

Race, Folk, and Ethnography in Visual Culture

Deadline: Sep 14, 2018

Marsha Morton, Pratt Institute

Proposals for Essays in Book Anthology on Race, Folk, and Ethnography in Visual Culture

The recent rise in problems of immigration and race are of long historical standing. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Europe, increased colonial expansion, globalization, industrialization, and economic inequality severely tested the assumptions of a shared social fabric. In this, the visual arts performed a key function by amplifying or mitigating racial and ethnic difference. We are seeking proposals for essays that explore representations of race and folk within the context of the disciplines of ethnography and anthropology. The focus of the book will be to examine art's role in forming social constructions about the interactions between white majority populations with minorities that are indigenous, migratory or nomadic, or relocated through colonization. Proposals are encouraged which look at understudied countries and challenge traditional assumptions, such as perceived homogenous populations (Scandinavia, for example) or those with diverse and shifting multi-ethnic groups, as in Central Europe and Russia. Of particular interest are topics that consider ambiguities and contradict assumptions of uniform binary relations: East-West fusions within racial origins, interracial marriages, fluctuating borders, and migratory populations. One might consider the fact that the folk were valorized in definitions of national identity simultaneously with the marginalization of indigenous people through racist characterizations and ethnic categorizations. So too, admiration for the primitive and the popularity of "exotic" people as entertainment co-existed with their denigration.

Proposals are welcome that apply themes from critical race theories, such as the definition of racial identity through social construction, evidence of micro-aggressions, and practices of essentializing ethnic groups rather than individuals. How did countries that viewed themselves as progressive and inclusive deal with evidence that contradicted this? In what ways did multi-ethnic regions foster a common culture while at the same time practicing biological or cultural racism? How did migratory folk populations disrupt conventional definitions of ethnic identity, which were based in part on geography? Proposals are also welcome that consider continuing echoes of these issues later in the twentieth-century; that look at ways in which marginalized minority groups used culture as a means to empower and define themselves; or that focus on the construction of white racial identity.

Proposals should be approximately 300 words and are due by September 14.

Send proposals and c.v. to: Marsha Morton, mortonmarsha10@gmail.com and Barbara Larson, blarson@uwf.edu

Reference:

CFP: Race, Folk, and Ethnography in Visual Culture. In: ArtHist.net, Jul 4, 2018 (accessed Jan 22, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/18547>>.