

Art 350 * Methods of Art History * Sp. 2025

Tuesdays, 1:20 - 2:45

Thursdays, 2:15 - 3:35

Location: Boe 202

Professor: Hannah Ryan, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Art History
Director of Gender and Sexuality Studies

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Please call me: Hannah or Professor Ryan

Email: ryan11@stolaf.edu

Office Hours: Mondays, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Stop by or [sign up here](#).

[Google Classroom](#) code: jbt7pwb

Course Description

This seminar explores methods by which art historians and curators analyze and contextualize works of art. Students develop an advanced understanding of these methods by application of various methods to works of art, by examining historical factors surrounding principle movements in the study of art history and by engaging in lively class debates about them. Readings, discussions, and presentations culminate in an independent research project that allows students to find their own place in the discipline, identifying their own theoretical framework. As the use of theory among art historians evolves, this particular course will focus on emergent trends in *cultural context*: the theories concerned with socioeconomics, gender, race, postcolonialism, and beyond.

Syllabus Statements:

- **Anti-Racism Statement:** Classrooms are communities like any other: they bring people together, but they also exclude and marginalize. Our classroom is not immune to the continuing struggle for equity in our larger communities of St. Olaf College, Minnesota, or the United States. In our classroom, we must actively work together to combat and not tolerate forms of bias and discrimination, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, transphobia, xenophobia, and white supremacy, among others. Together, we commit to anti-racist pedagogy and dialogue. For resources, please explore the excellent [Talking About Race Portal](#), created by the National Museum of African American History and Culture.
- **Pronouns:** This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. Please indicate your pronouns on the introductory letter, or at any point throughout the semester. As a class, we commit to gendering each other properly.

Course Materials: All readings will be available online, as links embedded in this syllabus. A handful of films are assigned, and can be streamed for under \$20 total.

Field Trip: Together, we will plan a field trip in April or May! Think about where you'd like to go as a group, where we can see and experience things relevant to the class.

Academic Resources

- The Writing Desk. Peer tutors at the Writing Desk offer help with any paper, in any class, at any stage of the writing process. You can sign up for an appointment online or drop in for online tutoring Sundays 12pm-9:45pm, Mondays-Thursdays 9am-9:45pm, and Fridays 9am-5pm. Learn more at <http://wp.stolaf.edu/caas/writing-help/>.
- The Speaking Space. Speaking Tutors help students effectively speak and listen within academic conversations, from participating in or leading class discussions to preparing and rehearsing formal presentations. Sign up for an appointment online Sundays-Thursdays 7-8:30pm.
- Academic accommodations. I am committed to supporting the learning of all students in my class. If you have already registered with Disability and Access (DAC) and have your letter of accommodations, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss, plan, and implement your accommodations in the course. If you have or think you have a disability (learning, sensory, physical, chronic health, mental health or attentional), please contact Disability and Access staff at 507-786-3288 or by visiting wp.stolaf.edu/academic-support/dac.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism, the unacknowledged appropriation of another person's words or ideas, is a serious academic offense. It is imperative that you hand in work that is your own, and that cites or gives credit to others whenever you draw from their work. Please see St. Olaf's statements on academic integrity and plagiarism at: <https://wp.stolaf.edu/thebook/academic/integrity/>. See also the description of St. Olaf's honor system at: <https://wp.stolaf.edu/honorcouncil/>.

- All work you complete in this course must be original. You cannot have submitted it in any other course.

Labor and Assessment

- This class is structured like a graduate school seminar in Art History. As such, you are responsible to participate fully, in a self-directed manner.
- Please bring notes on readings to class each day. Your notes should discuss individual readings, and draw connections between them. You should also include questions—for your learning community. You should also include works of art, when relevant, so you can share them with the class to work through the theories.
- Main projects will consist of several scaffolded projects in preparation for the final research paper, and the paper itself.

Grade Breakdown

Weekly reflections on course content of 1-2 pages (graded ✓, ✓-, ✓+). These end March 6, before the preparatory work for the research paper begins. Portfolio of weekly reflections due 3/6.	25%
Preparation for Research Paper: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief topic proposal of 100 words, including how you envision applying theory to your topic. Due: 3/11. • Annotated bibliography of at least ten sources, which outlined the arguments in each article and book. Due: 3/18. • Outline of paper with five images. Due: 3/27. • First draft of paper, peer-reviewed by at least one other classmate. Due 4/15. • Second draft, integrating peer feedback, shared with the instructor for additional feedback. Due 4/22. • Presentation, prior to wrapping up the final paper. Guidelines are provided in the prompt on Classroom. Questions and feedback will inform the final paper. Students provide written feedback for each presenter, using a prompt provided by the instructor. 5/1, 5/6, and 5/8. • Portfolio of all preparation for research paper due 5/8. 	25%
Attendance and participation in discussions, reflection due 5/13	25%
Final Paper of 15 pages. Due 5/16, 3:00 p.m.	25%

Final Research Papers

- Students are encouraged to craft final projects that will move their scholarly interests and goals forward. Find the questions that feel most urgent to you.
- In advance, please read: [Anne D'Alleva, Writing Art History Papers](#).
- Papers should be approximately 15 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 point font, and use Chicago style citations. Include a bibliography in the Chicago style. If you plan to use your papers as writing samples for graduate school applications, identify the requirements of your top programs and write a paper of that length. Please note that many programs require 20 page writing samples.
- Images must be accompanied by proper captions. Include a figure list at the end of the document.
- Studio Art majors, students feeling creative, and those not needing writing samples for graduate school: please see me about the possibility of integrating your preparatory work into a creative project rather than a final paper. A final creative project, rather than paper, requires a proposal and instructor approval.
- Final Papers are due Saturday, May 18 at 3:00 p.m., our scheduled exam time.

- There is no final exam in this class, and we will not meet during the scheduled exam time.
- Please note the importance of staying on track to meet the deadlines for these scaffolded assignments. This is especially true for seniors, in the last few months of college.

Schedule

Thursday, February 6

Introduction to Methods

- What are theories? Why use them?
- Review syllabus, propose any changes, especially moving topics up that you may want to use for final papers.

Tuesday, February 11

Thinking Theory, Feeling Love

- [Anne D'Alleva, Methods and Theories of Art History](#). (Please read Intro and Chapter 1)
- [bell hooks, All About Love: New Visions](#) (Please read Intro and Chapter 6, Values: Living By a Love Ethic, beginning page 84)
- [bell hooks, Love as the Practice of Freedom](#)
- [Remembering bell hooks and All About Love](#)
- [With the Death of bell hooks, a Generation of Feminists Lost a Foundational Figure](#)

Thursday, February 13

Disrupting the Male Canon, Pt 1.

- [Nochlin, Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?, 1971](#)
- [An Illustrated Guide to Linda Nochlin](#)
- [In Memory of Linda Nochlin](#)

Tuesday, February 18

Disrupting the Male Canon, Pt. 2

- [Griselda Pollock, Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity, 1988](#)
- [Bridget Schulte, A Woman's Greatest Enemy? A Lack of Time to Herself, 2019](#)

Thursday, February 20

Intersectional Feminism(s) and Art(s), Pt. 1

- [Alice Walker, In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens, 1972/1984](#)
- [bell hooks, Feminist Theory from Margin to Center, 1984](#) Chapter 1
- [bell hooks, Art on My Mind, 1995](#)

Tuesday, February 25

Intersectional Feminism(s) and Art(s), Pt. 2

- Explore [Audre Lorde, on the Poetry Foundation website](#)
- [Audre Lorde, The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House](#)
- [Audre Lorde, Poetry is Not a Luxury](#)
- [A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde](#) (sign in through Catalyst for access, and watch whenever you can, as it is 90 minutes long. If it doesn't work, skip it!)

Thursday, February 27

Queer and Gender-Affirming Approaches

- [Review: Who's Afraid of Gender, 2024](#)
- [Judith Butler, Who's Afraid of Gender, Introduction](#)
- [Judith Butler, Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire, in Gender Trouble, pp 1-34, 1990](#)
- Scan: [Silver, Erin and Amelia Jones \(eds.\). Chapter 1: Queer Feminist Art History. An Imperfect Genealogy, in Otherwise: Imagining queer feminist art histories. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015.](#)
- Scan: [Bissonauth, A Camping of Orientalism in Sunil Gupta's Sun City](#)

Tuesday, March 4

The Gaze

- [Laura Mulvey, Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, 1975](#) pp. 57-68
- [Barbara Kruger, Untitled \(Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face\)](#)
- [Alison Bechtel, The Rule, 1985](#)
- Explore: [The Bechtel Test](#)

Thursday, March 6

The Gaze Part 2

- [bell hooks, The Oppositional Gaze](#)
- Read: [The Woman, Animalized](#)
- Watch the [trailer for The Pornography of Meat](#)
- [Carol J. Adams, The Pornography of Meat, 2020](#) Chapter 1 (Content warning for potentially disturbing material)
- * Due: Portfolio of weekly reflections

Tuesday, March 11

Exile, Displacement, Migration

- [Edward Said, Reflections on Exile](#)
- [Sarah Ahmed, Uprootings, Regroundings, Questions of Home and Migration](#) (Intro)
- [Women and Migrations II](#) (Peruse topics and choose one chapter to read in depth)
- In class: [Mapping Ana Mendieta](#)
- * Due: Brief topic proposal of 100 words, including how you envision applying theory to your topic.

Thursday, March 13

Orientalism

- [Namrata Verghese, What is Orientalism? A Stereotyped, Colonialist Vision of Asian Cultures, 2021](#) (Please read this closely!)
 - At 2:30, Namrata Verghese will visit our class virtually to discuss this article and Orientalism
- [Edward Said, Orientalism, 1978](#) (Please read Introduction and skim Chapter 1)
- Explore: [Orientalism in Nineteenth Century Art](#)
- Skim: [Linda Nochlin, The Imaginary Orient, 1983](#)

Tuesday, March 18

Borderlands

- [Gloria Anzaldúa: Multi-Identity Chicana Feminist Writer](#)
- [Gloria Anzaldúa, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza \(1987\)](#) Pages 99-113
- * Due: Annotated bibliography of at least ten sources, which outlined the arguments in each article and book.

Thursday, March 20

Abject

- [Julia Kristeva, The Powers of Horror, An Essay on Abjection](#) (Please read chapter I: Toward Abjection)
- [Abject Art](#)

Tuesday, March 25

Cultural Identities and Diaspora

- Read: [Stuart Hall, Cultural Identity and Diaspora](#)
- Read: [Jamaica Kincaid, A Small Place \(excerpt\)](#)
- Very short, ten minutes in total:
 - Read: [The Unfinished Conversation](#)
 - View: [short trailer for The Stuart Hall Project](#)
 - Watch: [short clip from The Stuart Hall Project](#)

Thursday, March 27

- 2:15-2:50 Research session with Karen Olson, Research and Instruction Library for Fine Arts and Music
- In class: work independently and in small groups on outline (Hannah away)
- * Due: Outline of paper with five images.

* Spring Break *

Tuesday, April 2: no class

Thursday, April 4: no class

* Quiet Week for Advising *

Tuesday, April 8

Cultural Identities and Diaspora

- No work prior to class!
- In class: Watch the brand new biopic [Bob Marley: One Love](#)
- How can we apply Stuart Hall's conception of cultural identities and diaspora to Bob Marley?
- Discuss writing an outline

Thursday, April 10

Cultural Identities and Diaspora

- Continue Bob Marley: One Love
- Afterward: Apply Stuart Hall to the film.

Tuesday, April 15

Affect

- [Cvetkovich, Ann. "Affect." In *Keywords for American Cultural Studies, Second Edition*, edited by Burgett Bruce and Hendler Glenn, 13-16. NYU Press, 2014.](#)
- [Ahmed, Sara. "Introduction: Feel Your Way." In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 1-19. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.](#)
- [Hardt, Michael. *Affective Labor*.](#)
- [Sign up for presentations on May 7 and 9](#)
- * Due: First draft of paper, peer-reviewed by at least one other classmate.

Thursday, April 17

Emotion

- [Jennifer Doyle, *Hold it Against Me: Difficulty and Emotion in Contemporary Art*, Duke University Press, 2013, Chapter 1, pp.1-27](#)
 - [Second link for above reading \(please read both, paying attention to page number\)](#)
- [Doyle, Jennifer. "Soccer, Art, and Desire." *World Literature Today* 85, no. 3 \(2011\): 44-45.](#)
- [Yrsa Roca Fannberg's *Watercolors*](#)

Tuesday, April 22

Feeling Down

- [José Esteban Muñoz, 'Feeling Brown, Feeling Down: Latina Affect, the Performativity of Race, and the Depressive Position,' *Signs*, 31:3, Spring 2006, pp. 675-688](#)
- Skim: [Eve Sedgwick, "Paranoid reading and reparative reading," in *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Duke University Press, 2003, pp.123-151](#)
- * Due: Second draft, integrating peer feedback, shared with the instructor for additional feedback.

Thursday, April 24

Trans and Non-Binary Approaches

- [A Syllabus on Trans and Non-Binary Methods of Art and Art History](#)
- [Sara Ahmed, An Affinity of Hammers](#)
- Skim: [Prismatic Views: A Look at the Growing Field of Transgender Art and Visual Culture Studies](#)
- View: [Disclosure](#) (2020, Netflix)

Tuesday, April 29

- [Hannah Ryan and Melinda Gonzalez, How to hold on to a hurricane, 2004](#)
- Hold this class session (possibilities of weather, disruptions, moving things around!)

Thursday, May 1

- * Presentations, prior to wrapping up the final paper. Questions and feedback will inform the final paper.
- [Here is the sign up sheet for presentations on May 1, 6, and 8](#)

Saturday, May 3

- Potential field trip?


Tuesday, May 6

- * Presentations, prior to wrapping up the final paper. Questions and feedback will inform the final paper.

Thursday, May 8

- * Presentations, prior to wrapping up the final paper. Questions and feedback will inform the final paper.
- * Due: Second draft, integrating peer feedback, shared with the instructor for additional feedback.
- * Portfolio of all preparation for research paper due.

Tuesday, May 13: Last day of class!

- Wrap up presentations if needed.
- Collective reflection
- Course evaluations
- Farewell, seniors!! 

* FRIDAY, MAY 16, 3:00 P.M.: FINAL PAPER DUE *

For Further Reading

Putting theory into practice

- Watch: [Vision and Justice: Cheryl Finley Interviews Hank Willis Thomas](#) (30 min)
- Watch: [LaTanya S. Autry, Facing Racism: Art + Action](#) (13 min)
- Watch: [Can Beauty Open Our Hearts to Difficult Conversations?](#) (13 min)
- Watch: [How Can Images Tell the Story of Mass Incarceration?](#) (2 min)
- Explore: [Monument Lab](#), recent [Projects](#), including [On the Day They Came Home](#)

Pain/Affect

- [Ahmed, Sara. "The Contingency of Pain." In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. 20-41. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014. Accessed April 13, 2021.](#)
- Ann Cvetkovich, *Depression: A Public Feeling*, Duke UP, 2012
- Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Lesbian Public Cultures*, Duke UP, 2003.

Archives and Silencing

- [Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing The Past*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1995, intro and ch.1, pp.1-69](#)
- [Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Duke University Press, 2003, pp. 16-52](#)
- [Zahid Chaudury, 'Death and the Rhetoric of Photography: X Marks the Spot,' in *Afterimage of Empire: Photography in Nineteenth Century India*, University of Minnesota Press, pp. 36-71](#)
- View: [Change the Subject](#)
- Watch: [Listening to Images, A Salon in Honor of Tina Campt](#)
- Peruse: [Tina Campt, *Listening to Images*, Duke UP: 2017, chapter 1, 'Quiet Soundings](#)

Postcolonial Theories and Hybridity

- [Homi Bhaba, *The Location of Culture* \(1994\)](#) (Read Intro, Chapters 1-2, and any other sections of interest)
- [Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* \(1987\)](#) Pages 99-113
- Skim: [Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn's "Hybridity and Its Discontents" \(2003\)](#) Pages 5-29

More bell hooks

- Watch [bell hooks: Cultural Criticism and Transformation part 1](#) and [part 2](#) (TW: sexual violence, racism, violence, disturbing language and imagery)

Postcolonialism and Ireland

- [Postcolonial Art](#)
- [Postcolonial Theory and Art History](#)
- [A History of Ireland for Outsiders, 2019](#)
- [Using Art to Explore Ireland's Postcolonial Identity, 2016](#)

- [“800 Years of Oppression!” Ireland’s Contemporary Art Biennial, 2016](#)
- [These Murals Lie at the Center of a Debate Over Northern Ireland’s Future, 2017](#)

Representation and Indigeneity:

- [Marcia Crosby, ‘The Construction of the Imaginary Indian,’ in Stan Douglas \(ed.\), *Vancouver Anthology: The Institutional Politics of Art*, Vancouver: Talon Books, 1993, pp.267–291](#)

Representation and Burden

- [Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness*, MIT Press, 2007, ch.1, ‘On Black Representational Space,’ pp.27–70](#)
- [Kobena Mercer, ‘Black Art and the Burden of Representation,’ *Third Text*, vol.4, 1990, 61–78](#)
- [Tavia Nyong’o, “Unburdening Representation,” in *The Black Scholar*, vol 44, n. 2, Summer 2014](#)

Tourism and Neocolonialism

- [Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*](#)
- [Reading guide](#)

Decolonizing Art History

- [Andrew Tuck and Eve Yang, ‘Decolonization is not a Metaphor,’ *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2012, pp. 1-40](#)
- [Catherine Grant and Dorothy Price \(eds\), ‘Decolonizing Art History,’ *Art History*, 43:1, February 2020, pp.8–66](#)
- [Walter D. Mignolo, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*, pp 105-134.](#)