ANT 457H - ANTHROPOLOGY OF MATERIAL CULTURE
ROOM SS 1080
Silvia Forni

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Thursdays, 10:00 – 12:00 noon
office hours by appointment
Royal Ontario Museum

Course description:
Objects are one of the means through which humans shape their world. Simultaneously the material world shapes the way humans conceive of themselves and the social relationships they entertain. After years of distancing from the world of objects, material culture and materiality have become popular concepts in contemporary anthropology. This course investigates the paths that objects travel, both in anthropological theory and in concrete terms as they move across borders, social, and institutional settings. We will investigate the notions of ownership, authenticity, value, agency, relevance and affect in relation to objects that are part of our world and we will discuss and trace the cultural biographies of things that matter to the life and identity of individuals across the world.

Textbooks
Articles and book chapters assigned are either available as electronic resources through the Library or will be posted on Blackboard.
*Modernity at Large* is available in the course reserve section at the Robarts Library.
The *Traffic in Culture* is available for consultation at the ROM library.

Requirements
**Class participation and leading discussion.** Every student is expected to participate actively in the class discussion. Occasionally you will be in charge of leading discussion. Depending on the
number of students, this may be a group activity. The leaders are expected to submit to the instructor the questions/points that they want to discuss with the class at least 2 days before class. This will allow for feedback and honing of the points of the questions. These will be posted on blackboard a day or two before class.

**Reading responses and exhibition review.** Reading responses and exhibition review (2-4 pages, double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margin) must be turned in electronically through www.turnitin.com and a hard copy should be handed out at the beginning of the class when the readings are scheduled. Students are required to submit **two reading responses** (each worth 10% of your grade) and one exhibition review. While the exhibition review date is fixed, and must be turned in on March 2, the other reading responses can be chosen according to personal interest. However at least **1 must be chosen** among the **first 3 weeks** of readings. It is strongly advised not to wait until the last weeks to submit your other reading response.

Reading responses and exhibition review should express intellectual reactions to specific points and/or general analyses and your observations on how these readings/displays have confirmed, augmented, or challenged prior assumptions and knowledge.

**Topic outline and annotated bibliography.** This assignment is a preliminary step to your final research paper: a one page outline of the topic chosen for the final research paper followed by a bibliography of the main sources identified. The bibliography should include 8-12 carefully selected sources (do not exceed this number). For each source please provide a brief summary of main ideas, issues, questions, problems. For help in developing an annotated bibliography see: [http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/images/stories/Documents/annotated-bibliography.pdf](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/images/stories/Documents/annotated-bibliography.pdf)

The annotated bibliography is due on **March 10**.

Late assignments will be penalized with a **2% grade reduction per day of lateness**.

**Final research paper.** Paper topics should be chosen and discussed with instructor by the **third week of February**. Final papers should be 15-20 pages in length (double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margin), and are due the **last day of classes**. Papers need to be submitted electronically to turnitin.com before the due date. Late assignments will be penalized with a **2% grade reduction per day of lateness**.

**Plagiarism**

According to the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students/academic-integrity-basics) (Appendices D and E), plagiarism is an offence.

In the same Code of Behaviour, plagiarism is defined as:

- representing as one’s own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work;

- submitting, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere; and
• submitting for credit any academic work containing a purported statement of fact or reference to a source which has been concocted.

Please refer to the writing center advice on plagiarism:
http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize

**Turnitin.com**
Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Turnitin.com is a web based application that detects textual similarities by comparing your paper with published sources, websites and student papers contained in its database. Turnitin.com provides a report to the instructor regarding instances of “textual similarity” and, as such, does not itself make accusations of plagiarism. If similarities occur, I will review the writing and assess whether or not plagiarism is a factor. There is no percentage rate that defines plagiarism in absolute terms, and I will evaluate your papers each in their own merit. If plagiarism is detected, your grade will be affected and you may be reported to the competent academic authorities.

To submit your paper you must first register to the website and enrol in the class

For this **ANT 457H - Anthropology of material culture** seminar the course ID is: **11379267**
Password: **matcult**

A 1-page document that provides the basic steps for to set up your own accounts and submit papers is available at:
http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching/academicintegrity/turnitin/guide-students.htm:

In addition, the turnitin.com website provides precise and easy to follow instructions:

**Evaluation criteria**
Leading discussion and class participation (weekly) 10%
Reading responses/exhibition review 30%
Topic outline and annotated bibliography (due March 10) 15%
Paper Presentation 15%
Final Paper (15-20 pgs, **due last class**) 30%
Course program

Week 1. January 14 – Course Introduction – Things that travel, things that matter
Optional attendance: ROM Daytime free lecture @11 am

Week 2. January 21 - Objects and anthropology – The museum and the field.

Week 3. January 28
The social life of things
http://search.library.utoronto.ca/details?10226252&uuid=ec620dc8-682c-4579-93d2-f58fea5feb66

http://search.library.utoronto.ca/details?10226252&uuid=ec620dc8-682c-4579-93d2-f58fea5feb66

Fowler, Chris. "From Identity and Material Culture to Personhood and Materiality." Oxford Handbooks Online.

Week 4. February 4— BY THIS WEEK YOU NEED TO TURN YOUR FIRST READING RESPONSE!
Material, beauty, and relevance
http://quod.lib.umich.edu.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb31369.0001.001
[http://journals2.scholarsportal.info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/tmp/1590538375871462843.pdf](http://journals2.scholarsportal.info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/tmp/1590538375871462843.pdf)


**Week 5 February 11 - Differential creation of value**

**Screening of movie: In and out of Africa**


**February 18 – No class READING WEEK**

**Week 6 February 25**

**Objects, markets, and transnational aesthetics**

Guest speaker: **Sarah Fee**


**Week 7. March 2 – EXHIBITION REVIEW DUE ***note: this class will be on Wednesday from 2:30 to 4:30 @ the ROM – meet at school entrance, south side of building @ 2:20**

**Material culture, modernity and globalization**

Exhibition viewing and seminar with **Arjun Appadurai**


**Week 8. MARCH 10 — ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY!**

**Photography, Materiality and Memory**

Guest speaker: **Julie Crooks**

http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2000.10443418

http://books2.scholarsportal.info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/viewdoc.html?id=/ebooks/ebooks0/duke/2012-06-25/1/9780822394457

**Week 9. March 17 – Materiality and the archive**


Gable Eric, 2013, The city, race, and the creation of a common history at the Virginia Historical Society in *Museums and Communities: Curators, Collections and Collaboration* : 32.- 47

**Week 10. March 24 – Student presentations**

**Week 11. March 31 – Student presentations**

**Week 12. April 7 – RESEARCH PAPER DUE TODAY**
Student presentations and final remarks