

Sample Assignment #1

Using Any Campus Museum as an Object

Art historian Carol Duncan has described museums as sites for the expression of national power. How might that process work? Can you find any physical evidence to support this framing of museums? As you walk in and around the museum pay close attention to architectural style and detail, the organization of interior space, and the objects displayed.

Readings:

Carol Duncan, "Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship," in *Exhibiting Cultures*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine.

Martin Berger, "Museum Architecture and the Imperialism of Whiteness," from *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture*.

Steven Conn, "Museums and the late Victorian World," from *Museums and American Intellectual Life*.

Sample Assignment #2

Using One Exhibition to Think About Race

This article raises a simple question that is profoundly difficult to answer. Why on earth did people believe that Fusco and Gómez-Peña were undiscovered 'Amerindians' on display in cages in U.S. museums?

Readings:

Coco Fusco, "The Other History of Intercultural Performance," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff.

Curtis Hinsley, "The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893," in *Exhibiting Cultures*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine.

Sample Assignment #3

Using One Museum to Teach about Nationalism

Go to the American Museum of Natural History website. Look at the interactive floor plan, the museum map, and the permanent exhibition links. Google images of the Theodore Roosevelt statue. Can you find any lingering evidence in any of these web images of Haraway's arguments about the museum as a site for the construction of imperialist nationalism?

Reading:

Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908–1936," from *Primate Visions*.