ARTH7

Gender, Race, Sexuality: Episodes in Modernism 1900-1945

Professor David Getsy
First-year seminar, Department of Art History, Dartmouth College
Winter 2003 • 10A / 10.00-11.50 Tuesday Thursday / x-hour 3.00-3.50 Wednesday
Office hours: 1.00-2.30 Tuesday / office: 307 Carpenter Hall

Course Description

This discussion-based, writing-intensive seminar will introduce key concepts for modernism in the visual arts and will stress current critical approaches to the study of visual culture. Focusing on the development of modernism in the first half of the twentieth century in Europe and America, we will explore a series of episodes in which artists and critics engaged with questions of gender, race, sexuality, and identity. We will examine cases in which artists and critics subverted or critiqued cultural norms as well as cases in which the work of modernist artists reflected and relied upon dominant assumptions about race, sexuality, and gender. Themes studied will include: primitivism, gender performance, the politics of museum display, feminism in history and scholarship, cultural hybridity, the role of subcultures, and the politics of representation. Artists and movements discussed will include Picasso, Duchamp, Vorticism, Harlem Renaissance, Cadmus, Kahlo, Hepworth, and Surrealism.

Structure of the Course

Each two-hour session will be focused primarily on discussion of images, texts, and course themes. At points throughout the course, one half of the two-hour session will be taken up with lectures introducing historical and conceptual contexts. For each session, two students will be asked to pose questions based on the readings to the rest of the class. X-hour sessions will be used to supplement normal course lectures through additional lectures, visits to the Hood Museum of Art, and further discussion sessions. Attendance at x-hour sessions is required. Open x-hours may be utilized with as little as a day’s notice.

Method of Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on the basis of (1) attendance, preparation, and participation in class discussion (including preparation of discussion questions), (2) four research and analysis papers, and (3) the final examination, if required (see below). Note that all course assignments must be adequately completed and submitted in order to receive a passing grade.

Class participation: All students are expected to attend class meetings prepared to discuss the required readings. Failure to productively contribute to class discussions throughout the quarter will result in a reduced grade.

Daily questions: For each class session, students will be required to come prepared with three written questions or observations about the assigned readings. Two students will read their questions aloud at the beginning of each class as a starting point for discussions. Questions must critically engage with the readings and all students’ questions will be collected each class. Two of these assignments may be turned in late without affecting the final course grade, but all assignments must be turned in by the end of the quarter to receive course credit.

Research Papers:


2. Compare and contrast the statements (or manifestos, interviews, etc.) of two artists working in the period 1900-1945. Further details TBA, 1500 words, due 6 February.
3. Research and analyze a relevant work of art seen in the Hood Museum of Art or in class. Papers should pursue a clear thesis and be grounded in visual analysis. Further details and exclusions TBA. 2000 words, due 25 February

4. Compare and contrast the ways in which gender, race, and sexuality have been employed in the readings. Papers should draw on the assigned texts from at least 5 different ‘episodes’ discussed throughout the term. 2000-2500 words, due 5pm, Friday 7 March.

Final examination: If the class as a whole has been prepared throughout the quarter to discuss the readings, there will be no final examination. If it becomes clear that students are not completing the readings, the entire class will take a comprehensive final examination based on course lectures and required readings.

First-year seminars are writing intensive. Clarity, organization, depth, grasp of course material, and style will be among the criteria for evaluation in papers and examinations. Students are encouraged to address questions about writing style and argumentation at any time. Additionally, some x-hour sessions will be devoted to research and writing.

writing editor
All students are expected to work with the Department of Art History Writing Editor, Iona McAulay [302 Carpenter Hall, iona.mcaulay@dartmouth.edu, 603.646.0434]. She will assist and evaluate writing skills and argumentation for the written assignments. For the first paper, all students must submit a first draft to Ms. McAulay at least one week before it is due so that any issues regarding writing skills or style can be addressed immediately. All students are expected to meet with Ms. McAulay before submitting the first paper. For subsequent papers, students are also strongly encouraged to work with Ms. McAulay on drafts. Please note, however, that the Writing Editor will not advise on content for the papers and requires sufficient time to prepare comments on drafts. All inquiries related to the content of the papers should be directed to the professor.

differently-abled students
Any students with exceptional needs or concerns (including ‘invisible’ difficulties such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, or psychiatric complications) are encouraged to make an appointment with the professor to discuss these issues by the end of the second week of the term so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged.

explicit material
Students should be aware that graphic or explicit imagery and themes may be discussed at points in the course. Any concerns about this issue should be brought to the professor at the outset of the term.

course readings
There will be one course textbook: Christopher GREEN, ed., Picasso’s Les Demoiselles d’Avignon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). The remaining texts can be found in the course reader available at Wheelock Books. All readings must be done carefully, and students will be expected to raise critical questions about the texts. Readings listed for ‘further reference’ are optional and are meant to aid students in developing research paper topics. Any concerns about the availability of readings or suggestions for alternative readings should be addressed to the professor as soon as possible. Assignments are subject to change with due notice.

hood museum of art
Students are encouraged to make frequent use of the relevant collections of Hood Museum of Art in order to supplement course lectures and develop research paper topics. Throughout the quarter the class will meet in the museum’s teaching galleries during x-hour sessions.
session calendar

Tuesday, 7 January
Introduction: Why Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Modernism?

Further reference
- Homi K. Bhabha, “‘Race’, time and the revision of modernity,” The Location of Culture(London: Routledge, 1994), 236-56.

X-Hour, Wednesday, 8 January
Researching an art history paper: Starr Instructional Center 274 (east side of Berry level 2)

Thursday, 9 January
Episode I: Pablo Picasso’s Les Demoiselles d’Avignon I

Required reading

Further reference
- See bibliography in GREEN

Tuesday, 14 January
Les Demoiselles d’Avignon II
Required reading


Further reference


X-Hour, Wednesday, 15 January
Workshop in visual analysis and writing about art

Thursday, 16 January • DEADLINE FOR DRAFTS TO WRITING EDITOR
Les Demoiselles d’Avignon III

Required reading

- Tamar Garb, “To Kill the Nineteenth Century: Sex and Spectatorship with Gertrude and Pablo,” in GREEN, 55-76.

Further reference


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Tuesday, 21 January
Episode 2: ‘Primitivism’ in Twentieth-Century Art

Required reading


Further reference


X-Hour, Wednesday, 22 January
open

[of note: Dartmouth Film Society: Julie Taymor, Frida (2002), 6.45/9.00pm, Hopkins Center]

Thursday, 23 January • PAPER #1 DUE

“Primitivism” II

Required reading


Further reference

- Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994).

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Tuesday, 28 January

“Primitivism” III

Required reading


Further reference


X-Hour, Wednesday, 29 January

Hood Museum of Art visit: Picasso, Guitar on a Table(1912) and the Vollard Suite(1930-37)

Thursday, 30 January

Episode 3: Machines, Vorticism, and Futurism

Film screening: Ferdinand Leger, Ballet mécanique, 1924

Required reading


[continued]

Further reference


Tuesday, 4 February

Episode 4: Claude Cahun and Marcel Duchamp

Required reading


Further reference


X-Hour, Wednesday, 5 February

Open
Thursday, 6 February • PAPER #2 DUE
Episode 5: Surrealism I: Race and surrealism

Required reading

Further reference

Tuesday, 11 February
Surrealism II: Women in/and Surrealism

Required reading

Further reference

[of note: Japanimation Film Festival: Taro Rin, Metropolis (2001), 7.00pm, Loew Auditorium]

X-Hour, Wednesday, 12 February
Hood Museum of Art visit: Surrealist works on paper (Dorothea Tanning, Max Ernst)
Thursday, 13 February
Episode 6: Frida Kahlo

Required reading

Further reference

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** Monday, 17 February 7pm**
Film screening: Isaac Julien, Looking for Langston, 1988, Carpenter 13, 7pm [Mandatory]

Tuesday, 18 February
Episode 7: The Harlem Renaissance

Required reading

Further reference
• Richard Powell, Black Art and Culture in the 20th Century (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997).

X-Hour, Wednesday, 19 February
No class (CAA)

Thursday, 20 February
Episode 8: Fritz Lang’s Metropolis (1927)
Film screening, details TBA

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Tuesday, 25 February • PAPER #3 DUE
Discussion: Metropolis
Episode 9: The Phallic Logic of Modern Sculpture

Required reading

Further reference

X- Hour, Wednesday, 26 February
open

Thursday, 27 February
Episode 10: The Alfred Stieglitz Circle I: Georgia O’Keeffe

Required reading

Further reference

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Tuesday, 4 March
Stieglitz Circle II: Demuth and Hartley (with a comparison to Paul Cadmus)

Required reading

Further reference

X-Hour, Wednesday, 5 March
Hood Museum of Art visit: Works by Paul Cadmus and Ilsa Bischoff

Thursday, 6 March
The Politics of Display

Required reading

Further reference

** Friday, 7 March **
PAPER #4 DUE, 5pm

[Final Examination: 12 March 1:30pm]