Methods of the History of Art and Architecture

Wednesdays, 2:30-5:20pm
Frick Fine Arts Room 104

Faculty

Shirin Fozi  
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Office Hours: Tues & Weds, 1-2pm

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Learning Outcomes
Each student is expected to…
- Choose an object in the city of Pittsburgh for study
- Teach the object to the class through open-ended discussion
- Articulate the humanistic value of the object/study/project
- Develop and apply a methods-informed research agenda

Graded Work
Final grades are based on…
- Class participation and presentations (25%)
- Object Dialogue in Pittsburgh (25%)
- Public Humanities Statement (25%)
- Final Paper, due Dec. 15 (25%)

Course Expectations
Class participation: Regular attendance is required for this course, and active participation is expected. If you must be absent for any meetings, please let Prof. Fozi know ASAP.

Object Dialogue: 20-minute discussion-based teaching exercise, in which each student will lead a class discussion in front of their research object. To be scheduled in October/early November.

Public Humanities Statement: 3-5 page statement outlining the public or humanistic value of the research object, prefaced by a 250-word abstract. To be presented in class on December 2.

Final Paper: 10-12 page essay presenting an object within a clearly articulated intellectual framework, informed by research but focused on developing a method of scholarly inquiry.

Class use of web-based resources
We will be using a group blog on tumblr throughout the semester in order to make posts and start discussions in advance of class. The tumblr site is closed to the public, and the posts are not graded or evaluated in any way. The tumblr site is a “judgment-free” zone where tentativeness, questioning, doubts, as well as insights and Eureka moments are expected and encouraged. In November, students will also co-author public posts on constellations.pitt.edu in response to the SECAC conference (details below).
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| September 2| **Introduction**             | 1) Classroom – opening discussion  
2) Schenley Plaza (Object Dialogue – K Savage) |
| Sept 6 (Sunday) | Choose ONE publication that inspired you to apply to graduate programs, and post your choice on Tumblr. |
|           |                              | Write a 300-word “review” that unpacks the piece for the class, to be read aloud and discussed on Sept. 9. |
| September 9| **Literature reviews**       | 1) Classroom – short presentations and discussion |
2) Classroom – short discussion of paper topics |
| Sept 21 (Monday) | Post on Tumblr an image of your chosen object of study and a paragraph or two explaining the methodological focus you intend to take with it. |
| September 23| **Audiences / Consumers**    | 1) Cathedral of Learning – *Nationality Rooms*  
2) Classroom – short discussion of object choices and organization of students into affinity groups. |
Between Sept 23 and Oct 7: Affinity groups have two weeks to prepare for its discussion and presentation on Oct 7. Each group will develop a short list of readings chosen for their methodological significance and relevance to their group’s objects. Outside class, the groups will meet to talk through their readings, and even more importantly, to discuss how core concepts from the readings will shape their inquiry into their objects. Prepare to discuss these core concepts and their relationship to your objects, first in a brief Tumblr post on Oct 5 followed by class discussion on Oct 7. Please also take advantage of this time to meet with the Fine Arts librarian Kate Joranson to brainstorm or refine your reading list.

September 30

**Artists / Patrons**

2) Classroom – check-in time for affinity groups

Reading:


**Oct 5 (Monday)**

Each affinity group makes a short post on tumblr (300 words) outlining the key methodological concepts or insights on which your group plans to focus its class discussion. Include at least one image of each of your chosen objects.

October 7

**Affinity Group Meetings**

1) Classroom – Affinity Group discussions/presentations, approximately 30-40 minutes per group. Don’t think of these as lectures but as opportunities to follow up your tumblr post with probing discussion of the method-object relationship, and to spark feedback and discussion.

2) Classroom – short discussion of museum pedagogy and teaching strategies based on the Burnham reading.

Reading:
Rika Burnham, *Teaching in the Art Museum: Interpretation as Experience* (Getty, 2011), Chapters 6 and 7: 94-125; 67-78 also suggested.

October 14

**Object Dialogues**

October 21-24

**SECAC** – attendance required; no class. Each affinity group should look at the SECAC program together, and select relevant lectures/sessions to attend. Each group will co-author a blog entry (500-1,000 words), to be posted on *constellations.pitt.edu* by Nov. 2. Remember that these are public posts and should be respectful and constructive, not carping.
October 28  Object Dialogues

November 4  Object Dialogues

*Nov 6 (Friday)*  Affinity groups post co-authored blog posts about SECAC on constellations.pitt.edu

November 11  Collections / Galleries
1) Frick Art Historical Center
2) Short Discussion of Constellation Posts

Reading:

November 18  Museums / Identity
1) Soldiers and Sailors Memorial and Museum

Reading:


November 25  Thanksgiving

*Nov 30 (Monday)*  Post on tumblr 250-word abstract of your public humanities statement.

December 2  Public Humanities Statements
Class discussion of statements. As time permits, affinity groups can meet to discuss individual work in progress.

December 9  Presentations of object research
Each student will have approximately 25 minutes. Think of it as a 10-minute presentation followed by 15 minutes of class feedback and discussion. Since we already know your object well by this time, you can skip the usual background and get straight to the methodological core of your project – i.e. what methods have you used and what insights have they given you into the object of study?

December 16  Presentations of object research

*Dec 20 (Sunday)*  Final papers due