Museum Visit & Presentation Assignment Due: 2/22 in class

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For this project, students will be asked to visit a museum or archival collection of their choice in order to further their understanding of how to interact with primary sources. They will need to answer the questions found below for an area of a museum or artifact from the special collections, and then they will present on the artifacts they discover to the class for their archival presentation grade. The presentations will be five minutes each, and will follow the format found below.

The question answers will count as a homework assignment (to be turned in on 2/22 in class) and the presentation is worth 5% of your final grade.

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Step 1: Homework Questions to Be Answered

Visit a museum of your choice that features primary sources for you to analyze. Some great options include: the McClung Museum on UT’s campus (free to visit) or the East Tennessee History Center downtown ($5 to enter) for history exhibits; the Ewing Gallery in the Art & Architecture Building (free), UT’s Downtown Gallery on Gay St. (free), or Knoxville Museum of Art in World’s Fair Park (free) for art exhibits; and the Special Collections area of the library for direct interaction with their holdings (if following this last option, please follow the guidelines for visiting located on their website and speak with me about how best to approach your use of their archives).

If taking the history or art exhibit options, please answer the questions for #2 on page 206 in *Rhetoric of Inquiry*. If taking the Special Collections option, please answer the questions to #3 on page 207 in *Rhetoric of Inquiry*.

Step 2: In-Class Presentation

You will present to the class the area of the museum or artifact of choice from your museum/Special Collections visit. Each presentation will be five minutes long and include an in-depth analysis of one of the pieces in your exhibit or of the primary source you were able to find in Special Collections.

In this in-depth analysis, please be sure to cover the four areas we discussed in class: 1) explanation of what the artifact is, 2) historical and cultural context in a synchronic or diachronic fashion, 3) significant details and close reading of artifact (for instance, how brush strokes and color choices work together, what materials it’s made of, how it was made, etc.), and 4) connection to larger themes of significance to our class (for instance, archival research or American Identity).

If you wish to share visual aids with the class as part of your presentation, please bring them on a flash drive or e-mail them to me before class.