

# (RE)ACTIVATING OBJECTS: SOCIAL THEORY & MATERIAL CULTURE

## Call for Papers

The Department of Visual Arts  
Western University, Canada  
reactivatingobjects.wordpress.com  
March 15 - 17, 2013

*(Re)Activating Objects* is a 3 day interdisciplinary conference that investigates the ways material culture provides a lens to examine socio-cultural-economic worlds.

Graduate students at the M.A., M.F.A., and Ph.D. levels are invited to submit abstracts for presentations of twenty minutes. We encourage papers from a variety of disciplines and approaches, addressing the fundamental and theoretical questions about social constructions, social politics, and social ethics.

Graduate student candidates from various fields, including but not limited to, visual arts, history, museum studies, indigenous studies, gender studies, and theory are invited to submit abstracts or artists panel proposals. The multidisciplinary of *(Re)Activating Objects* allows participants to bring their particular trajectory and discipline to the conference for a lively and collegial exchange of ideas. Successful candidates will also be considered for a corresponding online publication.

*(Re)Activating Objects* will ask questions such as: How do varied ways of knowing and seeing impact how objects are conceived to have value? What narratives can be found by examining material culture? In looking at shifting intersections, how have objects come to hold socially constructed meanings? Who, or what, creates these meanings, holds authority over objects, and what does this mean for those who lack these privileges? In what ways do the historical and contemporary contexts support or unsettle such dynamics?

We ask you to 'activate' objects that are under-theorized and/or 'reactivate' objects with shifting or multiple ideologies. Ultimately, how do these 'activated' objects create a productive discomfort that forces us to ask questions about our current worldviews? Furthermore, can they point us toward an imagined future?

Samantha Angove & Cierra Webster  
Conference Co-organizers

Topics for discussion include, but are not at all limited to:

- Engaging art and social politics (feminism, anti-racism, accessibility)
- Social media and canonicity
- Alienation and assimilation (silencing, occupation, decolonization)
- Materiality of marginalization
- Objects and dialogue (language, emotions, embodying)
- Narrowing/widening intervisuality
- Performance and spectatorship
- Reframing art/artefact/ephemera
- Constructed dichotomies (classification, cataloguing)
- Complicating science & reality; objectivity

**Please send:**

- 300-word abstract for a 20 minute presentation
- short biography
- contact information name of institution, degree + program, e-mail

**TO:** reactivating.objects@gmail.com

**DUE:** Wednesday, December 5, 2012

Successful participants will be notified by December 15, 2012.

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