

## **Waste, Custom, Community**

CS 677.04  
04675-1 R  
Dulles 27  
MW 9:30-11:18

Prof. Dorothy Noyes  
Denney 517  
292-0387, -6065  
noyes.10@osu.edu  
Off. hrs. T 3-5:30  
W 11:30-1

This course explores the customary management of communal resources, both human and material. It pays special attention to the category of the residual: the excess, superfluous, unclassifiable, damaged. Starting off from Agnès Varda's film "The Gleaners and I," we will explore traditional means of recycling residual people and things, practically and symbolically, in a range of societies. We'll examine the creation of waste (and its converse, deprivation) with the codification of custom in modernity, and look at strategies by which waste is recuperated, out of necessity, principle, and aesthetic concern. Finally, we'll think about the status of residues in social and cultural theory. This exercise should help us to theorize community and custom as well as the residual.

### **REQUIRED READINGS**

#### At SBX only:

Hobsbawm, Eric. 2000 (rev.ed.) *Bandits*. New York: New Press.

Cerny, Charlene, and Suzanne Seriff, eds. 1996. *Recycled, Re-Seen: Folk Art From the Global Scrap-Heap*. New York/Santa Fe: Harry N. Abrams/Museum of International Folk Art.

#### At the Tuttle Park Cop-Ez:

A course packet.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Four short papers, 40%. The course is divided into six units. For four of these, you will reflect on the readings and discussion (about 2 single-spaced pages each). These papers may be focused in any way you like, and incorporate data, ideas, and questions beyond the scope of our discussions. They should demonstrate, however, that you have been engaged as reader and participant.

2. Two longer oral/written reports, 50%. For two of the course units, you will conduct basic research on a topic that interests you and report to the class on your findings. Your methods depend on the topic: you might do anything from close reading to ethnographic observation. The goal is to provide us and yourself with a case study that helps to shed light on the questions of the course, as well as allowing you to bring your own expertise to the general discussion. One week after your course presentation (about 15 minutes, with another 10 for discussion), you'll turn in a revised and enriched written version (about 7 double-spaced pages).
3. General presence and participation, 10%.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance and minimal course requirements.** As point 3 of the course requirements make clear, your attendance (as well as your level of preparation) will have an impact on your grade. More than five absences, without documented excuses, will result in an F in the course. Not turning in any one of the six major writing assignments is also grounds for an F.

**Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

Especially when doing research on the Internet, be extremely careful to credit your sources appropriately. And bear in mind—it is far less trouble to write the paper yourself than to plagiarize convincingly.

**Disability resources.** The Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307. If you require accomodation to do the work of the course, please let me know immediately.

## SCHEDULE

### Unit one. Approaching the residual

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| 9/25 | Introduction   |
| 9/30 | Symbolic approaches: classification and residues<br><br>Douglas, Mary 1979 (1966). "The Abominations of Leviticus." In <i>Reader in Comparative Religion</i> , 149-152. W. Lessa and E. Vogt, eds. New York: Harper and Row. |

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|      | <p>Leach, Edmund 1979 (1964). "Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse." In <i>Reader in Comparative Religion</i>, 153-166. W. Lessa and E. Vogt, eds. New York: Harper and Row.</p> <p>Thompson, Michael 1979. <i>Rubbish Theory: The Creation and Destruction of Value</i>, ch. 1 (1-12). Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>LESSA AND VOGT VOLUME + XEROXED THOMPSON AT MAIN LIBRARY RESERVE</p>   |
| 10/2 | <p>Historical and practice approaches</p> <p>Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1962. "The Science of the Concrete." <i>The Savage Mind</i>, 1-33. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p> <p>Kelley, Donald R. 1990. " 'Second Nature': The Idea of Custom in European Law, Society, and Culture." <i>The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe</i>, 131-172. Anthony Grafton and Ann Blair, eds. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.</p> <p>XEROXED READINGS AT MAIN LIBRARY RESERVE</p> |
| 10/7 | <p>Film: "The Gleaners and I" (Les glaneurs et la glaneuse), dir. Agnès Varda (2000).</p>  |
| 10/9 | <p>No class: do your research!</p>   |

## Unit two. Scarcity and abundance

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| 10/14 | <p>Buried treasure, limited good and reciprocity</p> <p>Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm. 1987 (1857). "Godfather Death." <i>The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm</i>, 160-163. Jack Zipes, trans. New York: Bantam.</p> <p>Foster, George W. 1964. "Treasure Tales and the Image of the Static Economy in a Mexican Peasant Community." <i>Journal of American Folklore</i> 77: 39-44.</p> <p>Briggs, Charles. 1985. "Treasure Tales and Pedagogical Discourse in Mexicano New Mexico." <i>Journal of American Folklore</i> 86: 287-314.</p> |
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| DUE   | <p>Agonito, Rosemary. 1967. "The Snake." From "Il Paisano: Italian Immigrant Folktales of Central New York." <i>New York Folklore Quarterly</i>, 54-55.</p> <p>Paper 1</p>  |
| 10/16 | <p>Hunger and the land of Cockayne</p> <p>Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm. 1987 (1857). "Hansel and Gretel" and "Clever Gretel." <i>The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm</i>, 58-64, 286-288. Jack Zipes, trans. New York: Bantam.</p> <p>Del Giudice, Luisa. 2001. "Mountains of Cheese and Rivers of Wine: Paesi di Cuccagna and Other Gastronomic Utopias." <i>Imagined States: Nationalism, Utopia, and Longing in Oral Cultures</i>, 11-63. Luisa Del Giudice and Gerald Porter, eds. Logan: Utah State University Press.</p> <p>Pellegrini, Angelo. 1984 (1948). "The Discovery of Abundance." From <i>The Unprejudiced Palate</i>, 18-36. San Francisco: North Point Press.</p> <p>Ernaux, Annie. 1983. <i>A Man's Place (La Place)</i>, 14-24. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows.</p> <p>Hill, Joe. 1911. "Pie in the Sky."</p> <p>McClintock, Harry. 1921. "The Big Rock Candy Mountain.</p> |

### Unit three. Tradition and the outsider

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| 10/21 | <p>Foreigners and immigrants</p> <p>The Book of Ruth</p>   |
| DUE   | <p>Paper 2</p>   |
| 10/23 | <p>Marginals, transients, category problems</p> <p>Green, Anthony E. 1980. "Popular Drama and the Mummers' Play." In <i>Performance and Politics in Popular Drama</i>, 139-166. David Bradby et al., eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Hartigan, John Jr. 1997. "Name Calling: Objectifying 'Poor Whites' and 'White Trash' in Detroit." <i>White Trash: Race and Class in America</i>, 41-</p> |

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|       | <p>56. Matt Wray and Annalee Newitz, eds. New York and London: Routledge.</p> <p>Penley, Constance. "Crackers and Whackers: The White Trashing of Porn." <i>White Trash: Race and Class in America</i>, 89-112. Matt Wray and Annalee Newitz, eds. New York and London: Routledge.</p> |
| 10/28 | <p>Outlaws</p> <p>Hobsbawm, Eric. 2000 (rev.ed.). <i>Bandits</i> (selections). New York: New Press.</p>  |

#### **Unit four. Commons and communities**

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| 10/30 | <p>The commons</p> <p>Scott, James. 1998. "Nature and Space." <i>Seeing Like a State</i>, 11-51. New Haven: Yale University Press.</p> <p>Williams, Raymond 1973. "Enclosures, Commons, and Communities." <i>The Country and the City</i>, 96-107. New York: Oxford.</p> <p>McKay, Bonnie J. and James M. Acheson. 1987. "The Human Ecology of the Commons." <i>The Question of the Commons</i>, 1-34. McKay and Acheson, eds. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.</p>   |
| 11/4  | <p>Enclosures and customary protest</p> <p>Sahlins, Peter. 1993. "Deep Play in the Forest: The "War of the Demoiselles" in the Ariège, 1829-1831." <i>Culture and identity in early modern Europe (1500-1800)</i>, 159-177. Barbara B. Diefendorf and Carla Hesse, eds. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.</p> <p>Noyes, Dorothy. 1995. "Façade Performances: Public Face, Private Mask." <i>Southern Folklore</i> 52: 91-95.</p> <p>Noyes, Dorothy. 1995. "Façade Performances in Catalonia: Display, Respect, Reclamation, Refusal." <i>Southern Folklore</i> 52: 97-120.</p> |
| DUE   | <p>Paper 3</p>  |
| 11/6  | <p>The commons in ruins: Appalachia</p> <p>Hufford, Mary. 1999. "Weathering the Storm: Cultural Survival in an</p>  |

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|       | <p>Appalachian Valley.” <i>An Appalachian Tragedy: Air Pollution and Tree Death in the Eastern Forests of North America</i>, 147-159. Harvard Ayers, Jenny Hager, and Charles E. Little, eds. San Francisco: Sierra Club.</p> <p>Stewart, Kathleen. 1996. “Mimetic Excess in an Occupied Place.” <i>A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics and Politics in an “Other” America</i>, 41-66. Princeton: Princeton University Press.</p> |
| 11/11 | NO CLASS—Veterans’ Day  |
| 11/13 | <p>The problem of cultural property</p> <p>Brush, Stephen B. 1996. “Whose Knowledge, Whose Genes, Whose Rights?” <i>Valuing Local Knowledge</i>, 1-21. Stephen B. Brush and Doreen Stabinsky, eds. Washington D.C.: Island Press.</p> <p>Do a Google search: intellectual property rights, cultural property, indigenous cultural property, etc.: browse what looks interesting.</p>  |

### Part Five. Capitalism and waste

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| 11/18 | <p>Thrift</p> <p>Franklin, Benjamin 1961. “The Way to Wealth.” <i>The Autobiography and Other Writings</i>, 188-197. New York: Signet.</p> <p>Weber, Max 1976 (1920-21). “Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism.” <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i>, 155-183. Trans. Talcott Parsons. New York: Scribners.</p> |
| DUE   | Paper 4   |
| 11/20 | <p>Excess and display</p> <p>Veblen, Thorstein. 1994 (1899). “Conspicuous Consumption.” <i>The Theory of the Leisure Class</i>, 68-101. New York: Penguin.</p> <p>Bataille, Georges. “The Notion of Expenditure.” <i>Visions of Excess</i>, 116-129. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.</p>                                    |
| 11/25 | <p>Scavenging and recycling</p> <p>Cerny and Seriff, eds. Read Seriff, Cerny, Turner, Gundaker, Roberts.</p>  |

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| 11/27 | <p>Conspicuous recycling</p> <p>Cerny and Seriff, eds. Read Korom, Cubbs and Metcalf, Cosentino.</p> |
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**Part Six. Leftover culture**

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| 12/2 | <p>Cultures, residual and emergent</p> <p>Schmitt, Jean-Claude 1983. "On Superstition." <i>The Holy Greyhound</i>, 14-24. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Taylor, E. B. 1970 (1871). "The Science of Culture." <i>The Origins of Culture</i>, 1-25. Gloucester MA: Peter Smith.</p> <p>Williams, Raymond 1977. "Dominant, Residual, and Emergent." <i>Marxism and Literature</i>, 121-127. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Gramsci, Antonio. 1999 (1950). "Observations on Folklore." <i>International Folkloristics</i>. Alan Dundes, ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.</p> |
| DUE  | Paper 5  |
| 12/4 | <p>The futures of the folk</p> <p>Stewart, Kathleen. 1988. "Nostalgia: A Polemic." <i>Cultural Anthropology</i>. 3:227-241.</p>  |
| 12/9 |  |
| DUE  | Paper 6 (MUST be turned in electronically!)  |