Professor: Dr. Anja Bock  
Lectures: Wednesdays and Fridays 14h30 – 16h00, Arts W215  
Office hours: Fridays 13h00-14h00, Arts W260 (Dr. A. Vanhaelen’s office)  
Email: anja.bock2@mcgill.ca  

TA: Anne-Sophie Garcia  
Email: anne-sophie.garcia@mail.mcgill.ca  

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).
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:

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

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<td>Mid-term</td>
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5% Attendance and 5% Discussions


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-)publicly 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.
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

PART I: TRADITIONAL METHODS

BIOGRAPHY

January 10th

FORMALISM

January 15th

January 17th
ICONOGRAPHY

January 22nd


January 24th – group discussion


THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ART AND MARXIST APPROACHES

January 29th


January 31st


PART II: IN THE GALLERY

GALLERY INSTALLATIONS AND THE “IDEAL” VIEWER

February 5th

February 7th


PHENOMENOLOGY AND “AFFECT”

February 12th


February 14th


FOUCAULT AND INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE

February 19th


February 21st


POST COLONIALISM AND EXHIBITING CULTURES

February 26th


February 28th *MID-TERM EXAM*

March 3rd – March 7th: Reading Week

PART III: THE INFLUX OF THEORY

SEMIOTICS AND STRUCTURALISM

March 12th


March 14th *essay proposals due*


PSYCHOANALYSIS

March 19th


OR


March 21st


POST-STRUCTURALISM / DECONSTRUCTION

March 26th


March 28th


FEMINISM and QUEER THEORY
April 2\textsuperscript{nd}


April 4\textsuperscript{th} *essay due*


TRAUMA THEORY (Guest Lecturer Anne-Sophie Garcia)
April 9\textsuperscript{th}


REVIEW
April 11\textsuperscript{th}

Readings TBA

FINAL EXAM PERIOD
April 14\textsuperscript{th} – 29\textsuperscript{th}

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