This course explores the notion of the residual: what is left over, useless, unclassifiable. We will explore the customary management of communal resources, both human and material, in scarce-resource societies. We’ll consider processes of symbolic classification through which phenomena can be labelled as out of place or out of phase. We’ll examine the creation of waste (and its converse, deprivation) with the codification of custom in modernity, and look at strategies by which waste is recuperated as a matter of necessity, aesthetics, or ideology. We’ll look at how different kinds of leftover move in and out of systems of value: for example, the labelling of things as "junk" or "antiques," people as "trash," or ideas as "folklore." Finally, we’ll think about the status of residues in social and cultural theory.

REQUIRED READINGS
Please bring the readings with you to class, except of course in the case of websites.

Books at SBX:


Online readings:
Most readings will be on Carmen. Readings marked LIBRARY will be found online through the journal title in the OSU library catalogue. (Note that journals are sometimes in multiple repositories depending on the years of publication.) The readings come from a wide range of sources and some are forbidding. Don’t panic. We will talk them through.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
All assignments must be completed as described below for a passing grade.

1. General participation. 40%
   - being present and on time and awake in class
   - having relevant contributions to make in discussion. This entails having read the assigned texts and considered the discussion questions. I will put you on the spot to answer!
• adding to the post-class Carmen discussion. You must post at least once a week with a substantive comment.

• responding to other students’ projects on Carmen. You must comment with ideas or suggestions to three students after each of the three draft postings, responding to different students each time. (You’re welcome to do more, of course.) Due the Monday after the Friday posting of the topic or draft.

2. One day as class scribe. 10%

You’ll post your notes on the class discussion of the day, singling out those points of disagreement or interest where we left questions open. Post by 6 AM the day after the class in question!

3. Final project. 50% [10+20+30%]

Report on the social life of a cultural object. See pp. 8-9 for details.

• Friday, Oct 1. Post topic on Carmen.
• Friday, Oct 29. Draft 1—ca. 5 double-spaced pages. Post on Carmen.

COURSE POLICIES

Office hours T 1:30-3:30, W 10-12 at the Mershon Center, 104A, 1501 Neil Ave. (corner of 8th and Neil), 292-8683. Or by appointment or by telephone. Because I run around between offices and have a manic meeting schedule, it is always best to try me first by email, and even during regular office hours it’s helpful if you let me know when you’re coming.

Attendance is up to you, but affects your grade both directly (via your participation grade) and indirectly (via your ability to do the written work effectively). We need you here in the spirit as well as in the flesh. Please come to class with the readings done. Announcements made at the beginning of class will not be repeated for latecomers, so it is also in your interest to arrive on time.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. Especially when doing research on the Internet, be extremely careful to credit your sources
appropriately (come to me if you are not certain how to do this). And bear in mind that it is much less work to do your own thinking than to plagiarize convincingly.

**Disability resources.** The Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307. If you require accommodation to do the work of the course, please let me know immediately.

**Class Cancellation.** In the unlikely event of class cancellation due to emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

**SCHEDULE**

**Unit one. Approaching the residual**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/22</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/27</td>
<td>Experience, valuation, labelling, exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>Classification systems and social symbols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Topic due</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/4</td>
<td>The question of modernity</td>
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Comments on topics due

**10/6**

Category movements and the history of value


### Unit two. Imaginaries of scarcity and abundance

**10/11**

Buried treasure, limited good and reciprocity


**10/13**

Gleaning


**10/18**

Hunger and the land of Cockayne


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/20</td>
<td>Fertility, foreigners, and immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Book of Ruth</td>
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<td><a href="http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/k/kjv/kjv-idx?type=DIV1&amp;byte=1120102">http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/k/kjv/kjv-idx?type=DIV1&amp;byte=1120102</a></td>
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### Unit three. Capitalism and waste

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>From thrift to efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/27</td>
<td>Managing trash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Strasser, chs. 1-4</td>
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<td>10/29</td>
<td>Draft 1 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>The throwaway society</td>
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<td>Strasser, chs. 5-7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Comments on draft 1 due</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>Excess and display</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Unit four. From modern to postmodern imaginaries**

11/8 Bourgeois cleanliness


11/10 Moral geographies


Lindahl, Carl. 2007. “Katrina Stories, the David Effect, and the Right to Be Wrong.” Unpublished ms. DISTRIB IN CLASS.

11/15 Margins, centers, and vehicles


11/17 The remix society


11/19 Draft 2 due.
# Unit five. Managing pasts and peripheries: development, heritage, displacement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Authors and Works</th>
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Comments on draft 2 due. |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>Outsiders and outsider art</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.victoriansecrets.net/watts.htm">http://www.victoriansecrets.net/watts.htm</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.wattstowers.us/simon_rodia.htm">http://www.wattstowers.us/simon_rodia.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and see also Joe Sciorra’s blog on Italian-American constructed landscapes:</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.i-italy.org/3627/folk-art-vernacular-architecture-cultural-landscapes">http://www.i-italy.org/3627/folk-art-vernacular-architecture-cultural-landscapes</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12/8</td>
<td>Final report due</td>
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**Final project**

1. Friday, Oct 1. Post topic on Carmen.
4. Wednesday December 8. Final report—ca. 10-12 double-spaced pages of well-shaped and stylish prose plus appendix and bibliography. Email to me as attached file. [carmen?] 

Pick an object—an artifact, a performance, a genre, an idea, a person, a place, a group—that is differentially evaluated by different actors. (If the object is big and complex, e.g. "heavy metal music," you will have to treat it within a narrow milieu, but that milieu must encompass differential social positions and evaluations.) Your goal is to examine the social life of this object, and more specifically how social value is assigned to it, transformed, lost, or recuperated. Does it have inherent properties that constrain its fortunes? How does its point of emergence and its subsequent history constrain it? How malleable are cultural objects? How consensible across social positions is social value?

You're going to turn in successive drafts of a report on this object, gradually sketching it out and filling it in. You'll begin by laying out questions and plans in the parts where you don't yet have any information. Your grade depends on how completely, how energetically, and how insightfully you carry out the assignment. I will respond at each stage and grade the three drafts.
Your report should cover the following, in roughly this order:

*Identify the object. (This may get more precise over time, as you see what is really being evaluated, or it may diversify as the object is transformed in different situations.)*

*Locate the milieu of the object—when, where, among whom, etc.*

*What do you know of the history of the object in this milieu, how it got there, its diffusion, what it used for, by whom, with whom it’s identified?*

*What are the labels attached to it, by whom?*

*Where do the labels come from, what are their associations, to what else are they attached to? In what class do they place the object?*

*Do the labels seem in any way contradictory with the uses and affect associated with the object? How do you account for the relationships between label, labeller, and the labeller’s affective and practical involvement with the object?*

*Are the conflicting labels in dialogue with one another? Is there mutual observation among different labellers, mutual awareness? Does the reaction to other labellings change the self’s relationship towards the object?*

*Do you see the object’s general reputation evolving over time as a consequence of these dialogues or of other factors?*

*What is it about this object that makes it contested and salient?*

*What’s at stake in the evaluation of this object?*

*Embedded throughout:*

*How do you know what you’re saying? (Footnote or otherwise highlight your sources)*

*How does our course reading and/or discussion shape your understanding of what is going on here?*

*At the end:*

*Appendix on your research process (e.g. I looked at Wikipedia, did a Google search, observed X event, interviewed Y, etc.) Where did you find roadblocks or confusion? What would you like to pursue further if you had time?*

*Bibliography*