

ETHN 114A Representing Native America — Midterm Report & Presentation

This midterm assignment covers Parts I and II of the course.

Select a museum to analyze for your midterm report. You may select one of the local museums to visit, or any museum that displays Native American objects. You cannot use the Smithsonian National museum of American Indian (NMAI) for this assignment. Use web sites, printed catalogs, or special exhibition catalogs (in the Art & Architecture Library), reviews in newspapers or journals, and any other sources you can find. Local museums to consider:

Museum of Man - Kumeyaay or other exhibit (Balboa Park)
Barona Museum and Cultural Center (Barona Reservation)
Cupa Cultural Center (Pala Reservation)
Mission San Diego Acalá Museum
Kumeyaay-Ipai Interpretive Center at Pauwai (Poway)
Autry National Center (Griffith Park, LA)

Your report should answer the following question: How do museums that exhibit Native American material negotiate the issues brought up so far in this course? Specifically:

- 1) How do they position material culture in relation to art or ethnographic sensibilities?
- 2) How do they contend with the colonial histories of collection, display, representation, and the ideology of nation building?
- 3) How do their exhibition strategies or narratives provoke or respond to the critiques posed by the scholars that write about the decolonizing project?
- 4) Are there elements that might lend themselves to working for decolonization through reinterpretation or another perspective?

You will turn in a 5-page report at the beginning of class on Thursday, February 2. You may assemble a team of 2 if you wish. You will also make a 5-minute (more if we have teams) presentation of your analysis in class.