

ARTH 600 Fall 2017
Methods and Research in Art History
Tuesday 4:30-7:10
Research 201

Instructor: Dr. Angela Ho
Email: aho5@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Monday 12–2 pm, Thursday 11–1 pm, and by appointment
Office: Robinson B 334

Course Description

This course will consider the history of art history, examining how approaches to understanding and interpreting art have evolved over time. We will look at a variety of research methods, including iconography, formalism, social history, biography, as well as feminist, Marxist, and post-modern theories. This course will examine the historical context in which these options emerged as well as the implications of adopting a particular approach. We will also ask how scholar's perspectives and assumptions often say as much about the time they are writing in as they do about the subjects they are writing about. Students will be required to read critically, participate in discussions, make class presentations, and engage in research for the written assignments.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will

- recognize, understand, and employ art historical methods;
- develop critical readings skills;
- examine how historical and cultural contexts influenced the interpretation of art;
- develop methodological self-awareness in your research and writing.

Course Format and Requirements

This course will be run as a seminar. I will provide background information or explanations when appropriate, but the bulk of the class sessions will be devoted to critical discussions of assigned readings. Your engagement with ideas presented in classes and readings, and your ability to apply them, will be assessed based on your participation in discussion, blog postings, response papers, and a final project (oral presentation and 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.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and participation:	20%
Weekly blog postings:	20%
Response papers:	20%
Presentation:	10%
Final paper:	30%

Grading scale

A+	97-100	C+	77-79.5
A	93-96.5	C	73-76.5
A-	90-92.5	C-	70-72.5
B+	87-89.5	D	60-69.5
B	83-86.5	F	< 60
B-	80-82.5		

Readings

Weekly readings include articles and book excerpts and will be available on Blackboard. Please also purchase the textbook:

Hatt, Michael, and Charlotte Klonk. *Art History: A Critical Introduction to its Methods*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006

Hatt and Klonk will help guide you through the theoretical texts. In order to get the most out of this course, it is essential that you complete the assigned readings BEFORE you come to class.

Participation

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. Your starting attendance/participation grade (i.e., you attend all class meetings but do not participate in discussions, or do not give any indication that you have done the readings) will be a C+. You build on that grade with informed contributions to class discussions.

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 one missed class, each subsequent unexplained absence will lead to a deduction of 10% of your participation grade.

It is important to maintain a positive learning environment and observe rules of classroom etiquette in class sessions. Constructive comments and criticism are welcome, but please be mindful of and respect one another's views.

Blog postings

From weeks 2–6, 8–12, choose 7 weeks to submit short responses (around 250 – 300 words) to the readings. Please post your response on Blackboard by 3:30 pm on the day we discuss the relevant topic in class. Please see page 7 for further instructions.

Response Papers

Out of the 7 weekly postings, choose 3 to expand into longer, more formal response papers. **At least two must be on readings from week 2 to week 9.** Upload response papers to Blackboard the week *after* we discuss the relevant topic. Please see page 7 for specific instructions.

Final project: presentation and analytical paper

For the final project for this course, you are asked to analyze an art history paper you wrote in the past. More detailed instructions will be provided later in the semester. You will present your project to the class on November 21, November 28, or December 5. The final paper will be due by the end of the day on December 15. Submit your final paper electronically to Blackboard.

PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of fairness, papers must be submitted on time to receive full credit. Students will incur a 3% grade 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.

A note about presentations: this is an opportunity for you to get feedback from your colleagues before you finalize the paper. It will also give all of you a chance to learn from each other. Attendance at all presentations is mandatory. For each presentation you miss, you will incur a 5% penalty from your final paper grade. So, for example, if you miss an entire session with 5 presentations, the starting grade for your final paper will be 75% (C).

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. Be sure to plan ahead, because the Writing Center is very busy near the end of the semester.

Tech requirements

I will ONLY use your GMU email addresses. If you prefer to use a commercial account, you must activate the email forwarder on your GMU account. Readings, course updates, and instructions for assignments and examinations will be available on Blackboard. Please also note that you will be expected to give a power point presentation of your research project.

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

- Do not use cell phones in class.
- Do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and may affect your participation grade.

Add-drop deadlines

Please note the following add-drop deadlines:

September 5	Last day to add a class
	Last day to drop a class with no tuition penalty
September 19	Last day to drop a class with 33% tuition penalty
September 29	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.

Students with disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please note that requests for

accommodation must be provided to me at least two weeks before the due date of the first assignment. For further information and documentation please contact the Office of Disability Services, Student Union Building I (SUB), Room 4205, Telephone: (703) 993-2474, TTY: (703) 993-2476.

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.

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Week 1 August 29

Introduction

- Hatt and Klonk, “Introduction” and “Preview.”

Week 2 September 5

Hegel and the birth of the discipline; Library session

- Moxey, Keith. “Art History’s Hegelian Unconscious.” In *The Subjects of Art History*, eds. Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly, Keith Moxey, 25-51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 3.

Week 3 September 12

Connoisseurship and technical art history

- Berenson, Bernard. *Rudiments of Connoisseurship*, 111-148. New York: Schocken Books, 1962 (originally published in 1902).
- Von Sonnenburg, Hubert. *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: aspects of connoisseurship*, 3-9; 71-79. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 4.

Week 4 September 19

Formalism

- Wölfflin, Heinrich. “Principles of Art History” (1915). In *The Art of Art history: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Donald Preziosi, 115-126. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Riegl, Alois. “Leading Characteristics of the Late Roman “Kunstwollen.” (1893) In *The Art of Art history: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Donald Preziosi, 169-175. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 5.
- OPTIONAL: Greenberg, Clement. "Modernist Painting." In *The Collected Essays and Criticism, vol. 4: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969*, 85-94. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995.

Week 5 September 26

Iconography

- Panofsky, Erwin. *Studies in Iconology*, 3-17. New York: Icon Editions, 1972.
- Panofsky, Erwin. "Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait*." *Burlington Magazine* 64 (1934): 117-119; 122-127.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 6.

Week 6 October 3

Social history of art

- Baxandall, Michael. "Period Eye (excerpts)." In *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 29-56; 86-108. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Clark, T. J. "On the Social History of Art." In *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution*, 9-20. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 7.

Week 7 October 10

Columbus Day recess. Tuesday classes do not meet.

Week 8 October 17

Feminism and gender theory

- Pollock, Griselda. "Feminist Interventions in the Histories of Art: an Introduction." In *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the History of Art*, 1-17. London and New York: Routledge, 1988.
- Nead, Lynda. *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain*, selections. Oxford and New York: Blackwell, 1988.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 8.

Week 9 October 24

Psychoanalysis

- Mulvey, Laura. "Fears, Fantasies and the Male Unconscious or 'You Don't Know What is Happening, Do You, Mr. Jones?'" In *Visual and Other Pleasures*, 6-13. Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1989.
- Pollock, Griselda. "Woman as Sign: Psychoanalytic Readings." In *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the History of Art*, 120-54. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 9.

Week 10 October 31

Semiotics

- Bal, Mieke, and Norman Bryson. “Semiotics and Art History.” *Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 174-188.
- Krauss, Rosalind. “In the Name of Picasso.” In *The Originality of the Avant-garde and other Modernist Myths*, 23-40. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 10.

Week 11 November 7

Postcolonialism

- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*, 49-73. 25th anniversary ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.
- Coombes, Annie E. “Inventing the ‘Postcolonial’: Hybridity and Constituency in Contemporary Curating.” *New Formations* (1992): 39-52.
- Hatt and Klonk, chapter 11.

Week 12 November 14

Material Culture

- Gell, Alfred. “The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology.” In *The Art of Anthropology: Essays and Diagrams*, 159–86. London and New Brunswick: The Athlone Press, 1999.
- Holmes, Megan. “Ex-votos: Materiality, Memory, and Cult.” In *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World*, eds. Michael Cole and Rebecca Zorach, 159-181. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009.

Week 13 November 21

Presentations

Week 14 November 28

Presentations

Week 15 December 5

Presentations

Final paper due on December 15, 11:59 pm.

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Weekly Readings, Blog Postings, Response Papers

Please upload your observations on the readings in a Word or RTF file to Blackboard by 3:30 pm on the day we discuss that particular topic in class. The goal of this assignment is to help you develop critical reading skills, which in turn will enable you to understand art historical methods.

Reading critically does not mean gathering information from a text, or simply reading it through once from beginning to end. Critical reading is active reading. Underline or highlight the main points and note down your thoughts and questions. When you have finished a reading, go back over your notes and highlights, and consider the following:

- When was the text written? How would the date of the text affect the way you approach it?
- What are the author's major arguments? How does s/he approach the history of art?
- Do you detect any assumptions or biases underlying the author's analysis?
- What evidence does the author use to support his/her arguments and how does s/he do so?
- Do you find the argument effective? Why or why not? How do the conclusions compare with other readings you have encountered?

Blog postings

Gather your thoughts and observations into a short essay (about 250–300 words) and post it to Blackboard. Identify the main arguments of a reading and—if appropriate—pose questions about the parts that you find particularly difficult. This is an informal writing assignment; what I am looking for is your active engagement with the readings. From weeks 2–6, 8–12, post at least 7 responses to the readings.

Response papers

For three of those weeks, you are asked to write a longer response paper on the readings (about 4 pages). Turn in the response paper one week after we discuss the readings in class. For example, if you decide to write a response paper on the topic for week 4 (“Formalism”), you will submit the paper in week 5. Two of the papers must be on readings from before week 10.

The response paper is a formal written assignment. You are expected to have go into greater detail in this paper than in your blog post, and the class discussion should have helped you confirm or adjust your initial ideas. The paper should be proofread, with proper citations.

If you draw on your classmates' postings on Blackboard, you must acknowledge your sources. It goes without saying that your response must reflect your own critical engagement with the text, and should not be a mish-mash of your classmates' postings.