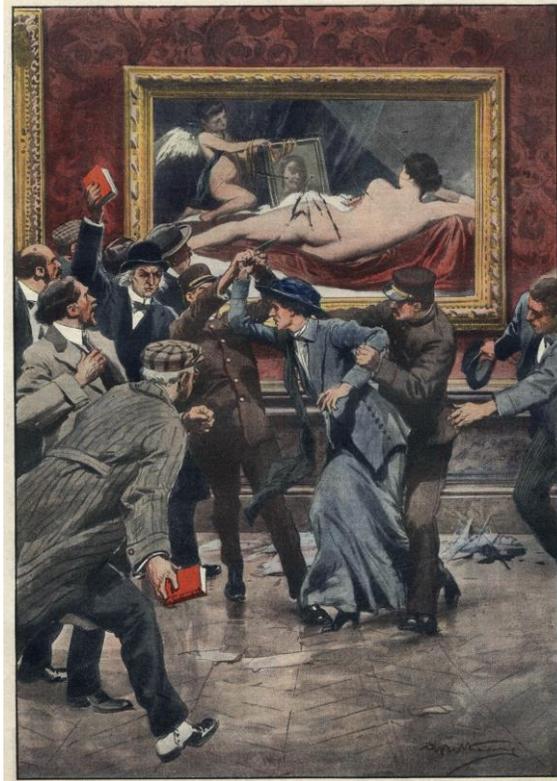


MCS3610F: Controversies and Contestations

Fall semester 2019
Thursdays, 11:30-2:30
Room 247, JLVAC



Professor: Dr. Kirsty Robertson
Office: VAC 221
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-2:00
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Overview:

From fistfights in the galleries, to well-organized interventions into museum collecting practices, museums are frequently sites of struggle and negotiation. What can we learn from the challenging and unsettling of museums by a wide range of groups and communities, across the political spectrum, both historically and in the present? What is it about museums that makes them ideal locations for intervention? What can museums learn from political action and how have they responded (historically and in the present)? Should museums collect protest ephemera, or engage in practices of radical archiving? How are museums themselves encouraging and sustaining political action in the current moment, and across long periods of time? Such questions underpin the discussions in this seminar-style class, where we will come to understand museums less as silent bastions of tradition, and more as raucous contested spaces.

Learning Outcomes, MCS3610F

The Readings and lectures

- Students will develop a greater understanding of the issues and politics that are significant to the museum field.
- Students will have the opportunity to develop their own opinions about controversial subjects in the museum field, through class discussions about the readings.
- Through reflecting on readings and in-class discussions, students will come to understand *why* museums are targeted and *how* museums respond to controversy and intervention.
- Through participatory exercises, students will learn about current best practices in museums.

Assignments

- Students will hone their academic writing skills and will develop their knowledge of critical themes and topics relevant to museum studies.
- Students will become more familiarized with best practices for citing reference materials and utilizing the Chicago Manual of Style.
- Most importantly, students will receive feedback at multiple stages on the same assignment, and will thus be able to work with the professor to develop their writing and analytic skills.
- Students will hone presentation and public speaking skills through a presentation of their work to their peers.