

ARTH 440/599 Spring 2012
Home, Tavern, Bordello:
Vermeer and Dutch Genre Painting in the 17th Century
Mondays 4:30-7:10 pm, Research Hall 402

Instructor: Prof. Angela Ho
Email: aho5@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Monday 12-2, Tuesday 2-3, or by appointment
Office: Robinson B334

Description

Scenes of courtship in well-appointed interiors, chores in the home, fights in the tavern, and exchanges in the brothel continue to delight us and to influence our understanding of 17th-century Dutch social life. This course examines the emergence and development of these new pictorial subjects in this period and considers the role of images in shaping contemporary social and cultural values. We will study the technical and thematic innovations of painters such as Johannes Vermeer, Jan Steen, Gerard ter Borch, Pieter de Hooch, and their equally interesting if less well-known contemporaries. We will look at the various motivations for buying paintings in this period, and consider how painters met and challenged collectors' expectations with their ingenuity. We will also scrutinize the different methods modern art historians use to interpret these paintings, many of which are open to multiple readings. Students will acquire knowledge of major examples of 17th-century Dutch genre painting and develop skills in visual analysis, critical reading and art historical research.

Tech requirements and policy

All students must activate their e-mail accounts on campus. I will ONLY use your GMU email addresses. If you prefer to use a commercial account, you must activate the forwarder on your GMU account. Readings, course updates, information on assignments and examinations will be available on Blackboard.

Please be respectful of your peers and your instructor when using electronic devices.

- Cell phones must be put on silent.
- Do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and may affect your participation grade.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will:

- Learn to situate works of art within the historical context of early modern Netherlands;
- Hone your skills of visual analysis and interpretation;
- Read primary and secondary sources critically;
- Develop the skills of art historical research and writing.

Requirements

In a seminar, learning happens when we are discussing readings and visual materials. Attendance and informed participation in class discussions are therefore required of all students. If you cannot attend class due to medical reasons or other emergencies, I would be happy to meet

with you during office hours to bring you up to date with the course material. Proper documentation, however, must be submitted to me in a timely fashion. Otherwise, after two missed classes, each subsequent unexplained absence will lead to a deduction of 10% of your participation grade.

Your engagement with ideas presented in classes and readings, and your ability to apply them to works of art, will be assessed based on your participation in discussion, response papers to weekly readings, and a final research project (oral presentation and research paper).

Students must complete *all* graded assignments and other requirements listed on the syllabus. Even if your overall average without one of these elements is sufficient for a passing grade, you cannot pass the class without specific, prior permission of the instructor.

Percentage breakdown:

Attendance and participation: 15%

Weekly response papers (7): 30%

Presentation: 10%

Draft of final paper: 10%

Final paper: 35%

PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of fairness, papers *must* be submitted on time to receive full credit. Students will incur a 3% penalty per day for late papers. In cases of medical or other serious problems, please document them and let me know as soon as possible.

Readings

Weekly readings include articles and book excerpts, which will be available as PDF's on Blackboard. In order to get the most out of this course, it is essential that you complete the assigned readings before you come to class. You are not required to buy a textbook, but there are several books on Dutch art that you might find useful, especially if you have not studied the subject previously:

Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.

Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing. Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Mariët Westermann, *A Worldly Art. The Dutch Republic 1585-1718*. New York: Harry Abrams and Prentice Hall, 1996.

These, along with other helpful books on Dutch art, history, and culture, are on reserve at the Johnson Center library.

Response Papers

You will be asked to write two-page papers based on the weekly reading assignments. Choose 7 weeks out of weeks 2 to 11. A set of questions will be provided to guide you through the assigned readings. Compose your papers in response to these questions. Hard copies of response papers are due in class on the day we discuss the relevant topic.

Final Paper (for ARTH 440)

One of the major objectives of this course is to help you acquire the skills necessary to write a research paper. Each of you will define a project that explores one or more of the major themes addressed in the course. To help you develop the project step by step, I will ask you to submit a paper proposal, an annotated bibliography and a draft of your paper at various points of the semester. You will also present your hypotheses and findings to the class on April 16, 23, and 30. A draft of your final paper (about 10-12 pages) is due on April 9, with the final version due on May 11. You can submit your draft and final paper electronically to Blackboard.

* For ARTH 599, the final research paper will be 15-20 pages.

Add-drop deadlines

Please note the following add-drop deadlines:

January 31, 2012	Last day to add a class
	Last day to drop a class with no tuition penalty
February 14, 2012	Last day to drop a class with 33% tuition penalty
February 24, 2012	Final drop deadline with 67% tuition penalty

It is your responsibility to observe the add-drop deadlines to ensure that you are properly registered for specific courses.

English as a second language

If English is not your first language, feel free to discuss with me any concerns you have about the writing assignments. Please, however, give me plenty of notice (at least a week) before the due dates. You may also consider consulting the Writing Center.

Standards of Academic integrity

Strict adherence to the Honor Code as defined in the undergraduate catalogue is expected. Plagiarism, cheating on examinations, and all other instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Committee, and may result in a failing grade for the course. Please consult the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process.

Students with disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should see me and contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. Please note that this form must be provided to me at least two weeks before the first test.

SCHEDULE

Please note that each class addresses a particular set of paintings and methodological concerns. Although readings have been assigned to specific topics on this syllabus, they can be subject to change. I will let you know well in advance if and when changes need to be made.

Week 1

January 23 **Introduction: What is ‘genre painting’?**

Week2

January 30 **A New Republic: Art and Society**

Simon Schama, “The Unruly Realm: Appetite and Restraint in Seventeenth Century Holland,” *Daedalus* 108 (1979): 103-121.

C. Willemijn Fock, “Semblance or Reality? The Domestic Interior in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting.” In *Art and Home: Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Mariët Westermann (Zwolle, 2001), 83-101.

Lyckle de Vries, “The Changing Face of Realism,” in *Art in History, History in Art*, edited by David Freedberg and Jan de Vries (Santa Monica: Getty, 1991), 209-44.

Week 3

February 6 **“Low Life” Paintings: Modes of Interpretation**

Linda Stone-Ferrier, “Pretty Ornaments and Clever Images: Interpretations of Dutch Art,” in *Dutch Prints of Daily Life: Mirror of Life or Masks of Morals* (Lawrence, KS: Spencer Museum of Art, 1983), 3-35.

Mariët Westermann, “Jan Miense Molenaer in the Comic Mode,” in *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh, N.C.: North Carolina Museum of Art, 2002), 43-58.

Herman Roodenburg, “How to Sit, Stand, and Walk: Toward a Historical Anthropology of Dutch Paintings and Prints,” in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne Franits (Cambridge, 1997), 175-186.

Week 4

February 13 **The Merry Company: Uses and Limitations of Iconology**
Library session: meet at Johnson Center

Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology* (New York: Icon Editions, 1972), 3-17.

Eddy de Jongh, “To Instruct and Delight,” in *Questions of Meaning: Theme and Motif in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Painting*, trans. by Michael Hoyle (Leiden, 2000), 84-103.

Eric Jan Sluijter, “Didactic and Disguised Meaning?” in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne Franits (Cambridge, 1997), 78-87.

Week 5

February 20 **Gender Roles: Questioning the Stereotypes**

Simon Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches* (New York: Random House, 1987), 398-453.

Alison Kettering, "Gerard ter Borch's Military Men: Masculinity Transformed," in *The Public and Private in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age*, edited by Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. and Adele Seeff (Newark, 2000), 100-22.

Wayne Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-17.

Week 6

February 27 **Home, Tavern, Bordello: Picturing Dutch Life**

Svetlana Alpers, "Picturing Dutch Culture," in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne Franits (Cambridge, 1997), 57-67.

Elizabeth Honig, "The Space of Gender in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting," in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne Franits (Cambridge, 1997), 187-201.

Richard Helgerson, "Soldiers and Enigmatic Girls: The Politics of Dutch Domestic Realism 1650-1672," *Representations* 58 (1997): 49-87.

Week 7

March 5 **Art and Money: Making and Selling Paintings in the Dutch Republic**

Paper proposal due

John Michael Montias, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art," *Art History* 10 (1987): 455-466.

Neil de Marchi and Hans J. van Miegroet. "Art, Value, and Market Practices in the Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century," *Art Bulletin* 86 (1994): 451-64.

Els Kloek, "The Case of Judith Leyster: Exception or Paradigm?" in *Judith Leyster: A Dutch Master and her World* (Exhibition catalogue, Worcester Art Museum, 1993), 55-68.

Week 8

March 12 *Spring Break*

Week 9

March 19 **Imitation and Originality: Reconsidering "Authorship"**

Richard Shiff, "Originality," in *Critical Terms for Art History*, edited by Robert S Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 103-15.

Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt and the Female Nude* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 251-65.

Angela Ho, "An Invitation to Compare: Frans van Mieris' *Cloth Shop* in the Context of Early Modern Art Collecting," *Renaissance Studies* 23 (2009): 694-717.

Week 10

March 26 **The Art and Science of Seeing**

Annotated bibliography due

Celeste Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten* (Chicago and London, 1995), 70-74, 169-82.

Arthur Wheelock, "Vermeer and the Camera Obscura," *Perspective, Optics, and Delft Artists around 1650*, New York: Garland, 283-301.

E. Melanie Gifford, "Painting Light: Recent Observations on Vermeer's Technique." *Studies in the History of Art* 55 (1998): 185-99.

Week 11

April 2 **Vermeer**

Ivan Gaskell, "Vermeer and the Limits of Interpretation," *Studies in the History of Art* 55 (1998): 225-33.

Celeste Brusati, *Johannes Vermeer* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), Introduction (6 pages).

Daniel Arasse, *Vermeer: Faith in Painting*, trans. Terry Grabar (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 59-75.

Eddy de Jongh, "On Balance," *Studies in the History of Art* 55 (1998): 351-65.

Week 12

April 9 *Individual meetings with students in lieu of class. Please sign up at my office for half-hour appointments to discuss your research project.*

Rough draft of final paper due

Week 13

April 16 **Student Presentations**

Week 14

April 23 **Student Presentations**

Week 15

April 30 **Student Presentations**

May 11, 11:59pm Final paper due (upload to Blackboard)