GUIDELINES

REFLECTION JOURNAL PAPERS
These are reactions to and reflections upon videos, a guest lecture, and a museum visit that will be shown, assigned, or take place during the semester. Each is due one week after the event. You will not be reminded. They are meant to be succinct, no more than a page. Although there are no right or wrong answers, in terms of opinion or reaction, your reflection should summarize basic points/viewpoint of the event and, as the semester progresses, include insights gained from your reading and class lecture/discussion.

PAPER/PROJECT
Your papers will focus on a traditional object from Australian or Pacific culture chosen from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, exhibition where the works are exhibited as art, the Peabody Museum at Harvard where the works are exhibited as ethnography. Both collections are available on line, but objects visible on line may not be on exhibit. You should be focusing on an object that you can view in time and 3-D space. Your choice must be approved by Professor Borgatti. The sooner you get your choice in, the more likely you will work on your first choice. Look at the books, go to a local museum where you live before you come back to school, or get yourselves as soon as possible to the MFA and have a look to see what interests you. Look on-line as well. Links to museums set up in web syllabus.

Once your choice is made and approved, you will research your object using books, journals and the web. (See research strategies on the syllabus; Raise questions about where to find sources at the library workshop on Jan. 28.) This will result in an annotated bibliography. You will then draft a 4-5 page paper that summarizes the information you have found, using your object as a window on the culture, or, put in another way, addressing the question “To what extent and in what ways does this object reflect the values, beliefs, identity or other aspect of the people/culture that produced it?”

The project includes a visual summary of your paper done in powerpoint and ‘hanging’ your work with a contemporary work that you will select from literary or web sources, and a virtual museum intervention, where you will place your object in a space in the MFA, Gardner or other Boston area museum – adjacent to non-Oceanic works.

Required Steps.
1. Due on or before Jan. 21 by email: Preliminary choice of three different traditional objects that you would be interested in working on. (5 points of your final paper grade)

2. Due by Jan.27 by email: Final choice and preliminary bibliography (3-5 sources, no more than 1 or 2 web sources— 1/3 or 2/4or 5) (5 points of your final paper grade)

3. Due by Feb. 21: Annotated Bibliography for traditional object (30 points of your final paper grade) and selection of contemporary work—by email. (Obviously, selecting a contemporary work may include additional bibliographic references in your
final bibliography. This is both a visual and conceptual exercise but I don’t consider it part of the main research project, though you have to justify or explain your choice. Thus, these references will be in addition to your minimum and not necessary at this point. See #5 below.

An annotated bibliography is a list of your sources or references (books, book chapters, articles, websites) in which each one is critically assessed. In addition to citing the source, a short paragraph summarizing its usefulness in relation to your topic, i.e. the credentials of the author and quality of the information, the usefulness of illustrations, and a consideration of the references used by the author.

Your bibliography should consist of a minimum of 10 sources and include examples from a range of possibilities: books, catalogues of exhibitions, journals, websites, etc. You should plan to look for at least twice this number so that you can select the best and most relevant sources for your research. No more than half should be from online web sites.

4. Write your paper and construct your powerpoint summary. Your paper is due on March 27 by email.

Your paper should be between 4-5 pages in length (double-spaced, font-size no larger than 12 point). In terms of overall focus: Introduce your object with a description and give your answer to the question: “To what extent and in what ways does this object tell the story of its culture, that is, reflect the values, beliefs, identity or other aspect of the people/culture that produced it?” Then support your assertions through a discussion of your research findings. Complete your paper with a summary of your main conclusions.

In writing this paper and doing the research, I suggest using the powerpoint visual summary as a way to organize your thoughts and to not forget important information. This visual summary should include: The photographed object. An annotated drawing of the object. A context illustration of the object in use in its own environment. A comparison with other objects of its type to see if it is typical or atypical. A map locating the culture and an image of the environment from which the object comes.

As indicated above: Begin with the object. Draw it. It makes you look more carefully (And if it was a good enough way for Picasso to work, it’s probably good enough for you too), annotate it in terms of materials, colors, etc., and describe it verbally. Then think of how different aspects of this object reveal the culture: What do the materials say about the environment? Does the color range signify anything in particular? How do the forms express what this object means? [What does it mean? Your research should help you with this. Does it draw from nature or realistic representation? If so, what do you think this means? Does it depart from the naturalistic, and why do you think this might be important in conveying meaning?] How is this object used? Is it complete, or is it a part of a larger visual and aesthetic construction? Is this object typical among those used for the same purpose? Who are the people who make and use it? Who are the ones who ‘view’ it? Are there gender distinctions here? Is it still being made? Has the use changed over time? Where is the culture that produced it located, what is their
economic base and what is the environment like? These are all questions that should be addressed within the larger question of how the object tells the story, or a part of the story, of its culture.

5. Revised paper (50 points) with powerpoint (10 points) – due by April 30.

CONTEMPORARY WORK
Selection of a contemporary work to ‘hang’ with your traditional work due on Feb. 21. (15 points) This should be a work that in combination with your traditional work raises some interesting questions or ideas as a visual analogue or as a contrast. You will have to justify your choice in terms of the issue(s) your comparison raises. “I just liked it” or “It interested me” is not a justification. This selection (though not necessarily the justification) is due on February 21, along with your annotated bibliography. You can find contemporary works in all three of your texts, and a list of keywords includes the following names (some of whom are noted in your texts). See Morphy for references to AUSTRALIA. Also, there are numerous books available in FLO libraries (the MassArt Library is just down the street and is on the 12th floor. Visit it). For NEW GUINEA: Mathias Kauage (painting), Joe Nalo (painting), HAWAII: Herman Pi‘ikea Clark (prints/computer graphics), Herb Kawainui Kane (painting), MAORI - NEW ZEALAND: Shane Cotton (painting/text), Jacqueline Fraser (wire sculpture), Fred Graham (sculpture), Robert Jahnke (sculpture), Robyn Kahukiwa (painting), Nikki Hastings McFall (mixed media), Michael Parekowai (various media), Rosanna Raymond (performance, jewelry, painting), Lisa Reihana (video, mixed media), Peter Robinson (mixed media), Cliff Whiting (sculpture). PACIFIC ISLANDS - NEW ZEALAND - USA - CANADA – EUROPE: Jewel Castro (painting), Fatu Feu'u (painting/prints), John Ioane (mixed media, figures), Shigeyuki Kihara (transgender performance artist), Lily Laita (painting), Ake Lianga (painting), Ani O’Neill (fabric sculpture), John Pule (painting), Filipe Tohi, Michel Tuffery (sculptures).

FYI: Shigeyuki Kihara has a show at the MET (or one that just closed, depending upon when you look at this). You can see the work on-line.

MUSEUM INTERVENTION
Museum Intervention Scheme and brief explanation due April 10 as a powerpoint slide, along with your traditional and contemporary objects ‘hung’ together. (15 points) The traditional object should have a label that identifies it (identified or unidentified artist, culture or ethnicity, nation; materials; dimensions; current location; and a line about meaning and use. The contemporary work label should have an equivalent label. You might include a text box that asks a question to make your audience think about the point you are making with this comparison.

In constructing your virtual Museum Intervention: Where would you place your object (a particular museum space or adjacent to particular works in a Boston area museum) to make the audience think about the space it is in, the forms of the target object and the comparison, how do the two elucidate each other or make you think about their
individual or respective meanings? This slide should have a text box that asks the question you want your audience to raise (or answer) by looking at this intervention.