

ARH 6930: Critical Theories for Museum Studies

Hegemonic power
Racism oppression microaggressions
Heteronormativity Patriarchy Cisgender
Intersectionality privilege
Critical theory
LGBTQ+ White privilege
Gender Sexism Social Justice
identity centering Cultural supremacy

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Office Hours: Wednesdays directly after class and by appointment via Zoom

*Please feel free to call me Dr. Moore, Dr. M, Dr. P

Pronouns: She/Her

Class Meeting Location: Room FAC 0116A

Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 10:40 AM-1:40 PM

**** This syllabus is highly subject to change****

Introduction

The study of museums is the study of the cultural product of humankind. Additionally, the study of museums is also inherently about critically examining the ways in which museums have historically organized and evolved into the institutions that we work, visit, study, play, and learn in. Museums organize themselves into collecting or non-collecting institutions. They display and/or produce tangible and intangible cultural heritage exhibitions, programming, and educational tools to preserve and educate varying publics. In recent years, seminal museum scholars such as Falk and Dierking and Gail Anderson have made much regarding the great “shifting” of values in the museum field. Anderson refers to this increased consciousness as a paradigm shift that “re-invents” the museum. Others such as Stephen Weil have helped museum professionals re-center the focus of museums from being about something to being for someone. The hierarchy of the object was/is replaced with the pulse and heartbeat of

community/communities needs and wants for leisure and information. Yet, there is also a newer, more nuanced shift occurring in museums. The increased demand for equity, inclusion, and access in museums means that new values have been introduced in the field such as social justice, feminism, trauma-informed techniques, healing-centered values, empathy, racial literacy, and more. Gone are the days when museums and their professionals could have the goal of functioning as community-centered institutions while attempting to remain neutral about deeply-rooted concerns which impact the lives of others. **If we are to evolve as museum and cultural heritage professionals and as institutions so must our thinking.**

Rather than pretending that these complicated values and ideologies do not have merit or space in the museum field; in this course we ask what is the future of museums (particularly, in this time of anti-intellectualism)? We turn to a deep exploration of pedagogies, critical theories, ideologies, and provocative thoughts not traditional to museum studies in order to help us re-imagine what might the power of museums be in the 21st century if they were more connected to critical theories and ideologies that push the limits of traditional modalities of thinking in museum studies? We will explore the following via critical inquiry:

1. Does working within the field of cultural heritage require critical theory?
2. Do we need a theory of museology? If so, what are the parameters for such?
3. What critical theories are necessary to promote and increase change in museums?
4. Is Critical Race Theory a vital pathway for the goal of meeting the demand for DEIA?
5. Is there room for theory in real-world museum jobs?
6. What additional pedagogies, concepts, and ideologies are viable for strengthening the museum field?
7. What new dimensions and realms of research does critical theory offer us to expand the field?

Course Objectives

Students will:

- Understand how Critical Museum Studies is essential to broadening their access to professional opportunities in a job market that is situated in requests for DEAI efficacy, 21st century literacies, and informed museum praxis
- Examine how critical pedagogies, critical thought, and historical narratives impact perspectives on museums and museum-going in a contemporary world;
- Engage with current theoretical debates in the field regarding critical and post-critical theories and consider how they are impacting museum practice in the ways of collections, collections management, preservation, etc.;

- Understand the organization, history, and operation of museums and cultural heritage institutions today and their role in a society that struggles to embrace ideologies such as Black Lives Matter, feminist theories, etc.;
- Situate indigenous narratives and histories as central to the shifts necessary for strengthening museums and decolonization efforts
- Recognize the relationship between disciplinary and cultural shifts and their resonance in museum practice as it relates to 21st century museum work;
- Engage with current literature in the field as it relates to current issues and opportunities in cultural heritage;
- Develop professional writing and presentation skills for museum praxis

CURRICULA

Statement on EIAJ and Curricula

Overview and Philosophy

Museum Studies is a vital discipline at the intersection of cultural heritage, informatics, digital technologies, material culture, history, and more. It is an in-depth examination of the role of museums in society. Our discipline's assumptions have been based on the notion that cultural heritage institutions exist to collect and preserve the material culture of nations for public display. While these conventions are predicated on the notion that access to these resources is a human right, it is our belief that it is necessary to interrogate these practices to maintain critical standards of ethics, empathy, and professionalization. We actively explore and seek deeper meaning and healing around issues of reparations, repatriation, cultural and national agency. We prioritize the need to cultivate challenging dialogue, shape innovation in the field, and create ideological change for the healthy growth and expansion of our field.

We understand the complex histories of colonialism and imperialism and their compounded impact on museums as institutions. As such, we understand that it is imperative to decolonize our curricula. 21st century museum scholarship and professionals must actively engage in anti-racist pedagogies and expand beyond museology as it is currently practiced.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

I believe deeply in critical pedagogy and critical inquiry. In the Digital and Information Age, this is the foundation of intellectual and academic excellence.

We will employ an Inquiry-based learning model in this course (IBL). **What is Inquiry?** Inquiry is the vital skillset of asking questions to obtain, evaluate, and acquire knowledge. Inquiry-based learning allows you to:

- Make cross-course connections
- Increase engagement with course material
- More deeply connect theories and principles
- Critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate varying bodies of knowledge and information content
- Engage in powerful dialogue with your peers and professor even when you disagree

Good, solid inquiry is based on two principles: 1) **Active Inquiry** and 2) **Active Listening**. Consider these two actions your most important tasks this semester.

Active Inquiry

Here are some general guidelines for my expectations of how you will use the language of Inquiry to pose critical questions to one another. (Although, please rest assured that there is no expectation for some of the language to be this formal).

Here are some types of questions that tend to facilitate thoughtful, sustained discussions:

Analysis

Questions beginning with “Why...” “How would you explain...” “What is the importance of...” “What is the meaning of”

- Example: What is the meaning of Madame X’s comment about Jacque’s activities the week before their encounter at the opera?

Compare and Contrast

“Compare...” “Contrast...” “What is the difference between...” “What is the similarity between...”

- Example: What is the difference between the mother and the father’s attitudes toward the daughter’s relationship with Philippe?

Cause and Effect

“What are the causes/results of...” “What connection is there between...”

- Example: What is the cause of Lea’s distress when she looks at herself in the mirror?

Clarification

“What is meant by...” “Explain how...”

I would also like to point out that the basis of seminar is that we are all in direct communication with the entire body of literature in museum studies. We should be mindful that we are to constantly be in conversation with every work that we read. Therefore, another powerful technique is to reference the readings and their authors as a way to increase connections between works so that key terms, principles, themes, frameworks, theories, and ideologies are centered in our conversations.

The reality is that I will not have all of the “answers”; neither will you. However, collectively we have a powerful brain trust that is a force for change in our field to be reckoned with.

Please consider and refer to this classic skillset for Effective Listening (What I call Active Listening).

Source: William H. Bergquist and Steven R. Phillips, A Handbook for Faculty Development, Volume 2. Washington, D.C.: Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, 1977, p. 207.

Ineffective		Effective
	<u>Non-Verbal Behavior</u>	
Listener looks bored, uninterested, or judgmental; avoids eye contact; displays distracting mannerisms (doodles, plays with a paper clip, etc.)		Listener maintains positive posture; avoids distracting mannerisms; keeps attention focused on speaker; maintains eye contact; nods and smiles when appropriate
	<u>Focus of Attention</u>	
Listener shifts focus of attention to himself: "When something like that happened to me, I . . ."		Listener keeps focus of her comments on the speaker: "When that happened what did you do?"
	<u>Acceptance</u>	
Listener fails to accept speaker's ideas and feelings: "I think it would have been better to . . ."		Listener accepts ideas and feelings: "That's an interesting idea; can you say more about it?"
	<u>Empathy</u>	
Listener fails to empathize: "I don't see why you felt that . . ."		Listener empathizes: "So when that happened, you felt angry."
	<u>Probing</u>	
Listener fails to probe into an area, to follow up on an idea or feeling		Listener probes in a helpful way (but does not cross examine): "Could you tell me more about that? Why did you feel that way? Listener follows up: "A few minutes ago you said that . . ."
	<u>Paraphrasing</u>	
Listener fails to check the accuracy of communication by restating in his own words important statements made by the speaker		Listener paraphrases to guarantee that she has understood correctly and to assure speaker that this is so
	<u>Summarizing</u>	
Listener fails to summarize		Listener summarizes the progress of the conversation from time to time
	<u>Advice</u>	
Listener narrows the range of alternatives by suggesting one "correct" course of action		Listener broadens the range of ideas by suggesting (or asking the speaker for) a number of alternatives

Course Policies



COVID

Covid protocols are ever-changing, please vigorously consult this UF website to receive updated information about Covid guidelines:

<https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/>

Course Attendance

Pre Covid, here is what I would have begun with regarding attendance:

Attendance and participation are critical components of this course and your success. If, for some reason, you are unable to be in class please let me know in advance via email. If a crisis or life-threatening emergency has occurred; please alert me as soon as possible after your absence should advance notice not be feasible. Please note that in many cases accompanying documentation might be required. More than three absences will impact your participation grade. A point will be deducted for each additional absence. Upon noticeable absences; I will call for a one-on-one meeting.

Additionally, I mark attendance by your being fully present physically, cognitively, and intellectually. Showing up, weighing in, and making powerfully creative and significant contributions to course discussion can greatly contribute to the success of your final grade in the course.

Here is how Covid impacts my attendance policy:

Self-preservation, caregiving, and resilience have become the tools we must employ to thrive and practice our best response to safety in these times. While it is my expectation that you adhere to the above; taking care of yourself is a priority. Therefore, if you are feeling ill or concerned that you might have been exposed to Covid-19, please do not hesitate to adhere to the on-going UF policies regarding Covid and prioritize SELF-PRESERVATION.

Read more here to learn about UF's Attendance Policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

ZOOM OPTION for illnesses ONLY

I am not allowed to offer virtual options for this course “just because”. However, in the event, that I am ill or if you are ill and still wish to maintain course attendance; I will offer the following Zoom link. Please note that, in general, I will not be using this link unless you have notified me in advance on the morning of your illness and need to utilize:

Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/7762937492>

A Word on Timeliness

Students are expected to be on time and prepared to begin at 10:40 AM. **When the class is meeting at a site other than the classroom please arrive at least 10 minutes prior.** Students should also familiarize themselves with the institutions we are visiting and the biographies or careers of the people that we will be meeting with. Students should also prepare questions for the speakers in advance of these classes.

Classroom Conduct

The relational landscape of a classroom is an important factor in creating an **energetic learning environment**. I want us to be energized; always. The most conducive way to achieve this landscape is to practice empathy. There are a myriad of definitions for “empathy”. I offer that empathy in the university classroom has two goals:

1. Helping students understand how seeking to make connections with the unfamiliar/their own information gaps can transform their learning experience
2. Helping students navigate modalities of Discernment, Agency, and Empathy.

I believe that museums can change the world; but we need empathetic, inspired museum workers to do so. Empathy is a way for us to understand how others are feeling even when it does not make sense to us. There are at least three types of empathy: 1) Cognitive, 2) Emotional, and 3) Compassionate. As such, I ask that you maintain this basic classroom behavior for our greatest possible learning experience:

Students should dress, behave, and treat their fellow students and instructor with professionalism. This includes giving them your full attention, not speaking over others, and respectfully responding to others' ideas or comments.

All of us will have differing opinions about a plethora of subjects. We can agree to disagree. Please do not deflate another's joy or passion for a subject simply because you do not share the same viewpoints. Higher education has room for variety of thought.

Focus Skills		Focus Skill in Action	Key Experiences
	Discernment	Thinking critically about rigorous content. Telling truth from fiction. Weighing arguments against context to find the right next step.	Small Group Instruction Balanced Literacy Academic Discourse College Exploration & Planning
	Agency	Exploring potential paths. Possessing the skills to plan, act and reflect. Responsibility. Using your voice effectively. Applying theory to practice. Leveraging opportunities.	Worthy Problems/Projects Exhibition Field Work Goal Setting Public Speaking/Presenting
	Empathy	Seeing and seeking multiple perspectives. Valuing difference. Caring about others even when you don't agree with them.	Circle Practices & Conflict Resolution Student Led Conferences Service Learning

Credit: "Helping Students Develop Discernment, Agency, and Empathy" By Sherre Vernon, Shelli Kurth and Joe Acker

Pronouns

My pronouns are She/Her. I recognize the fact that pronouns are not preferences; they just are. Please feel free to alert us what your pronouns are. There is the full expectation that as a class group we are respectful of all pronouns that we have been directed to use as a collective. In return, there is the expectation that allowing for proper/correct use of directed pronouns come with possible learning curves for some as they adjust to that notion grammatically.

Canvas

The (printed) syllabus is highly subject to change. More detailed information on assignments, weekly readings, and schedules, along with the complete syllabus will be posted on the Canvas site for this class. Canvas will serve as the most current resource for the class.

Students are responsible for consulting the site for the latest information regularly.

Museums are places for debate and conversations about important issues facing us today and in the past. Current issues that are near-crisis point in museums include: structural racism, repatriation, single-use plastics/environmental stewardship, pay wages, and more. The class will also be a place for similar debate and discussion. At times we will be discussing sensitive topics. It is essential that students are respectful of each other's viewpoints and comments. We will also be learning what might be new language and frameworks. I encourage you to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. Similarly, I encourage students to speak with me if they feel upset, unsafe, and unheard based on the discussions or atmosphere in class. I welcome the opportunity to shore up any issues of safety, inclusion, empathy, etc.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at

gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Plagiarism and the Honor Code

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment”.

This includes plagiarism, which includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

For more on plagiarism and the honor code see:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Privacy

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled.

The only allowable purposes are:

- (1) for personal educational use
- (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or
- (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited.

Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of

the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course.

A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section.

Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Conduct Code.

How to Submit Deliverables

The submission process for the course is fairly simple:

Written assignments should use 1.5 spacing, 12 point font in Times New Roman, edited for proper grammar and spelling and stylized for Chicago or APA.

Submitting Assignment--Written assignments and presentation PowerPoints should be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59pm the day they are due. They **MUST** also be submitted by hardcopy in class (except PP).

Student Resources & Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio

online at [http:// writing.ufl.edu/writing- studio/](http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/) or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Link to UF Grades and Grading Policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Grading Scale

Grade Scale

93.4-100=A;
90.0-93.3=A-;
86.7-89.9=B+;
83.4-86.6=B;
80.0-83.3=B-;
76.7-79.9=C+;
73.4-76.6=C;
70.0-73.3=C-;
66.7-69.9=D+;
63.4-66.6=D;
60.0-63.3=D-;

Course Schedule + Assignments

Wednesdays

WEEK 1	No class/Dr. Moore recovers Review Canvas Review Syllabus Varying Assignments
WEEK 2 January 12	Intro Assignment Review & Sign-Up Critical Museum Studies Memory Studies/Theory Critical Theory
WEEK 3 January 19	Critical Heritage Theory Information Theory Critical Theory CRT—Critical Race Theory
WEEK 4 January 26	CRT—Critical Race Theory Historical Thinking Critical Thinking Difficult Histories Race Narratives Due
WEEK 5 February 2	CRT Social Inclusion Theory Inclusion Theory
WEEK 6 February 9	Decolonization Theory
WEEK 7 February 16	CRIT Week Decolonization Continued Post-Colonial Theory
WEEK 8 February 23	Death Studies Archival Theory
WEEK 9 March 2	Disability Studies Food Studies
WEEK 10 March 9	Spring Break Observed March 5-12
WEEK 11 March 16	Queer Theory

	Feminist Theory Black Feminist Theory
WEEK 12 March 23	Creative Aging
WEEK 13 March 30	Trauma-Informed Pedagogy Healing-Centered Pedagogy
WEEK 14 April 6	Pleasure Activism Sexuality/Sex and Gender Studies
WEEK 15 April 13	Social Networking Theory Ted Talks Group 1
WEEK 16 April 20	Institutional Org Change Theory Ted Talks Group 2
WEEK 17 Reading Week	

Assignments

Race Narrative Due January 26

Ted Talk Group 1 Due April 13

Ted Talk Group 2 Due April 20

Case Study Paper Due during Reading Week

Response Paper (2) as signed up

Discussion Lead rolling as signed up

Academic Success Tools

Academic Resources E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process

Self-Care + Preservation

Basic Needs Security

Any student who facing challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in this course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. But also, please do not hesitate to contact me directly as well.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Take care of yourself! The stresses of graduate school can take a toll on our mental and physical health. The Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) is dedicated to caring for students' wellbeing. If you are feeling unwell in anyway, including anxious or panicked, you can reach out to the CWC: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>.

Telephone: 392-1575

Campus Resources: Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Connecting with Dr. Moore

In keeping with the mission and vision of the program and my own research and professional ethics, it is my work to meet strategically with the arts, cultural, and museum community to better identify partners, allies, accomplices, and opportunities for you, myself, and the program. The large implications of this means that I am likely to be in and around campus; but not always in my office. But never fear!

Here are some easy, effective ways that we can remain connected and partnered for your success:

1. Check the syllabus and check it twice
2. Always review Canvas for course updates
3. Identify a peer partner in class to ask any additional questions, collaborate, etc.
4. Come to my office hours. Seriously, come! These hours are set aside explicitly to meet with students. It is the best way to speak with me.
5. Email me. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response. Please do NOT use the Canvas email; just my pmoore@arts@ufl.edu. I am likely not going to respond to email over the course of the weekend but please expect responses over the course of the week.
6. Make an appointment with me. I am a hiker. I love nature and outdoors. I am game to walk the campus with you. Meet you at the library or some other fave spot on campus. Or, here in my office. It is your choice and a great option for fresh, engaging places to talk.
7. Meeting with me after class works as well as long as the questions do not require serious research or timely explanation on my end.



Tidbits of Miscellany

I love writing letters of recommendations for my students. Love! However, I have some hard and fast rules for this privileged action.

Here they are:

1. Be outstanding. Demonstrate your intellectual and professional acumen in and outside of class.
2. Ask for the letter a minimum of ONE MONTH in advance of the deadline
3. Include information about the position, internship, academic opportunity, etc. that you are applying for. If there are specific highlights that you want me to include please clearly identify those things and make your case for how they are apropos in my letter.
4. Include your CV and any additional sparks of interest that are suitable for the letter. Be specific.
5. Clearly state the deadline and how the letter should be submitted
6. Gentle reminders leading up to the deadline are critical!
7. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your academic and professional journey.

Positionality

My research lives at the intersection of community, race, technology, and museums. Interestingly enough, I am a Critical Race Theorist at a time when this decades long graduate level academic pedagogy is under attack. However, regardless of these terms, I am a researcher and scholar. This means that I wholly accept that a fundamental responsibility in my work is that of activist-scholar. At the personal level, this means that my work and research is concerned with intentionally being in tension with academia while joyfully working within it. In addition, this activist scholarship means that I am executing research, education and learning as a teacher, and disrupting best practices for the benefit of communities; specifically, museum visitors. Furthermore, activist-scholarship means that I am working to take what we learn as researchers, students, practitioners, and have it applied for the acquisition of knowledge in the field and for the benefit of communities. With that made clear; race matters. Not because of my lived experiences as a black woman; but more importantly, because race is the primary lens (not only) with which I make meaning of what I learn and the content I create as part of my pedagogy of critical praxis. We will be discussing the function of race, structural racism, and institutional racism in the museum field and cultural heritage in general.

The goal is for transformation and change as we evolve as museum practitioners—it is not about bashing individuals or groups. My focus on race is not bias (although bias exists in us all) or part of an agenda. As Critical Race Theorist it is a function of my learning process and research. Therefore, it is my deepest desire that you see and recognize my blackness. I also want you to understand that this is only one aspect of my lived experiences. We all live at the cross-sections and intersections of life in a multitude of identities. Our collective goal, then, is to honor and celebrate all of these multifaceted aspects of our lives. Understand that if we agree and believe that museums can change the world; we must begin by recognizing the ways in which –isms of all forms hinder or impact the good work that we are all doing to make museums vital, healthy systems in our world. Therefore, please expect that we will confront our biases with love, empathy, and compassion throughout the semester. We are all learning all the time. We will be uncomfortable. We will explore. Examine. Interrogate. Grow. Transform. LAUGH! Therefore, I view race as neither Republican, Democratic, or Independent issue. It is not a black and white dichotomy. It is neither Southern nor Northern. The work that I do is about cultural competence, relevance, and responsiveness. This is where I sit. With an ever-present desire to continue my learning. That's my positionality.