

ARCL0092 The Museum: Critical Perspectives 2023–24

15 CREDITS

Deadline for coursework for this course: Monday 11 December 2023

Marked assignments returned: Monday 11 January 2023



The Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford

Lectures: Tuesdays 9:00-10:30 Birkbeck Malet St. B18

Seminars: Tuesdays 10:45-11:50 / 11:55-13:00 IoA Room 209

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Online Office hours: 10am - 12 pm Fridays

Moodle: <https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=38473>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING ASSESSMENTS:

The **coursework coversheet** is available on the course Moodle pages and here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students> under "Policies, Forms and Guidelines".

Please enter **your five-digit candidate code on the coversheet and *in the subject line*** when you upload your work in Moodle.

Please use **your five-digit candidate code as the name of the file** you submit.

Please refer to the IoA Student Handbook and IoA Study Skills Guide:
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook>
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide>

for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines and marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission, over-length work and academic misconduct.

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Module Overview

This course aims to provide an introduction to the history and theory of museums. It does so by approaching the museum from a series of critical perspectives, considering the museum, among other things, as collection, as institution, and as site for advocacy and social justice. It explores different conceptualisations of the museum by drawing on examples which reflect a diversity of museum contexts in different regional and cultural settings. The course considers the role of museums in localising and globalising processes; it confronts the colonialist and racist legacies of museums; it examines the museum's social roles and responsibilities from well-being to climate change; and it addresses how groups and communities reclaim their ancestors and heritage from institutions. Building on a tradition of 'critical museology', the course seeks to provoke students into questioning what a museum is and does, and what it can be. It seeks to provide the broader historical and theoretical context to enable students to engage critically with contemporary museum practice and to develop a clear understanding of professional stewardship and critical ethics.

Aims

This course aims to introduce students to the history and theory of museums by approaching the institution of the museum from a series of critical perspectives. Building on a tradition of 'critical museology', the course seeks to provoke students into questioning what a museum is and does, and what it can be. It seeks to provide the broader historical and theoretical context to enable students to engage critically with contemporary museum practice and to develop a clear understanding of professional stewardship and critical ethics.

On successful completion of the course students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the history and development of museums in different contexts
- Discuss and debate the concept and functions of the museum
- Employ theoretically informed perspectives to critique established museological practice
- Demonstrate a familiarity with, and express informed opinions about, current museological debates
- Think and act beyond routinized 'Eurocentric' accounts and definitions of museums and cultural heritage, and be able to critically appreciate multiple conceptualisations and understand the complexities involved in the globalisation of museological practices

Learning outcomes

- Familiarity with key debates and concepts in critical museum studies
- Ability to apply knowledge in familiar and new situations for academic and professional purposes
- Capacity for independent learning
- Capacity for critical thinking
- Capacity for independent inquiry
- Ability to read and understand a wide range of academic writing
- Ability to speak and write accurately on academic topics in an academically rigorous manner
- Ability to work as a team, make oral presentations and lead discussions

Methods of Assessment

The course is assessed by a 3000-word essay which must be submitted by **Monday 11 December 2023**. It will be marked online and be returned by **Monday 11 January 2024**.

Students are asked to write a critical analysis of a specific museum, gallery, exhibition, collection or digital resource of their choice (or a comparison of two of these), focusing on a particular theme (or combination of themes) that we explore in the course (e.g. history of museums, museums and colonialism, museums and source communities, museums and human remains etc.). Since there are no set essay questions for students to write to, this provides students with practice in formulating their own essay titles and considering carefully how they structure an argument in relation to a body of existing academic literature and a specific case example, just as you will need to be able to do for your dissertation later in the programme. The module Co-ordinator and PGTA is willing to discuss an outline of the student's approach to the assignment, provided this is planned suitably in advance of the submission date.

Students should divide their essays into sections, which, in addition to a formal introduction and conclusion, should include:

- (1) a critical engagement with the relevant academic literature and debates;
- (2) use this discussion to develop an argument with reference to the specific museum, gallery, exhibition or digital resource they are exploring.

The aim of the assignment is to encourage students to engage fully with the theoretical and historical literature explored in the course, and then to apply this knowledge in relation to a specific case example of the students' own choosing in order to say something of relevance to museum studies debates more broadly. Students are encouraged to be as informed as possible about their 'case study' museums, conduct some basic historical research, and use figures to inform their essays.

To support your assessment, there are several opportunities for 'formative assessment' throughout the module:

- the practice essay is specifically linked to this module and will be supported and discussed in seminars;
- peer assessment (using the marking criteria) of previous essays;
- course convener/PGTA will give feedback on suitable essay titles and essay plans;
- developing skills at matching theories to case studies through two class presentations and weekly seminar discussions.

For more details see the 'Assessment' section on Moodle. The [IoA marking criteria](#) can be found in the IoA Student Handbook (Section 12- information on assessment) and the [IoA Study Skills Guide](#) provides useful guidance on writing different types of assignment.

Penalties for late submission: see [UCL guidance on penalties \(Academic Manual 3.12\)](#).

Please note: The use of software to generate content is not allowed for assessments for this course and will be penalised; the use of software for language and writing review and improvement is permitted, and the software and the way it has been used must be indicated in the relevant boxes on the coursework coversheet. UCL defines language and writing review as checking "areas of academic writing such as structure, fluency, presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and language translation".

Communications

- **Moodle is the main hub** for this course.
- Important information will be posted by staff in the **Announcements section of the Moodle page** and you will automatically receive an email notification for these. (or via email if you prefer).
- For personal queries, please contact the co-ordinator by email.

Week-by-week summary

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Tue, 3 October	Overview: Museum Definitions & Ethics
2	Tue, 10 October	Histories of Museums & Collections
3	Tue, 17 October	The Spaces & Places of Museums
4	Tue, 24 October	Source Communities
5	Tue, 31 October	Museums Are Not Neutral
6	Reading week, no teaching, 6 Nov–10 Nov	
7	Tue, 14 November	Repatriation
8	Tue, 21 November	Human Remains
9	Tue, 28 November	Photographs, Replicas & the Digital Museum
10	Tue, 5 December	Access all areas? Storage & Display
11	Tue, 12 December	Museums in the Anthropocene

Workload

This is a 15-credit module which equates to 150 hours of learning time including session preparation, background reading, and researching and writing your assignment. With that in mind you should expect to organise your time in roughly this way:

20 hours	Staff-led teaching sessions (lectures, seminars, tutorials, discussion-sessions)
70 hours	Self-guided session preparation (reading, listening, note-taking and online activities), about 7 hours a week
10 hours	Reading for, and writing, practice essay
55 hours	Reading for, and writing, the research essay

Resources

Preparation for Class

You are expected to read up to 2 **essential readings** and complete any online activities on **Moodle** each week. Completing the readings is essential for your effective participation in the seminar activities and discussions, and it will greatly enhance your understanding of the material covered. There are a few extra **recommended readings** listed below (and which are the texts that will be referenced in class) but much more extensive **further readings** are provided via the online-reading list for you to get a sense of the range of current work on a given topic and for you to draw upon for your assessments.

Basic texts

Ashcroft, Bill, Griffith, Gareth, and Tiffin, Helen (eds.) 2013. *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* 3rd Edition. London and New York: Routledge.

- Karp, Ivan. et al (eds.) 2006. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press [see introduction in particular].
- Knell, Simon. 2018. *The Contemporary Museum: Shaping Museum for the Global Now*. London and New York: Routledge
- Kreps, Christina F. 2003. *Liberating Culture: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation and Heritage Preservation*. London: Routledge.
- * Macdonald, Sharon. (ed.) 2006. *A Companion to Museum Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- * Marstine, Janet. 2011. *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Szántó, András. 2020. *The Future of the Museum. 28 Dialogues*. Berlin: Hantje Cantz.
- Watson, Sheila. (ed.), 2007. *Museums and their Communities*. London and New York: Routledge.

* There is no obligation to buy any text for the course and all of the above are accessible online through the library. However, if you would like to purchase texts for the course, those marked with an asterisk are recommended, are relatively cheap, will be relevant for almost all classes, and are useful beyond this module as well.

Week 1: Module Overview: Museums Definitions & Ethics

Lecture: After outlining the scope and teaching methods of this course, this introductory session will begin by reflecting on the scope of museum studies or museology as a discipline and where its political centre lies, together with the nature of museum ethics and how these underpin how we critically appraise and develop institutional practice.

Key concepts: ethics, new museology, Eurocentrism, epistemic coloniality

Seminar: We will consider what defines a museum and consider its purpose in the context of a series of critical issues that we will explore during the module. On the Moodle you will find in section 1.4 a short video discussing how to define a museum, together with some questions to consider for class discussion. In class, you will work in groups to produce a mind map of the key elements that constitute a museum.

Essential Readings: Go to the Moodle page and engage with the short activities there ahead of class to warm up our first discussion. If you do have a chance to do some reading, recommendations are starred below.

Recommended Reading

- Brown, K., and Mairesse, F. 2018. The definition of the museum through its social role. *Curator The Museum Journal* 61(4): 525–539.
- Candlin, F., Larkin, J., Ballatore, A. and Poulouvassilis, A. 2020. *Mapping Museums 1960-2020: A report mapping on the data*. London: Birkbeck.
<https://museweb.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/static/pdf/MappingMuseumsReportMarch2020.pdf>
- *Candlin, F. and Larkin, J. 2020. What is a museum? Difference all the way down. *Museum & Society* 18(2)
<https://journals.le.ac.uk/ojs1/index.php/mas/article/view/3147>
- Ginsburch, V. and Mairesse, F. 1997. Defining a museum: suggestions for an alternative approach. *Museum Management and Curatorship* 16(1): 15–33.
- Krstović, N. 2020. Colonizing knowledge: new museology as museology of news. *Prace Etnograficzne* 49(2): 125–39.
- Mairesse, F. 2019. 'The Definition of the Museum: History and Issues'. *Museum International*

71: pp. 154–159.

Marstine, J. 2011. Introduction. *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*. London and New York: Routledge.

*Soares, Bruno Brulon and Leschenko, Anna. 2018. Museology in colonial contexts: a call for decolonisation of museum theory *ICCOFOM Study Series* 46: 61–79

<https://journals.openedition.org/iss/895#quotation>

Week 2: Histories of Museums & Collections

Lecture: The accumulation, organisation and display of valued objects is fundamental to our conceptualisation of the museum (although we can challenge this idea). In this class we explore some of the historical motivations behind collecting practices and the establishment of the museum idea. While the first systematic collections that we know about were formed in the ancient world, our focus will be the more recent history of collecting. We briefly trace the origins of the European museum from the Enlightenment-period cabinets of curiosity, and then examine more closely how these collecting practices evolved through the ‘Museum Age’ of the late Victorian and Edwardian era, including the development of what Tony Bennett has termed the ‘exhibitionary complex’. The colonial implantation of the Western museum into other countries is examined, as are traditions of collecting and display from outside of Eurocentric models. We will explore how ‘things’ came to be at the heart of museums and how things acquire significance, meaning and value. In the second half of the class, we will introduce the interdisciplinary field of material culture studies, and consider how objects – like people – may be said to have ‘social lives’ and ‘biographies’. Related concepts such as ‘the relational museum’ and ‘the object habit’ are also presented for discussion. Throughout, we consider the question of what histories collections embody and which are privilege or ignored by institutions.

Key concepts: exhibitionary complex, object biographies, relational museum, epistemes, musealization, centres of calculation

Seminar: You will find some questions on the Moodle page to guide your essential readings. These also underpin your seminar task of preparing a group presentation on histories behind a selected museum object. Group presentations should be no longer than 7 minutes (a minute per slide/person in group to present!). See Moodle for further guidance.

Essential Reading

Alberti, Samuel. 2005. Objects and the museum. *Isis* 96(4): 559–571. Then read Hicks’ short intro here [you do not need to read all the responses]: Hicks, H. 2020.

Necrography: Death-Writing in the Colonial Museum.

British Art Studies, 19 <https://doi.org/10.17658/issn.2058-5462/issue-19/conversation>

Das, Subhadra and Lowe, Miranda 2019. Nature in black and white: decolonial approaches to interpreting natural history collections. *Journal of Natural Science Collections* 6: 4–14.

Recommended Reading

Collecting

Knell, S.J. (ed.) 2004. *Museums and the Future of Collecting*, 2nd edition. Aldershot: Ashgate. (Chapter 1: Altered Values: Searching for a New Collecting, pp.1-46)

- Macdonald, S. 2006. Collecting Practices. In S. Macdonald (ed.) *A Companion to Museum Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell. pp.81–97 [you might also like to consult pp.23-24 of Mason's chapter in this volume on 'cultural theory and museum studies' for an explanation of 'epistemes'].
- Pearce, S. 1994. Collecting re-considered. In Pearce, S. (ed.) *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London: Routledge, pp.193-204.
- Schildkrout, E. 1999. Royal treasury, historic house, or just a museum? *Museum Anthropology* 22: 14-27.

Histories of museums and collections

- *Batkin, N. 1997. Conceptualizing the history of the contemporary museum: On Foucault and Benjamin. *Philosophical Topics* 25(1).
- *Bennett, Tony. 1995. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. London: Routledge. [chapter 2 – The Exhibitionary Complex].
- Bennett, T., Cameron, F., Dias, N., Dibley, B., Harrison, R., Jacknis, I and McCarthy, C. 2017. *Collecting, Ordering, Governing: Anthropology, Museums, and Liberal Government*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Candlin, F. 2015. *Micromuseology. An Analysis of Small Independent Museums*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Delbourgo, J. 2017. *Collecting the World: The Life and Curiosity of Hans Sloane*. Belknap Press.
- Hooper-Greenhill, E. 1992. *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- MacKenzie, J.M. 2010. *Museums and Empire. Natural History, human cultures and colonial identities*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Pomian, K. 1990. *Collectors & Curiosities. Paris & Venice 1500–1800*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Qureshi, S. 2011. *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shao, Q. 2004. Exhibiting the modern: the creation of the first Chinese Museum 1905-1930. *The China Quarterly* 179: 684–702.
- Stevenson, A. 2019. *Scattered Finds: Archaeology, Egyptology and Museums*. London: UCL Press.

The *Museum History Journal* and the *Journal of the History of Collections* are dedicated to these topics and provide a strong range of case studies from Latin America through to the Pacific.

Material culture studies and object biographies

- Edwards, E. and Hart, J. 2004. Mixed Box: The Cultural Biography of a Box of "Ethnographic" Photographs. In Edwards, E. and Hart, J.(eds.) *Photographs Objects Histories*. London: Routledge, pp.47–61.
- *Gosden, C. 2009. The relational museum. In Geismar, H. *Material World. A Global Hub for Thinking About Things*. Available at: <http://www.materialworldblog.com/2009/01/the-relational-museum/>
- *Harrison, R. 2013. Reassembling ethnographic museum collections. In by Harrison, R., Byrne, S. and Clarke, A. (eds.) *Reassembling the Collection: Ethnographic Museums and Indigenous Agency*, ed. Santa Fe: SAR Press, pp. 3–35.
- Hill, K. (ed.) 2012. *Museum and Biographies: Stories, Objects, Identities*. London: Boydell and Brewer.
- Stevenson, A., Libonati, E. and Baines, J. 2017. The Object Habit: Legacies of Fieldwork and the Museum. *Museum History Journal* 10(2): 113–126.

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

Episode 39: Hans Sloane and the origins of the British Museum with James Delbourgo. *Museum Archipelago*, <https://www.museumarchipelago.com/39>

Week 3: The Spaces & Places of Museums

Lecture: This session draws from the spatial turn in the historical analysis of knowledge which has emphasised the ‘constitutive significance of place and space, site and situation, locality and territoriality’ (Livingstone 1995: 5) in the production and circulation of theories and practice. The approach is inclusive of settings from individual buildings to regional, national and supra-national localities. We will examine the physical nature of museum buildings themselves – their architecture and where they are sited – through adopting Carol Duncan’s concept of ‘ceremonial monuments’, which examines how architecture, space and atmosphere create ritualization and we discuss how museums can become tools for the elite to implement and enforce power structures. We will also look to ‘ethical architecture’, including the development of Indigenous museums and eco-museums which challenge these traditional ideas of museum space. We also broaden our frame of study to the local settings of museums, to examine the historical link between museum growth, economic development and civic pride. In particular, we will consider the more recent role of museums (particularly art museums) in urban regeneration.

Key concepts: civilising rituals, ceremonial monuments, urban regeneration

Seminar: On Moodle are some questions to guide your essential reading. You will also find a space to upload a picture of a new museum building and a space to write a few sentences about how its architecture and siting serves (or not!) the museum’s mission. We will discuss these in class.

Essential Reading

Grodach, Carl. 2008. Museums as urban catalysts: the role of urban design in flagship cultural development. *Journal of Urban Design* 13(2): 195–212.

Roux, Naomi. 2018. ‘A house for dead people’: memory and spatial transformation in Red Location, South Africa. *Social and Cultural Geography* 19(4): 407–428.

Recommended Reading

Museum architecture

Duncan, C. 1991. Art museums and the ritual of citizenship. In I. Karp and S.D. Lavine (eds.) *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, pp. 88–103.

Gieselhausen, M. 2006. The architecture is the museum. In Marstine, J. (ed.) *New Museum Theory and Practice. An Introduction*. London: Blackwell pp. 41-60.

*Gieselhausen, M. 2011. Museum architecture: a brief history. In Macdonald, S. (ed.) *A Companion to Museum Studies*. Chichester: Blackwell, pp. 223–44. [see also other papers in this section of the Companion for other relevant articles].

Livingstone, D. 2003. *Putting Science in its Place. Geographies of Scientific Knowledge*. Chicago: Chicago University Press [see pp. 29–40].

Ostrowitz, J. 2005. Concourse and periphery: planning the National Museum of the American Indian. *The American Indian Quarterly* 29(3/4): 384–425.

*MacLeod, S. 2011. Towards an ethics of museum architecture. In Marstine, J. (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics. Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First-Century Museum*. London and New York: Routledge, pp.379–92.

MacLeod, S. 2005. *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions*. London: Routledge.

Ecomuseums and Site Museums

Corsane, G. 2006. Using ecomuseum indicators to evaluate the Robben Island Museum and World Heritage Site. *Landscape Research* 31(4): 399–418.

Davis P., 2011. *Ecomuseums: A Sense of Place*. London: Leicester University

Silverman, H. 2006. *Archaeological Site Museums in Latin America*. Gainesville: University of Florida.

Nationalism and Museums

Crimp, D. 1993. *On the Museum's Ruins*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kaplan, F. 1994. *Museums and the Making of Ourselves: the role of objects in national identity*. London and New York: Leicester University Press.

Knell, S., Aronsson, P., and Amundsen, A. (eds.) 2010. *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World*. London: Routledge.

Posocco, L. 2022. *Museums and Nationalism in Croatia, Hungary, and Turkey*. London & New York, Routledge.

Urban regeneration, branding and museums

Baniotopoulou, E. 2001. Art for Whose Sake? Modern Art Museums and Their Role in Transforming Societies: The Case of the Guggenheim Bilbao. *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies* 7: 1–5.

Jimenez, J. 2015. The economics of museums and cities. In Lord, G. and Blankenberg, N. (eds.) *Cities, Museums, and Soft Power*. The AAM Press, pp. 29–49.

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

Episode 8: Calatrava and the Museum Icon *Museum Archipelago*,
<https://www.museumarchipelago.com/8>

Week 4: Museums & Source Communities

Lecture: In this seminar we look at how museums engage with and represent the heritage of diverse cultural groups, particularly Indigenous groups and Queer communities. We begin with an important critique of the museum as a public institution concerned not only with the ordering of objects and knowledges, but also with the ordering of people and society. Influential accounts of nineteenth-century museums have cast the public museum as ‘an instrument for civilising the morals and manners of the population’, part of the ‘civilising mission’ of the bourgeois classes. Whilst this Foucauldian critique was developed in relation to public art museums, it can be applied to other kinds of museums and is, of course, still relevant today. The last three decades have witnessed significant shifts in the conceptualization of the role of museums in relation to their communities. At the foundation of these developments lies relativistic and postmodern claims about the educational responsibilities of the museum. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century a ‘second wave’ to this development has been identified, one that has sought to reconnect research with museum practice in order to establish more collaborative programmes of exhibitions, shared curatorship and inclusionist use of collections. Many such projects have taken inspiration from James Clifford’s (1997) co-option of Mary Pratt’s ‘contact zone’, a framework that identifies the museum as a space of colonial encounter. It involves not only collaborating with Indigenous peoples, but also facing up to the hard truths of colonialism and ways in which museums can provide ‘healing spaces’. We look at how this has been put into practice and more recently critiqued through a series of case studies, finally asking whether it is possible for any museum to claim it is ‘universal’?

Key concepts: contact zone, governmentality, colonialism, orientalism, essentialism, gender activism

Seminar: On Moodle you will find some questions to guide your essential reading. Each group also has a link to the short text of ‘the Declaration of the Importance of Universal Museums’ where you can post comments regarding the strengths, weaknesses, and implications of the statement. We will discuss these in class.

Essential Reading

Boast, Robin. 2011. Neo-colonial collaboration: museum as contact zone revisited. *Museum Anthropology* 34(1): 56–70.

Singh, Kavita. 2009. Universal Museums: the view from below. In Prott, L.V. (ed.) *Witnesses to History. A Compendium of Documents and Writing on the Return of Cultural Objects*. Paris: UNESCO, pp.123–29.

Recommended Reading

Adair, J.G., and Levin, A.K. (eds) 2020. *Museums, Sexuality, and Gender Activism*. London: Routledge.

Clifford, J. 1997. Museums as contact zones. In Clifford, J. (ed.) *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 188–219.

- Crooke, E. 2008. Museums and communities. S. Macdonald (ed.) *Companion to Museum Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 170–185.
- Foueski, K. 2010. 'Community voices, curatorial choices': community consultation for the 1807 exhibitions. *Museum and Society* 8(3): 180–192.
- Ingold, T. 2000. Ancestry, generation, substance, memory, land. In Ingold, T. (ed.) *The Perception of the Environment: Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 132–51.
- Lynch, B. 2011. Collaboration, Contestation and Creative Conflict: On the Efficacy of Museum/Community Partnerships. In Marstine, J. (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Onciul, B. 2015. *Museums, Heritage and Indigenous Voice: Decolonising Engagement*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Peers, L. 2013 Ceremonies of renewal: visits, relationships and healing in the museum space. *Museum Worlds* 1(1):136–152
- *Peers, L. and Brown, A. 2003. (eds.) Introduction. *Museums and Source Communities*. London: Routledge
- Phillips, R. 2005. Re-Placing objects: historical practices for the second museum age. *Canadian Historical Review* 86(1): 83–110.
- Scott, E.J. 2022. The Museum of Transology. In Furman, A.N. and Mardell, J. (eds.) *Queer Spaces. An Atlas of LGNTQIA+ Places and Stories*. Riba Press.

Universal Museums

- *Abungu, G. 2004. The declaration: a contested issue. *ICOM News* 1: 5
- Cuno, J. 2010. *Who Owns Antiquities? Museums and the Battle Over Our Ancient Heritage*. Princeton.
- Curtis, N. 2006. Universal museums, museum objects and repatriation: the tangled stories of things. *Museum Management and Curatorship* 21(2): 117–27.
- Hamilakis, Y. 2011. Museums of oblivion. *Antiquity* 85: 625–29.

Week 5: Museums Are Not Neutral

Lecture: In this session we consider the place of protest, social activism, censorship and justice in the museum sector. We begin by looking at ways in which museum values have been challenged and subverted throughout the twentieth century from 'institutional critique' to BP or Not BP. These works have foregrounded questions of environment and property, feminism and global capitalism, especially arms production and global oil trade. We will then move from critique to transformative museum practice. We examine how museums are actively developing their policies and practices to foster inclusivity, interrogate authority and address decolonizing agendas. To do so requires engagement with the realities of complex social identities, group tensions and conflicting ideologies. Through a series of case studies and exercises we examine the language and assumptions that inform efforts to decolonize and democratize the museum, not only through its displays, but through organisational changes, and we ask whether it is ever possible to really 'decolonize' the museum.

Key concepts: Decolonization, coloniality, decoloniality, institutional critique, neocolonialism

Seminar: On Moodle you will find questions to guide your essential reading. You will also find a link to extracts from podcasts that explore definitions of 'decolonization' for you to reflect upon as you think about how you might define the term. In the seminar we will explore examples of museum labels and the challenge of transforming the use of language. We will also discuss the practice essay.

Essential Reading

Lee, Lisa Yun. 2008. Peering into the Bedroom. Restorative justice at the Jane Addams Hull House Museum. In Marstine, J. (ed.) *The Routledge Companion of Museum Ethics*. London and New York: Routledge

Muñiz-Reed, Ivan 2017. Thoughts on curatorial practices in the decolonial turn. *OnCurating* 35. <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-35-reader/thoughts-on-curatorial-practices-in-the-decolonial-turn.html#.XseiTZ5KiCQ>

Recommended Reading

Abd el-Gawad, H. and Stevenson, A. 2020. Egypt's Dispersed Heritage: multi-directional story-telling through comic art. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 21(1): 121–145.

Bienkowski, P. 2016. *No Longer Us and Them: How to Change into a Participatory Museum and Gallery*. London: Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

*Cairns, Puawai 2020. Decolonise or indigenise: moving towards sovereign spaces and the Māorification of New Zealand museology. *Te Papa Tongarewa Blog* 10 Feb 2020 <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2020/02/10/decolonise-or-indigenise-moving-towards-sovereign-spaces-and-the-maorification-of-new-zealand-museology/>

Fletcher, R. 2012. The art of forgetting: imperialist amnesia and public secrecy. *Third World Quarterly* 33(3): 423–39.

*Dalal-Clayton, A. and Rutherford, A. 2022. Against a new orthodoxy: decolonised 'objectivity' in the cataloguing and description of artworks. *Paul Mellon Centre Photographic Archive Features online* <https://photoarchive.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/groups/against-a-new-orthodoxy>

Marstine, J. 2017. *Critical Practice: Artists, Museums, Ethics*. London: Routledge.

- Mason, R. and Sayner, J. 2019. Bringing museal silence into focus: eight ways of thinking about silence in museums. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25(1): 5–20.
- Mignolo, W. 2011. Museums in the Colonial Horizon of Modernity. Fred Wilson's Mining the Museum (1992) In Harris, J. (ed.) *Globalization and Contemporary Art*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- *Minott, R. 2019. The past is now. Confronting museums' complicity in imperial celebration. *Third Text* 33(4/5): 559–74.
- Robins, C. 2013. *Curious Lessons in the Museum: The Pedagogic Potential of Artists Interventions*. Ashgate [see chapter 3 for history of institutional critique].
- Sandell, R. 2000. The strategic significance of workforce diversity in museums. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6(3): 213–230.
- Sandell, R. and Nightingale, E. (eds.) 2012. *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*. London and New York: Routledge. [read introduction; browse other chapters]
- Saini, A. 2019. *Superior: The Return of Race Science*. Forth Estate.
- Serafini, P. and Garrard, C. 2019. Fossil fuel sponsorship and the contested museum: agency, accountability and arts activism. In Janes, R.R. and Sandell, R. (eds.) *Museum Activism*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Soar, K. and Tremlett, P-F. 2017. Protest objects: *bricolage*, performance and counter-archaeology. *World Archaeology* 49(3): 423–34.
- Tuck, E. and Yang, K.W. 2012. Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*. 1(1): 1–40.
- Wajid, S. and Minott, R. Detoxing and decolonizing museums. In Janes, R.R. and Sandell, R. (eds.) 2019. *Museum Activism*. London & New York: Routledge.

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

- Das, S. 2017 *Bricks and Mortals*. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/culture/projects/bricks-mortals>
- Jansari, S. 2019. *The Wonder House* <https://thewonderhouse.co.uk/podcasts>

Week 7: Repatriation

Guest lecturer: Johanna Zetterström-Sharp

Repatriation has been a pressing issue for museums globally over last 5 decades, however public, professional and academic conversations around the return of cultural property have peaked over the last few years. This has been particularly acute for objects with provenance that is associated with forms of colonial duress, such as items looted from the palace compounds in Benin City during the British military incursion in 1897. 2022 saw museums across Europe and North America committing to the repatriation of these royal treasures to the Nigerian government. In this session we will look at some of the ways in which repatriation is historically situated within professional practice, calls for post-colonial and social justice, and in academic work. This includes exploring how ownership has been articulated and enacted by various stakeholders, including through professional practice and the legal structures that museums operate within. We will explore the current 'moment' and think through some of the discursive, practical and legal shifts that have contributed to the changes that are unfolding within the sector.

Key terms: Repatriation, restitution,

Seminar:

Essential Reading

Royal BC Museum & Haida Gwaii Museum. 2019. Indigenous Repatriation Handbook. Royal British Columbia

Museum <https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/indigenous/repatriation-handbook>

Sarr, F. and Savoy, B. 2018. The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage. Toward a New Relational Ethics http://restitutionreport2018.com/sarr_savoy_en.pdf

Recommended reading

Appiah, K.W. 2003. Whose culture is it, anyway? *Diogenes* 50(3): 99–114

Hatala-Matthes, E. 2018. Who Owns Up to the Past? Heritage and Historical Injustice. *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 4(1): 87–104.

Hicks, D. 2020. A Theory of Taking. In Hicks, D, *The Brutish Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution*. Pluto. P18-24

Joy, C. 2020. Justice as Return. In Joy, C. *Heritage Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Museum Ethnographers Group's Repatriation Resource:

<https://padlet.com/emmalmartin73/a-repatriation-resource-55eq3rdjdn7j>

Savoy, B. 2022. *Africa's Struggle for Its Art: History of a Postcolonial Defeat*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press

Shyllon, F. 2014. Repatriation of antiquities to sub-Saharan Africa: the agony and the ecstasy. *Art Antiquity & Law* 19: 121.

Shyllon, F. 2015. Restitution of antiquities to Sub-Saharan Africa: the booty and captivity: a study of some of the unsuccessful efforts to retrieve cultural objects purloined in the age of imperialism in Africa. *Art Antiquity & Law* 20: 369.

Week 8: Human Remains

Alice Stevenson

Relics, specimens, subjects, objects, ancestors, evidence? Human remains are some of the most complex and contentious types of collection museums manage. UK museums alone are estimated to hold more than 60,000 human remains, many acquired in the late 19th and early 20th century as part of imperial racial profiling. Over the last few decades attitudes to such collections have shifted through ongoing and largely constructive public debate, but there remain a range of legal, ethical, and political issues that museums must contend with. Who has cultural or scientific authority over the dead? Who gets to speak for them? What do(did?) the dead want? And what are the implications of new technologies such as DNA testing on claims of ownership and representation?

Key terms: repatriation, restitution, rehumanisation, non-maleficence, respect

Seminar: DCMS. 2005. *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums*. London: DCMS [read ethical framework section 1.2 pp.13-15] Each group has been given a scenario to think through. Who would you talk to? What would be your next steps? You will have a chance in class to share notes and discuss these with your group before sharing your response.

Essential Reading

Alberti, S.J.M.M, Bienkowski, P, Chapman, M.J., and Drew, R. 2009. Should we display the dead? *Museum and Society* 7(3): 133–149.

Overholtzer, Lisa and Argueta, Juan 2018. Letting skeletons out of the closet: the ethics of displaying ancient Mexican human remains. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 24(5): 508–530.

Recommended Reading

Biers, T. 2020. Rethinking purpose, protocol, and popularity in displaying the dead in museums. In Squires, K. Errickson, D. and Márquez-Grant, N. (eds.) *Ethical Approaches to Human Remains*. New York: Springer.

Fletcher, A. Antonie, D. and Hill, J.D. (eds.) 2014. *Regarding the Dead: Human Remains in the British Museum*. London: British Museum Press.

Gladstone, M. and Berlo, J.C. 2008. The body in the (white) box: corporeal ethics and museum representation. In Marstine, J. (ed.) *The Routledge Companion of Museum Ethics*. London and New York: Routledge, pp.

Jenkins, T. 2010. *Contesting Human Remains in Museum Collections. The Crisis of Cultural Authority*. London and New York: Routledge.

Mubaya, T. 2015. Africanising museums on the African soil: a critique of the Western concept of keeping human remains in Zimbabwean museums. In Madwere, M. & Chiwaura, H. (eds.) *African Museums in the Making*. Oxford: African Books Collective

Rassool, C. 2015. Re-storing the skeletons of Empire: return, reburial and rehumanisation in Southern Africa. *Journal of South African Studies* 41(3): 653–70.

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

Episodes 11 and 12. Dead Bodies in Museums. *Museum Archipelago*
<https://www.museumarchipelago.com/11>

Week 9: Photographs, Replicas & Digital Objects

Lecture: This session foregrounds types of collections that have historically ranked low in hierarchies of museum objects: photographs, film, sound and replicas. Most museums possess one or several of these types of media and they are frequently employed in exhibitions. Yet we need to consider critically not just how this material is utilized in exhibitionary contexts, but also how these media are ethically and professionally curated and managed as part of institutional practice. This includes the materiality of these collections, each with their own problems and possibilities for preservation, use, interpretation and community engagement. While often seen as neutral and objective, recording styles have shifted markedly, reflecting changes in interpretative approaches to objects. What constitutes a museum object and what are institutional records? Is there a difference and, if so, how should these be managed?

As photographs, film, sound and digital replicas are becoming more in demand due to the increasing use of online portals for accessing museum collections, our second theme for study is digital objects.

Key concepts: photo-elicitation, evidentiary ballast, born digital, authenticity, digitization, post-digital

Seminar: On Moodle you will find questions to guide your reading, together with a choice of online photographic exhibitions to review for class discussion.

Essential Reading

Odumosu, Temi. 2020. The Crying Child. On colonial archives, digitization, and ethics of care in the cultural commons. *Cultural Anthropology* 61(s22)

Recommended Reading

Photography and Film

Edwards, E. 2011. *Raw Histories: Photography, Anthropology, and Museums*. Oxford: Berg.

Edwards, E. and Lien, S. (eds.) 2014. *Uncertain Images: Museums and the Work of Photographs*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Edwards, E., and Morton, C. (eds.). 2015. *Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic [read the introduction].

Edwards, E. and Mead, M. 2013. Absent histories and absent images: photographs, museums and the colonial past. *Museums and Society* 11(1): 19–38.

Peers, L. and Brown, A.K. 2003. *Museums and Source Communities*. London: Routledge [see part 2 for 4 chapters on photographs/film and source communities/repatriation].

<https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/dah/article/view/83932>

Replicas

Fash, B. 2004. Cast Aside: Revisiting the Plaster Cast Collections from Mesoamerica. *Visual Resources* 20(1): 3-17,

- Foster, S. and Curtis, N. 2016. The thing about replicas. *European Journal of Archaeology* 19(1): 122-148.
- Latour, B. and Lowe, A. 2010. The migration of the aura or how to explore the original through its facsimiles. In Bartscherer, T. (ed.) *Switching Codes: Thinking Through Digital Technology in the Humanities and the Arts*. Chicago: UCP, pp. 275–97.

Digital Museums

- Cameron, F. and Kenderdine, S. (eds.), 2007. *Theorizing digital cultural heritage: A critical discourse*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Henning, M. 2008. New media. In Macdonald, S. (ed.) *A Companion to Museum Studies*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 302–318.
- Kalay, Y., Kvan, T., and Affleck, J. (eds.), 2008. *New heritage: New media and cultural heritage*. Routledge.
- Kidd, J., 2019. Digital media ethics and museum communication, In Drotner, Kirsten, Dziekan, Vince, Parry, Ross and Schroder, Kim Christian (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Museums, Media and Communication*, London & New York: Routledge.
- Meehan, N., 2020. Digital museum objects and memory: Postdigital materiality, aura and value. *Curator: The Museum Journal*.
- Parry, R., 2013. The end of the beginning: Normativity in the postdigital museum. *Museum Worlds: Advances in Research*, 1(1), 24– 39.

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

- Museum Archipelago 2018. Episode 40: Conserving digital photos with Jenny Mathiasson and Kloe Rusey. *Museum Archipelago* <https://www.museumarchipelago.com/40>
- The C-Word. 2017. S02E06: Replica, Surrogates, and Digitisation. *The C-Word* <https://thecword.show/page/5/>

Week 10: Access All Areas? Storage & Display

with Guest Lecturer Rafie Cecilia

Ever since the 19th century, museums they have been conceptualized as dual-purpose institutions, divided between store and gallery. Many museum practitioners today recognise the false premise of this division, positioning their responsibilities more holistically toward curating publicly-accessible and visible collections. But how do we tackle the common misconception that museums are solely a form of exhibitionary media? It is certainly true that in most museums only a portion of the permanent collection to be on display at any one time. How then are stored collections used? Are they accessible, and if not why not? In this session we deconstruct the binary opposition between 'display' and 'backstage' to examine the wider question of the purpose of collections and access to them. Interventions from artists, discovery centres and visible storage are some of the range of practices that have broached these divides. We will think too about the possibilities for physical and emotional interaction with objects in museums, how these might be enabled or disabled by institutional practices and public expectations.

This leads on to the museum's wider responsibilities towards accessibility for individual and communities of different and mixed abilities. In the discourse around access and audiences, museums are increasingly called to re-evaluate their practice in an effort to be inclusive. Museums have made efforts to re-evaluate disabled people as under-represented and traditionally neglected audiences. Part of this process is to better understand the representation of disabled people and disability-related themes in their collections and exhibitions. This part of the session will explore how museums have the potential to engage in activist practice, with explicit intent to act upon inequalities and injustices. It will present on issues of access and how they have developed inclusive and accessible visitor experiences to reach out and accommodate a much wider range of visitors.

Key Concepts: Social Model of Disability, visible and visitable storage

Seminar: On Moodle you will find questions to guide your reading

Essential Reading

Brusius, Mirjam. and Singh, Kavita. 2017. Introduction. In Singh, K. and Brusius, M. (ed.) *Museum Storage and Meaning. Tales from the Crypt*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1–33

Sandell, R., Delin, A., Dodd, J., and Gay, J., 2005. Beggars, freaks and heroes? Museum collections and the hidden history of disability. *Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship* 20/1: pp. 5-19.

Recommended Reading

Stored Collections

Keene, S. (ed.) 2008. *Collections for People: museums' stored collections as a public resource*. London: Institute of Archaeology UCL.

Kersal, M. 2015. Storage wars: solving the archaeological curation crisis? *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies* 3(1): 42–54.

Morris, Jane. 2007. Using stored collections. *Museums Practice* 47: 50–2.

Slater, D. 1995. Visible storage: the Glenbow experiment. *Museum International* 188: 13–17.

Smith, H.J.L., Ginley, B. and Goodwin, H. 2012. Beyond compliance? Museums, disability and the law. In Sandall, R. and Nightingale, E. (eds.) *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*. London and New York: Routledge.

Artist Interventions

Dorsett, C. 2010. Making meaning beyond display. In Dudley, S. (ed.) *Museum Materialities. Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 241–59.

Rhode Island School of Design. 1970 *Raid the Icebox I with Andy Warhol: an exhibition selected from the storage vaults of the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design*. Providence, RI: Rhode Island School of Design.

Enabling Access and Representing Dis/Ability

Disability Studies 33(3) Special issue on museum experience and blindness: <http://dsq-sds.org/issue/view/104>

Cachia, M. 2014. 'Disability, Curating, and the Educational Turn: The Contemporary Condition of Access in the Museum', *OnCurating journal*, issue 24 (<http://on-curating.org/index.php/issue-24-reader/disability-curating-and-the-educational-turn-the-contemporary-condition-of-access-in-the-museum.html#.V-jQi84YLgU>)

Candlin, F. 2003. Blindness, art and exclusion in museums and galleries. *The International Journal of Art Design* 22(1): 100–110.

Candlin, F. 2004. Don't touch! Hands off! Art, blindness and the conservation of expertise. *Body and Society* 10, 71–90.

Shakespeare, T. 1994. Cultural Representation of Disabled People: Dustbins For Disavowal. *Disability & Society* 9, pp. 283-299.

Walters, D. 2009. Approaches in museums towards disability in the United Kingdom and the United States. *Museum Management and Curatorship* 24(1): 29-46.

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

Disability Representations Podcast <https://disabilityrepresentations.org/>.

UK Disability History and Heritage Hub <https://ukdishisthub.mystrikingly.com/>

C-Word. 2017. Visible Storage. *The C-Word. The Conservator's Podcast* <https://thecword.show/2017/04/03/s01e03-visible-storage/>

Week 11: Museums in the Anthropocene

with guest lecturer Rodney Harrison

Lecture: In 1992, the world's governments committed to address the rapidly growing threat of global climate change by adopting the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Convention came into force in 1993. How can museums play a vital part in the shift to a low-carbon future? This session considers the role of museums in an era of unprecedented global change and the emergence of what has been termed the 'Anthropocene', a new geological epoch marked by humanity's impact on the planet. How should museums respond to a rapidly warming planet and the multitude of other challenges we face? These issues link to wider discourses about sustainability. Bearing in mind the growing pressures for all cultural organisations to integrate sustainability in their long-term planning, their exhibition spaces and day-to-day operations we will discuss how museums can contribute to the so-called four pillars of environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability. We will look at concepts, agendas and principles that are currently underpinning museum sustainability and examine some of the challenges and opportunities through various examples.

Museums are also increasingly concerned with the health and well-being of their communities and we look at some recent examples of these initiatives that extend the role of museums in society beyond many of its traditional functions.

Key concepts: Anthropocene, sustainability

Seminar: In this final seminar we revisit the museum definition mind maps that we created in class 1 to see how our understanding of museums has developed. We will consider then what the future of museums might be and what might be the most important changes/challenges over the next decade.

Essential Reading

NO ESSENTIAL READING THIS WEEK but particularly recommended is:

Harrison, R. and Sterling, C. 2021. *Reimagining Museums for Climate Action*. London: Institute of Archaeology. Available open access at:
<https://www.museumsforclimateaction.org/mobilise/book>

See also: <https://www.museumsforclimateaction.org/mobilise/toolbox>

Further Reading

Climate Change & Sustainability

<https://mccnetwork.org/exhibitions>

Brophy, S. S. & Wylie, E. 2012. Environmental sustainability in B. Lord, G. D. Lord & L. Martin (eds.), *Manual of Museum Planning: Sustainable Space, Facilities, and Operations* (3rd edition). Lanham, Maryland and Plymouth: AltaMira Press, pp. 495-508.

Cameron, F.R., Hodge, B. and Salazar, J.F. 2015. Conclusion. Climate change engagement. A manifesto for museums and science Centers. In Cameron, F. and Neilson, B. (eds.) *Climate Change and Museum Futures*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 248-68.

- Hebda, R. J. 2007. Museums, Climate Change and Sustainability. *Museum Management and Curatorship* 22(4): 329-336.
- Loach, K., Rowley, J. & Griffiths, J. 2017. Cultural sustainability as a strategy for the survival of museums and libraries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 23(2): 186-198.
- Newell, J. R. & Wehner, K. (eds.), 2017. *Curating the future: Museums, communities and climate change*. London & New York: Routledge.

Health and Well Being

- Chatterjee, H. and Noble, G. 2013. *Museums, Health and Well-Being*. Ashgate, Farnham.
- Morse, N. Thomson, L.J., Brown, Z and Chatterjee, H.J. (2015) Effects of creative museum outreach sessions on measures of confidence, sociability and well-being for mental health and addiction recovery service-users, *Arts & Health*, 7:3, 231-246, DOI:10.1080/17533015.2015.1061570

Recommended Podcast and Video listening

- The C-word. 2018. Going Green. <https://thecword.show/2018/09/19/s04e01-going-green/>