Session 2

COLONIALISM AND EXHIBITED OTHERS:
Difference as Spectacle and Science
Colonialism and Exhibitions

- Exhibited for consumers
- “Aberrations” (in relation to Europe)
- EXHIBITIONS: spectacle → science
- Anthropologists & ethnographic spectacles

David MacDougall:

“It seemed somehow strange that the person, the object of the anthropologist’s attention, should remain largely invisible to the anthropological audience. An early remedy...was to bring exotic people to museums, lectures and such popular venues as world fairs and colonial exhibitions”

Franz Boas, Anthropological Hall, World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago
Ishi, University of California’s Museum of Anthropology, under Alfred Kroeber
Exhibits of “vanquished races”:

- Chicago Columbian Exhibition of 1893,
- Omaha Trans-Mississippi Exposition of 1898,
- Buffalo Pan-American Exposition of 1901,
- St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exhibition in 1904

- Ota Benga, Bronx Zoo
- 1894 Antwerp World’s Fair, reconstructed Congolese village
- museumizing others + bringing viewers to the colonies
Ethnographic Photography: Making Exhibits Travel
In 1909-10, 866 million picture postcards posted in Great Britain – photography of indigenous people in native dress (or nakedness) for taxonomies. Spectacles produced for mass audiences around the world.
Stereoscopic cards

- creating human models: comparison & classification
- demonstrate & celebrate European power over others
- close to nature, without culture
Photographs of assimilation
Photographs of servitude