsible.jsp). Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to complete all assigned readings and activities. Students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the class and to have a positive attitude and demeanor.

HES Policy on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the theft of someone else’s ideas and work. Whether a student copies verbatim or simply rephrases the ideas of another without properly acknowledging the source, the theft is the same. A computer program written as part of the student’s academic work is, like a paper, expected to be the student’s original work and subject to the same standards of representation. In the preparation of work submitted to meet course requirements, whether a draft or a final version of a paper,
project, take-home exam, computer program, or other written assignment, students must take great care to distinguish their own ideas and language from information derived from sources. Sources include published primary and secondary materials, the Internet, and information and opinions gained directly from other people. Whenever ideas or facts are derived from a student’s reading and research, the sources must be properly cited.

Students are responsible for learning the proper forms of citation according to the standards delineated by Harvard University. This is true even for students from other countries who may have been taught to use sources in other ways. Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students and Writing with Internet Sources, prepared by Harvard’s Expository Writing Program, is on reserve at Grossman Library. Students who have questions about the standards of scholarly writing should speak with their instructors before beginning research on assigned papers and projects.

**HES Writing Requirement Course Criteria**: Writing-intensive courses at HES offer students the opportunity to develop their writing skills in the context of a particular academic discipline, and these courses all feature common elements. Students will:

- Develop core writing skills, as defined by the instructor, in the discipline of the course;
- Complete multiple writing assignments of varying lengths, at least two of which must be revised;
- Produce a minimum of 10–12 pages of writing, exclusive of the required revisions, over the course of the term;
- Meet at least once in individual conference (in person, by phone, or electronically) with the instructor or teaching assistant to discuss writing in progress;
- Receive detailed feedback on their drafts and revisions, on both content and expression.

19 November 2007