

METHODS IN ART HISTORY (ARTH 305)

Department of Art History and Communication Studies, McGill University

Dr. Anja Bock, Winter 2014

Professor: Dr. Anja Bock

Lectures: Wednesdays and Fridays 14h30 – 16h00, Arts W215

Office hours: Fridays 13h00-14h00, Arts W260 (Dr. A. Vanhaelen's office)

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We can best answer your questions if you come talk to us after class or during office hours.

For email inquiries, please contact Anne-Sophie. Your query will be forwarded, if necessary.

Only emails sent to/from McGill accounts will be answered. Please allow 24 hours for a response; 72 hours on the weekend.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a window onto our discipline; we will see how different modes of inquiry have shaped and inspired what art historians do, why we do it and *how*. The aim of the course is to illuminate the analytical, political and cultural possibilities of a variety of approaches to art history. Different methods entail different kinds of questions and concerns. The course is an opportunity for students to ask themselves: which methods are best suited to your own developing understandings of what art is and why it matters?

The course consists of two lectures per week. Students need to come to class prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that week. Given the emphasis on methods – on *how* art historians approach a work of art – a number of case studies will be presented for group discussion in order that students may test different analytic tools and question their implications for art and art history.

COURSE PREMISE

The way we approach our study of a work of art determines what we will see, and therefore what we will take away from it.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

To become familiar with methodological debates in the discourse of art history; to recognize that our own ideological and cultural situatedness as scholars determines the criteria and values we use to analyze art (that is, to become more self-reflexive).

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COURSE MATERIALS

Required readings are available as PDF files, to be downloaded from *My Courses*. Please note that neither the power point presentations nor lecture notes will be made available to students.

Additionally, you will find four books on reserve in the library:

- D'Alleva, Anne. *Methods & theories of art history*. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012.
- Fernie, Eric, ed. *Art History and its Methods*. London and New York: Phaidon, 1995.
- Hatt, Michael and Klonk, Charlotte. *Art history: a critical introduction to its methods*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006.
- Preziosi, Donald, ed. *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Participation	10%	5% Attendance and 5% Discussions
Reading Reports, 3	15%	Also to be posted on <i>My Courses</i>
Mid-term	20%	In class Friday February 28 th
Essay Proposal/Bibliography	5%	Due in class Friday March 14 th (at the latest)
Essay	25%	Due in class Friday April 4 th
Exam	25%	To be scheduled during the exam period

READING REPORTS

Each student is responsible for posting 3 reading reports (200 words each) on *My Courses* on the appropriate "discussion board" the day the reading is due. A printed copy must also be submitted to the TA at the beginning or end of class the day the reading is due. The reports must contain a minimum of two paragraphs: the first must summarize the argument of the article; the second must assess the strengths and weakness of the argument. The objective of this assignment is to (semi-)publically articulate an informed opinion in a low-risk environment. Taken together, these reports will create a study tool for the course. A sign-up sheet with the choice of readings will be passed around in class on Friday January 10th. You must choose one reading from each of the three sections of the course.

MID-TERM

The purpose of the mid-term is to assess the students' assimilation of the course readings and lectures. The mid-term will require the comparison and contrast of various methods and an understanding of their consequences for the interpretation of art.

TERM PAPER

Write an 8-10 page position paper (2000-2500 words) on one methodology (chosen among the Social History of Art; phenomenology; Foucauldian analysis; post-colonialism, semiotics and structuralism; post-structuralism and deconstruction; psychoanalysis; feminism or queer theory) *by means of a concrete case study of an artwork, an artist, an exhibition, or an institution*. The paper should develop an argument about what the method brings to art historical analysis *and* what its limitations might be. Comparisons and counter examples can be useful in arguing your point but the focus of the paper is to demonstrate your depth of understanding of one a particular method.

While you are welcome to draw on the course readings, it is expected that you will consult 4-5 additional sources for your paper. These sources should be chosen with great care, and a rationale for each choice should be included in an annotated bibliography. This research should draw on scholarly sources. Blogs and unauthored internet content, such as Wikipedia, do not count as a scholarly source and should be used only as a starting point. You should also include scholarly sources that are specific to your case study.

A written proposal, including a description of your topic (200 words) and an annotated bibliography (50 words per entry) must be submitted by March 14th.

Please note: Top marks (A range) will be reserved for essays that demonstrate outstanding writing ability, as well as quality of research and analysis, clarity of structure, excellence of presentation and scholarship.

FINAL EXAM

The main objective of the final exam is to test the students' grasp of the fundamental concepts addressed through the readings and lectures. Students will be asked to demonstrate their understanding of the differences and/or links between methods. The exam will cover the entire course. As per university policy, final exams are not returned to students.

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

- Only printed copies of written assignments will be accepted – no electronic submissions.
- Written assignments must be typed and doubled-spaced on 8 ½" x 11" paper with 1" margins.
- The font must be roughly equivalent to Times New Roman 12 point.
- Include a typed title page.
- All pages except your title page must be numbered.
- Images should appear on separate pages at the end of your paper. Images must have typed captions including artist, title, date, medium, and dimensions.
- Written assignments must include proper citations, in the form of footnotes and a bibliography. Notes must be included not only for direct quotations but for ALL ideas

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that are not your own. They must be formatted according to an accepted academic style guide, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Do not use in-text parenthetical references.

For more information on citations, visit the library website:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/library/services/citation>

- All titles of books must be italicized. Titles of all articles are in quotation marks. All titles of artworks must be italicized. Their dates must be indicated, either in the text, or in parentheses after the title.
- Quotations that exceed four lines of text must be indented from the left margin and single-spaced. They do not need quotation marks when indented.
- Grammar counts! Be sure to check it carefully.
- Staple papers together (no paper-clips, please).
- The Writing Centre offers individual consultations on all aspects of writing. Appointments are required. <http://www.mcgill.ca/mwc/>
- In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

PLAGARISM

If you use someone else's words or ideas without citing them properly, it is plagiarism. McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

LATE POLICY

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated. Late papers must be placed in the lock-box outside the departmental office where they will be date stamped at 4:00pm each business day. Do not leave them under my door or with anyone else. All late papers will be penalized 5% (or one grade point) per day, including weekends.

EXTENSIONS

In the interests of fairness, extensions will only be granted with a medical or counseling certificate. This certificate must clearly indicate a professional opinion that you are legitimately unable to complete the required work due to illness or personal problems.

COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

January 8th

Moxey, Keith. "Motivating History." *The Art Bulletin* 77, 3 (Sep. 1995): 392-401.

Fernie, Eric. "Introduction: A History of Methods." In Eric Fernie, ed. *Art History and its Methods*. London and New York: Phaidon, 1995. 10-21.

PART I: TRADITIONAL METHODS

BIOGRAPHY

January 10th

Wolff, Janet. Excerpt from "The Death of the Author." In *The Social Production of Art*. New York: New York University Press, 1981. ***117-29**.

FORMALISM

January 15th

Bell, Clive. (1914) "The Aesthetic Hypothesis." In *Art*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1949. 3-37
*highlighted.

Wolfflin, Heinrich. (1915) *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*. New York: Dover Publications, 1950. 1-16.

January 17th

Steinberg, Leo. Excerpt from "Other Criteria." In *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art*. London: Oxford University Press, 1972. ***64-82**.

[Supplementary] Greenberg, Clement. (1965) "Modernist Painting." In Francis Francina and Charles Harrison, eds. *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology*. New York: Harper & Row, 1982. 5-10.

ICONOGRAPHY

January 22nd

Panofsky, Irwin. (1955) Excerpt from "Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art." In *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982. 26-41.

January 24th – group discussion

Bann, Stephen. "Meaning/Interpretation." In Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, eds. *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. 128-42.

Holly, Michael Ann. "Witnessing an Annunciation." *Past Looking: Historical Imagination and the Rhetoric of the Image*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996. 149-69.

Marin, Louis. "Toward a Theory of Reading in the Visual Arts: Poussin's The Arcadian Shepherds." In Donald Preziosi, ed. *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 263-75.

Moxey, Keith. "Panofsky's Melancholia." In *The Practice of Theory: Poststructuralism, Cultural Politics, and Art History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994. 65-78.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ART AND MARXIST APPROACHES

January 29th

Clark, T.J. "Introduction." *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. *5-14 definitions.

Clark, T.J. "Manet's Exposition Universelle de 1867." In *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. 60-66.

Lipton, Eunice. (1980) "The Laundress in Late Nineteenth-century French Culture." In Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, eds. *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology*. New York: Harper & Row, 1982. 275-83.

January 31st

Wood, Paul. "Commodity." In Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, eds. *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003. 382-406.

[Supplementary] Marx, Karl. (1976) "The Fetishism of the Commodity." In Nicholas Mirzoeff, ed. *The Visual Culture Reader*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. 122-123.

PART II: IN THE GALLERY

GALLERY INSTALLATIONS AND THE “IDEAL” VIEWER

February 5th

Duncan, Carol. “Art Museums and the Rituals of Citizenship.” In Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds. *Exhibiting Cultures*. Washington: Smithsonian Press, 1991. 88-103.

February 7th

Staniszewski, Mary Anne. *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998. 61-83.

O’Doherty, Brian. “Notes on the Gallery Space.” *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*. Intro. Thomas McEvilley. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. 13-34.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND “AFFECT”

February 12th

Boetzkes, Amanda. “Phenomenology and Interpretation Beyond the Flesh.” *Art History* 32, 4 (September 2009): 690-711.

[Recommended] Krauss, Rosalind. “The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum.” *October: 54* (Fall 1990): 3-17.

[Additional] Fried, Michael. “Art and Objecthood.” *Art Forum* (Summer 1967): 12-23.

February 14th

Prior, Nick. “Having One’s Tate and Eating It: Transformations in a Hypermodern Era.” In Andrew McClellan, ed. *Art and its Publics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. ***51-7, 65-74.**

O’Sullivan, Simon. “Writing on Art (Case Study: The Buddhist Puja).” *Parallax* 7, 4 (2001): 115-121.

FOUCAULT AND INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE

February 19th

Foucault, Michel. “The Subject and Power.” In Brian Wallis, ed. *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*. Foreword Marcia Tucker. New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984. 417-33.

Fraser, Andrea. “Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk.” *October* 57 (Summer 1991): 104-22 ***skim.**

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[Additional] Tagg, John. "A Means of Surveillance: The Photograph as Evidence in Law." In *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*. London: Macmillan, 1988. 66-95.

February 21st

Crary, Jonathan. "Eclipse of the Spectacle." In Brian Wallis, ed. *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*. Foreword Marcia Tucker. New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984. 283-294.

POST COLONIALISM AND EXHIBITING CULTURES

February 26th

Coombes, Annie. "Inventing the 'Postcolonial': Hybridity and Constituency in Contemporary Curating." In Donald Preziosi, ed. *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 486-97.

February 28th *MID-TERM EXAM*

March 3rd – March 7th: Reading Week

PART III: THE INFLUX OF THEORY

SEMIOTICS AND STRUCTURALISM

March 12th

Chandler, Daniel. "Signs." In *Semiotics: The Basics*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. 17-42. As accessed on-line: <http://users.aber.ac.uk/dgc/Documents/S4B/sem02.html>

[Suggested] Iverson, Margaret. "Saussure v. Peirce: Models for Semiotics of Visual Art." In A. L. Rees and F. Borzello, eds. *The New Art History*. London: Camden Press, 1986. 82-94.

March 14th *essay proposals due*

Chandler, Daniel. "Denotation, Connotation and Myth." In *Semiotics: The Basics*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. 140-46. As accessed on-line: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/sem06.html>

[Supplementary] Barthes, Roland. "Myth Today." In *Mythologies*. Trans. Annette Lavers. New York: The Noonday Press, 1957. 107-115.

[Additional] Bryson, Norman and Bal, Mieke. "Semiotics and Art History." *The Art Bulletin* 73, 2 (June 1991): 174-208.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

March 19th

Nixon, Mignon. "Psycho-Phallus (Qu'est-ce que c'est?)" In Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde, eds. *A Companion to Art Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002. 397-408.

OR

Fer, Briony. "The work of art, the work of psychoanalysis." In Gil Perry, ed. *Gender and Art*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press and the Open University, 1999. 240-51.

[Supplementary] Freud, Sigmund. (1927) "Fetishism." In *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press, 1961. 152-7.

March 21st

Foster, Hal. "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic." *October 78* (Autumn 1996): 106-124.

[Screening] Wolff, Françoise (Dir.) *Jacques Lacan Speaks*. Brooklyn, NY: First Run/Icarus Films, 2007. 60 min.

[Supplementary] Lacan, Jacques. (1949) "The Mirror Phase as Formative of the Function of the I." In Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds. *Art in Theory 1900-1990: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992. 609-13.

POST-STRUCTURALISM / DECONSTRUCTION

March 26th

Eagleton, Terry. Excerpt from "Post-Structuralism." In *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983. 127-34.

Bal, Mieke. "Dispersing the Image: Vermeer Story." In *Looking In: The Art of Viewing*. Intro. Norman Bryson. Amsterdam: G + B Arts, 2001. 65-91.

March 28th

Owens, Craig. "Representation, Appropriation, and Power." In *Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power and Culture*. Intro. Simon Watney. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. 88-113.

[Supplementary] Foucault, Michel. "Las Meninas." *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Tavistock Publications, 1970. 3-16.

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FEMINISM and QUEER THEORY

April 2nd

Tickner, Lisa. (1988) Excerpt from "Modernist Art History: The Challenge of Feminism." In Hilary Robinson, ed. *Feminism, Art, Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. 250-57.

April 4th *essay due*

Doyle, Jennifer. (2006) "Queer Wallpaper." In *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, edited by Donald Preziosi. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. 391-401.

TRAUMA THEORY (Guest Lecturer Anne-Sophie Garcia)

April 9th

Butler, Judith. "Violence, Mourning, Politics." *Studies in Gender and Sexuality 4:1* (2003): 9-37.

REVIEW

April 11th

Readings TBA

FINAL EXAM PERIOD

April 14th – 29th

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