G. Brown Goode Smithsonian Education Lecture Series

The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies, in collaboration with the Science Education Department of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, announces the G. Brown Goode Smithsonian Education Lecture Series. Through this series, named after the Smithsonian's earliest proponent of museums as educational institutions, Smithsonian staff can help keep abreast of emerging developments in education pertaining to many aspects of their work, from exhibit design to outreach in the schools. The theme for our first year will be:

Inside the Living Brain: A New Look at Learning in Museums and Schools.

New research in the brain and learning is allowing us for the first time to literally look inside the living human brain as learning takes place, to provide new insights into what happens when we learn, informing everything from the design of museum exhibits to the practice of teaching in the schools. This lecture series, designed specifically for curators, researchers, and educators of the Smithsonian Institution and its affiliate museums, presents talks by some of the world's foremost researchers in learning and the brain.

The first lecture in the series takes place on Tuesday, June 6, 2006, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. in the National Museum of American History's Carmichael Auditorium and will be delivered by Professor Kevin Dunbar, Center for Cognitive and Educational Neuroscience, Dartmouth College, Department of Education. Professor Dunbar will speak on:

"Designers at the Exhibition: Balancing Aesthetics and Learning at the Museum"

Museum visitors are as intriguing as they are varied; they can come to escape the weather, to know and understand, or just for fun. Museum designers are acutely aware of the diversity of visitors and build exhibits that can be as varied as the visitors themselves. But how do particular choices of designing an exhibit influence the visitor experience?

Over the past few years Professor Kevin Dunbar and his colleagues have been devising effective ways of helping museums understand their visitors and have been discovering the effects of different types of exhibit set ups on how visitors interact with each other and the exhibit itself. Some of their results are surprising as they see that each type of exhibit design has tradeoffs in terms of activities that visitors engage in and the overall nature of the experience. In this presentation Professor Dunbar will outline different ways that museums can understand visitor actions and conversations, as well as the different effects that exhibits have on visitors. The talk will feature compelling video of museum visitor's interactions with exhibits, demonstrating how exhibit design interacts with learning.

The lecture will be web cast live, available at http://museumstudies.si.edu

A reception will follow at 4:00 p.m. in the museum's Presidential Reception Suite.

The next lecture will take place Thursday, September 21, 2006, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. in the S. Dillon Ripley Center Lecture Hall and will be delivered by Professor Eric Klopfer, the Scheller Career Development Professor of Science Education and Educational Technology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Professor Klopfer will speak on:

"Learning on Location with Handhelds in Museums"

The growth of new mobile technologies is introducing exciting opportunities for bringing new kinds of learning in museums. The PDA in particular has the capability to create new learning environments and experiences by providing the user with an additional layer of data to supplement information acquired through his/her real world context. Participants in PDA-based simulations games retrieve data from simulated instruments, interview virtual characters, and wirelessly collaborate with other participants. Prof. Klopfer and his colleagues have been building simulations on handheld computers that involve learners in collaborative activities that utilize new mobile technology to solve authentic complex problems. Professor Klopfer will discuss how these technologies can be used in various museum contexts.

The lecture will be web cast live, available at http://museumstudies.si.edu

A reception will follow at 4:30 p.m. in Room 3111 of the Ripley Center.

The final lecture in the first series will take place Tuesday, January 23, 2007, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the National Zoological Park Visitors Center and will be delivered by Professor Temple Grandin, Professor of Animal Science at the Colorado State University. Professor Grandin will speak on:

"Animals in Translation – How Animals Think and Feel"

Using the mysteries of autism to decode animal behavior, Professor Temple Grandin speaks in the clear voice of a woman who emerged from the other side of autism, bringing with her an extraordinary message about how animals think and feel. Grandin's lecture will offer a guide into their world, exploring animal pain, fear, aggression, love, friendship, communication, learning, and even animal genius. Professor Grandin's professional training as an animal scientist and her history as a person with autism, have given her a unique perspective in the field. Standing at the intersection of autism and animals, she will offer unparalleled observations and groundbreaking ideas about both. Autistic people can often think the way animals think, putting autistic people in the perfect position to translate "animal talk."

The lecture will be web cast live, available at http://museumstudies.si.edu

All lectures will be made available for viewing after the program dates at http://museumstudies.si.edu

George Brown Goode

George Brown Goode (1851-1896), ichthyologist and museum administrator, received his B.S. degree from Wesleyan University in 1870. After a year of postgraduate study with Louis Agassiz at Harvard University, Goode returned to Wesleyan to direct the Judd Museum of Natural History.

In 1872, Goode met Spencer F. Baird, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and United States Fish Commissioner. He quickly became Baird's chief pupil and assistant. In 1873, Goode was appointed Assistant Curator in the United States National Museum (USNM), a position he retained until 1877 when his title was changed to Curator. In 1881, when the new USNM building was completed, Goode was promoted to Assistant Director. On January 12, 1887, Goode was appointed Assistant Secretary in charge of the USNM, and he remained the chief administrative officer of the museum until his death.

Goode's primary scientific interest was ichthyology, and he published both specialized and popular works on fish and fisheries. In addition to his duties at the USNM, Goode also served in various capacities for the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries. After Baird's death in 1887, Goode assumed the position of Fish Commissioner until January 1888.

Goode was regarded as the premier American museum administrator of his era. In 1881, he issued Circular No. 1 of the National Museum which set forth a comprehensive scheme of organization for the museum. Goode was involved in designing and installing Smithsonian and Fish Commission exhibits at many of the international expositions held during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Goode was also a historian, bibliographer, and genealogist, and he published several papers on the history of American science.

Selected quotes on the purpose and function of museums from G. Brown Goode:

"The people's museum should be much more than a house full of specimens in glass cases. It should be a house full of ideas. . . ."
Museum History and Museums of History, p. 306

"The museum cultivates the powers of observation, and the casual visitor even makes discoveries for himself, and, under the guidance of the labels, forms his own impression. In the library one studies the impressions of others."
Museum History and Museums of History, p. 310

"The museum of the future must stand side by side with the library and the laboratory, as a part of the teaching equipment of the college and university, and in the great cities cooperate with the public library as one of the principal agencies for the enlightenment of the people."
Museums of the Future, p. 332

"The museum…is the most powerful and useful auxiliary of all systems of teaching by means of object lessons."
Museums of the Future, p. 322

"The museum likewise must, in order to perform its proper functions, contribute to the advancement of learning through the increase as well as through the diffusion of knowledge."
Museums of the Future, p. 337

Quotes taken from:
Goode, George Brown, *The Origins of Natural Science in America*, edited by Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.