2014 SIMA Syllabus

Week 1 ORIENTATION TO THE FIELD SITE
Faculty resources: Josh Bell, Marit Munson, Jason Baird Jackson (F)

DAY 1 – ORIENTATION

Lesson #1, NMNH Orientation and Walkabout (Greene and Godby Ingalsbe)

Lesson #2, Program Overview (Greene)
* Grant proposal to NSF for support of SIMA.
  [rationale for material culture and museum based research within cultural
  Anthropology; types of research questions; goals for the training program]

* Gosden, Chris and Frances Larson
2007 What is a Museum? In Knowing Things: Exploring the Collections at the Pitt Rivers
[consider collections as the material residue of particular sets of social relationships]

* Greene, Candace S.
1992 Documentation, Attribution and the Ideal Type. In Art and Artifacts: Essays in Material Culture
and Museum Studies, In Honor of Jane Powell Dwyer, Harold David Juli, ed. Research Papers in
[focus on assumptions about culture that inform ideas of ‘documentation’ or ‘attribution’]

Sturtevant, William
[focus on issues of documentation, which remain the same in spite of being computerized]

* Thomas, Nicholas
[consider alternatives of moving from questions to objects, or from objects to questions]

Lesson #3a, Methods from My Research (Greene)
Greene, Candace S.
with The American Federation of Arts and the Drawing Center.
[quantitative study based on hundreds of items]

2009 One Hundred Summers: A Kiowa Calendar Record. University of Nebraska Press. (selections)
[qualitative study based on work with community members plus archival sources]
Lesson #3b, Methods from My Research (Bell)

Bell, Joshua A.


Bell, Joshua A. et al.

“We’re Almost Like Therapists for People with Electronics”: Fetishization, Cell Phones, and Repair. Paper to be submitted to Anthropological Quarterly as part of a special issue edited by the authors about the materiality of the cell phone.

Bell, J.A. and H. Gesimar


Lesson #4, Object Database Orientation (Greene & Buhrow)

No readings

DAY 2 – SPEED DATING - OBJECTS

Lesson #5, Collections Resources: Artifacts (Greene and staff)

* Guide to Collections Records, Ethnology and Archaeology Collections. Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology.
  [read this one carefully; keep it for continual reference]

*Review of Anthropology Collections home page, available at [http://anthropology.si.edu/cm](http://anthropology.si.edu/cm)
  [critical before any museum visit!]

Jones, Reba


Flynn and Hull-Walski


Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History Department of Anthropology Object Handling Procedures

Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History Department of Anthropology Statement on Potential Hazards (Inherent and Acquired) Associated with Collection Objects

[Tuesday-Friday: arranged small group lunches with Godby Ingalsbe]
DAY 3 – SPEED DATING - ARCHIVES

Lesson #6a, Collections Resources: Archives (Greene and staff)
* Review of National Anthropological Archives home page, available at [http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa/](http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa/)

* Review of public version of online database, available at [http://siris-archives.si.edu](http://siris-archives.si.edu)

*NAA documents:
Visitor form
Digital camera use
Photocopy order form


* Redman, Samuel J. 2013 Historical Research in Archives: A Practical Guide. American Historical Association. [read chapters 2-3 for an introduction to archival research]

Lesson #7, Learning from Photographs (Bell)
<https://www.academia.edu/203619/Bell_J.A._2009._For_Scientific_Purposes_a_Stand_Camera_is_Essential_Salvaging_Photographic_Histories_in_Papua._In_Morton_C._and_Edwards_E._eds_Photography_Anthropology_and_History_Expanding_the_Frame_143-170._Ashgate>


DAY 4 – FIELD NOTES, DATA COLLECTION PLANS

Lesson #8, Photographing Collections (NMNH Photographer Don Hurlbert)
   [critical technical skills]

Lesson #9, Managing Your Image Files (Nault, NAA)
   [data management strategies and best practices]

Lesson #10, Collection Notes and Work Plans (Greene and Munson)
Sanjek, Roger

Lesson #11, Meet and Greet: Smithsonian Resource People

Day 5 – DEFINING QUESTIONS, DEFINING DATA

Lesson #13, What’s Your Data? (Munson)
Banning, E. B.
2000 "What are data?" In The Archaeologist's Laboratory: The Analysis of Archaeological Data, pp.7-8.
   [read pp.7-8 only; think about your collection and consider what you want to measure and why]
Lesson #14, Introduction to my Methods (Jackson)

Boas, Franz
[The opening salvo in the Boas-Mason-Powell debate on typological versus historical presentation in museums.]

Kroeber, A. L.
[A textbook account of distributions in the anthropological study of culture history.]

Dundes, Alan
[A comparative folklorist introduces various comparative strategies, comparing and contrasting folklore and cultural anthropology in their use.]

Jackson, Jason Baird and Raymond D. Fogelson
[A localized introduction to culture areas as conceptual units and to the culture area where I work. Touches on one of my in-class case studies.]

*Choose one of the following three readings based on your topical interest*

Jackson, Jason Baird
2000 Signaling the Creator: Indian Football as Ritual Performance among the Yuchi and their Neighbors. Southern Folklore. 57(1):33-64.
[My interests reflected in a consideration of a ritualized game in context and in light of its regional distribution]

[My interests reflected in a consideration of a medicinal plant in context and in light of its regional distribution]

Jackson Jason Baird and Victoria Levine
[My interests reflected in a consideration of a music and dance performance form in context and in light of its regional distribution]
Lesson #15a, Close Looking: Single Objects
Part 1: In the Classroom (Greene)
*Banks, Marcus
[think how to apply his analysis of a postcard to museum objects]

Caple, Chris
[consider what technical analyses can reveal]

*Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan
1890  The Science of Deduction. In Sign of Four.
PDF made from text at http://www.literature.org/authors/doyle-arthur-conan/sign-of-four/chapter-01.html
<accessed 9 May 2012>.
[not just for fun – we’ll discuss this one]

Prown, Jules David
[another systematic way to approach objects; consider whether observations are answers or questions to apply to further sets of objects]

Lesson #15b, Close Looking
Part 2: In the Collections
[small groups learning to look]

Lesson #16, Research Funding:
  Guest Speaker Deborah Winslow, NSF
* Dissertation Improvement Abstracts on NSF Site
  Michael Jordan, NSF Proposal
  Catherine Nichols, Wenner Gren Proposal
[samples of successful proposals for you to keep on file]

Lesson #17, Models and Assumptions (Munson)
Munson, Marit K.
2011  The Archaeology of Art in the American Southwest. Chap.1 and 2, pp. 1-42. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
[how considering something “art” versus “artifact” raises different questions]

Wisker, Gina.
[especially section on operationalizing a concept]
Lesson #18a, Looking at Sets, Seeing Patterns (Arnoldi)
* Arth, Kim
2005 Keeping Traditions: Change, Innovation and Continuity in Kenyan Kyondo Baskets (MA Thesis) [general background for work with baskets collected by Arth]

Lesson #18b, Looking at Accessions and Collectors (Bell)
O’Hanlon, M.

Bell, J.A.

Bell, Joshua A., Alison K. Brown, and Robert J. Gordon, eds.

Lesson #19, Collectors and Collecting (Jackson)

Sturtevant, William C.
[Skim]
Week 3  HOW COLLECTIONS ARE SHAPED: DATA CRITIQUE
Resource people: Josh Bell, Jason Baird Jackson (M-T), Jennifer Kramer (W-F)

Lesson #20, Smithsonian Folklife Festival (Godby Ingalsbe and Jackson)
*Kurin, Richard.
[An official introduction to the Festival. The Festival allows us to interact with makers and users of objects as we study material culture. There is much literature and debate around the topic of festivals as sites of representation. But for our purposes, we’re focusing on the Festival as a field site analogous to the museum and archives.]

Lesson #21, Ethics in Museum Research (Godby Ingalsbe)
*AAA Committee on Ethics
2012  “Principles of Professional Responsibility,” posted on AAA Ethics Blog: A forum sponsored by the AAA Committee on Ethics. PDF created from website; Accessed 30 May 2014
http://ethics.aaanet.org/category/statement/
[It's useful to see what your relevant professional organization has to say about ethics; this provides a useful baseline.]

Bounia, Alexandra
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/jcms.1021214>.
[Do you see these theoretical views impacting your work? Are there other theoretical views that should be considered?]

*Fowler, Catherine S. and Steven J. Crum

[Ethical research impacts how you interact with the communities you study, what you do with your data, and what you can access at other institutions. You should consider all of these issues when planning research projects.]

*Smithsonian Institution Office of Sponsored Projects
2009  “Human Subjects Research FAQs,” posted at
[Is the research you’re engaged in human subjects research? This document provides helpful criteria for deciding.]

Lesson #22, Material Culture in/as Cultural Performance (Jackson)
*Babcock, Barbara
[A folklore-studies friendly, communications-centered introduction to material culture.]
* Bauman, Richard
[A folklore-studies friendly, communications-centered introduction to the concept of performance.]

* Stoeltje, Beverly J.
[A folklore-studies friendly, communications-centered introduction to festival, a key performance "genre."]

Lesson #23, Museum Systems of Classification (Greene)
* Edwards, Elizabeth and Janice Hart
[the contingent ways in which things are assembled within a museum or archive]

* Pearce, Susan M.

Lesson #24, Objects in Circulation: Beyond Biography (Bell)
Tsing, Anna

Weiner, Annette B.

Latour, Bruno

Lesson #25, Introduction to my Methods (Kramer)
Bunn-Marcuse, Kathryn

Jonaitis, Aldona
Lesson #26, Mini-symposium - informal student presentations

[time to think about how your projects have grown, changed, or gotten stuck]
Lesson #27, From Museum to Field: Working with Source Communities (Bell and Kramer)
[whom to work with, how to engage people, what people may or may not know]

Kramer, Jennifer

Smith, Paul Chaat

Lesson #28, Variously valued material culture (Kramer)
Kramer, Jennifer

Duffek, Karen

Ki-ke-in

Lesson #29, Final Symposium with Student Presentations
Discussants

Lesson #30, SIMA Course Evaluation
RUNNING THROUGHOUT PROGRAM

Individual data collection, based on weekly plans
  Research visits to other area collections by appointment

Individual advising on research project

Individual time in collections with faculty

Informal small group gatherings for discussion on various topics, organized by faculty or by students