John Warne Monroe

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# Education

Ph.D. in European History, Yale University, 2002

Dissertation: “Evidence of Things Not Seen: Spiritism, Occultism, and the Search for a Modern Faith in France, 1853-1925” (with the Theron Rockwell Field Prize)

Fields of study and advisors:

France, 1789-Present (John Merriman)

Nineteenth Century European Intellectual History (Frank Turner)

History of Psychology (Esther da Costa-Meyer)

M.Phil. in European History, Yale University, 1998.

A.B. in History, *summa cum laude*, with certificates in European Cultural Studies and Creative Writing, Princeton University, 1995.

# Current Research

I am currently working on a history of the reception of African sculpture in inter-war France, and its crucial role in establishing “primitive art” as a Western esthetic category. The growing acceptance of this category had a wide range of consequences, not only in metropolitan France, but also in the empire and elsewhere. My book, an interdisciplinary study based on extensive research in Paris, New York and Dakar, will explore those consequences, showing how the concept of what dealers and collectors now often call “tribal” or “ethnographic” art emerged from a complex, often ambivalent interaction between esthetic Modernism and France’s imperial project.

**Publications**

Authored Book

*Laboratories of Faith: Mesmerism, Spiritism and Occultism in Modern France.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.

*Laboratoires de la Foi: mesmérisme, spiritisme et occultisme en France, 1853-1914*. Trans. Paul Veyret.

Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2013.

Refereed Journal Articles

“Surface Tensions: Empire, Parisian Modernism, and ‘Authenticity’ in African Sculpture,

1917-1939,” in the *American Historical Review*, 117:2 (April 2012): 445-475.

“*Cartes de Visite* from the Other World: Spiritism and the Discourse of *Laïcisme* in the

Early Third Republic,” in *French Historical Studies*, 26 (Winter 2003): 119-153.

“Making the Séance ‘Serious’: *Tables Tournantes* and Second Empire Bourgeois Culture,

1853-1861,” in *History of Religions*, 38 (Feb. 1999): 219-246.

Book Chapters

“Of Memory and a Masterpiece: A Bamana Boli between Mali and France,” in Lenore Metrick- Chen, ed., *Creating Public Memory: On Objects, Architecture and Other Ephemera* (Albany: SUNY Press, forthcoming).

“Crossing Over: Allan Kardec and the Transnationalization of Modern Spiritualism,” in Cathy Gutierrez, ed., *Handbook of Mesmerism and Spiritualism* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

Exhibition Catalogue

With Lenore Metrick-Chen. *Imaging Others: Cultural Intersections in the Colonial Period* (Des Moines:

Drake University, 2010).

Non-Refereed Articles

“The Way We Believe Now: Modernity and the Occult,” in *Magic, Ritual, and*

*Witchcraft*, 2 (Summer 2007): 68-78.

“Spiritualism,” in John Merriman and Jay Winter, eds., *Europe 1789-1914*. New York:

Scribner’s, 2006.

Book Reviews

Claude Blanckaert, ed., *Le Musée de l’homme, histoire d’un musée-laboratoire*, in *H-France Review* 17 (January, 2017), No. 23.

Adam Jolles, *The Curatorial Avant-Garde: Surrealism and Exhibition Practice in France*, in *History: Reviews*

*of New Books*, 44:2 (April, 2016): 48.

Alice Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology and Empire in France, 1850-1950*, in *Museum Anthropology*, 9:1-2 (2015): 174-175.

Guillaume Cuchet, *Les Voix d’outre-tombe: Tables tournantes, spiritisme et société au XIXe siècle*, in *Journal of*

*Modern History*, 86:4 (December 2014): 930-932.

Robert Ziegler, *Satanism, Magic and Mysticism in Fin-de-Siècle France*, in *Nineteenth Century French Studies* 42:3 and 4 (Spring-Summer 2014): online at http://ncfs.unl.edu/reviews\_online.php

Sally Price, *Paris Primitive: Jacques Chirac’s Museum on the Quai Branly*, in *Journal of Modern History*, 86:1 (March 2014): 193-196.

Michael Saler, *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality*, in *Journal of Modern History* 85:3 (September 2013): 669-671.

Daniel J. Sherman, *French Primitivism and the Ends of Empire, 1945-1975*, in *Social History* 38:2 (May 2013): 261-263.

Sofie Lachapelle, *Investigating the Supernatural: From Spiritism and Occultism to Psychical Research and Metapsychics in France, 1853-1931*, in Metascience 22 (2013): 193-196.

Heather Wolffram, *The Stepchildren of Science: Psychical Research and Parapsychology in Germany, c.1870- 1939*, in *Social History of Medicine* 24:1 (2011): 203-204.

Tim Blanning, *The Triumph of Music: The Rise of Composers, Musicians, and their Art*, in *Commonweal* (July 17, 2009).

Robin Wooffitt, *The Language of Mediums and Psychics: The Social Organization of Everyday Miracles*, in *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 4 (Winter 2009): 249-252.

**Curated Exhibition**

“Time and Space in African Art.” University of Iowa Museum of Art, February 2006-2008.

# Awards and Fellowships

Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean’s Emerging Faculty Leader Award, 2015-2016.

National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Fellowship, 2015-2016.

George A. and Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation Fellowship, 2013-2014.

William Koren, Jr. Article Prize from the Society for French Historical Studies, 2013.

James Huntington Ellis Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Introductory Teaching, 2013.

Profiled in *The Best 300 Professors* (Princeton Review Books, 2012), as one of the nation’s top teachers of undergraduates.

Iowa State University Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities Research Grant, summer 2010.

Millstone Interdisciplinary Paper Award, from the Western Society for French History, 2008.

Cassling Family Faculty Award for Teaching, 2007-2008.

Iowa State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Early Achievement in Teaching Award, 2007.

Iowa State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Research Grant for Early-Career Faculty in the Humanities and Social Sciences, 2006-2007.

Curatorial Fellowship in African Art, University of Iowa Museum of Art, 2005-2006.

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend Fellowship, summer 2005.

Visiting Fellow at the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, University of Iowa, summer and fall 2004.

Iowa State University Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities Research Grant, summer 2004.

Iowa State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Faculty Development Grant, summer 2003.

Millstone Travel Grant from the Western Society for French History, summer 2002.

Theron Rockwell Field Dissertation Prize from Yale University, 2002.

Pew Charitable Trusts/Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion at Yale Fellowship, summer 2001.

Yale College Prize Teaching Fellowship, 1999.

*Bourse Chateaubriand*, 1999.

Gilbert Chinard Research Grant from the Société Française de Washington, 1999.

Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies, 1995.

***Undergraduate awards***: Elected to Phi Beta Kappa; Laurence Hutton Prize in History (given to the top undergraduate in the major); Frances Lemoyne Page Creative Writing Prize; Ward Prize for Literary Translation.

**Presentations**

“Presumed Antique: Paul Guillaume and the Connoisseurship of African Sculpture, invited talk presented at the Berlin Technical University as part of the symposium “All the Beauty of the World: The Western Market for Non-Western Art,” October 14, 2016.

“Mirages of Modernism: Inventing Histories of African Sculpture in Inter-War Paris,” invited talk presented at Princeton University, as part of the symposium “Europe Without Borders,” May 13, 2016.

“Of Art and Others: The Transcultural Journey of an African Mask,” lecture delivered at the Salisbury House, Des Moines, as part of the 2014 Iowa Humanities Festival.

“The Market as ‘Artist’: Traditional African Sculpture and the Institutions of the Modernist Art World,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Philadelphia, PA, November 2012.

“African Representations of Europeans in the Colonial Period,” gallery talk delivered at the Anderson Gallery, Drake University, November 2010.

Commentary for the panel “Great War Studies I: Images and Perceptions in the Great War” at the

Western Society for French History Conference, Lafayette, LA, October 2010.

Commentary for the panel “France’s Colonial Past, Representations and Ideologies” at the Western

Society for French History Conference, Lafayette, LA, October 2010.

“The Making of a Metropolitan Fetish,” invited talk delivered as part of the symposium

“Transcultural Perspectives on Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Twentieth

Century” at the University of Heidelberg, February 2010.

“Fetishes at Home and Abroad,” paper delivered at the Western Society for French

History Conference, Boulder, CO, October 2009.

Commentary for the panel “Transnational Arts in the Twentieth Century” at the Western

Society for French History Conference, Boulder, CO, October, 2009.

“Developing *Art Nègre*: Authenticity, Photographs, and the Perception of African

Material Culture in Interwar France,” paper delivered at the Western Society for

French History Conference, Quebec City, QC, November 2008.

“Taming the Visionary Imagination: Revelation and Authority in French Spiritism,” paper delivered at the annual meeting of CESNUR (Centro Studi Sulle Nuove Religioni), London, April 2008.

“Metropolitan Fetish: African Sculpture in the Spaces of French Modernism,” paper delivered at the College Art Association Conference, New York, NY, February 2007.

“Outfitting the Modern Soul: Spiritism, Occultism and the Subconscious in *Fin-de-Siècle* France,” paper delivered at the Society for French Historical Studies Conference, Champaign, IL, April 2006.

“Time and Space in African Art,” gallery talk delivered at the University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa City, IA, February 2006.

“African Art/French Rooms,” lecture delivered to the Director’s Circle at the University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa City, IA, May 2005.

“From Mahatmas to Messiah: The Failure of Theosophy in France,” paper delivered at the Western Society for French History Conference, Newport Beach, CA, November 2003.

“‘A Genius for Associations’: Occultist Sociability During the *Belle Epoque*,” paper delivered at the American Historical Association Conference, San Francisco, CA, January 2002.

“The Medium and the Message: Spiritism, Performance and the Davenport Brothers in Second Empire France,” paper delivered at the Western Society for French History Conference, Indianapolis, IN, November 2001.

“Faith and Modernity under the Moral Order: Spiritism on Trial, 1875,” paper delivered at the Western Society for French History Conference, Los Angeles, CA, November 2000.

**Teaching Experience**

*Associate Professor at Iowa State University:*

Graduate Seminar on Teaching the Modern Europe Survey (2015)

Graduate Historiography Seminar in Modern Europe (2011)

Graduate Seminar in Writing Historical Narrative (2006, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2017)

History 495, undergraduate “capstone” research seminar (2010)

The French Revolution (2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016)

Europe, Reformation-Present (2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2017)

France, 1789-Present (2002, 2003, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014)

Modern European Intellectual and Cultural History (2002, 2003, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016)

*Instructor at Smith College:*

Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century: Urban Society, Culture and Politics,

1789 to the *Fin-de-siècle* (spring 2002)

*Instructor at Yale College:*

The Avant-Garde and European Culture, 1900-1945 (fall 2001)

*Teaching Fellow at Yale College:*

European Civilization, 1648-1945, John Merriman (spring 1999)

France, 1789-1871, John Merriman (fall 1998)

European Intellectual and Cultural History, 1890-1990, Kevin Repp (spring 1998)

French History, 1871-Present, John Merriman (fall 1997)

**Professional Service**

Editorial Board member, *French Historical Studies*, 2011-2013

Editorial Board member, *Magic Ritual and Witchcraft*, 2006-

Advisory Board member, Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History Series, 2008-

Advisory Council, Western Society of French History, 2010-2013