

ARTH 300/740: Art History Methods

Fall 2024 ▪ Thursdays 6-7:40, In-person ▪ Klapper 174
Prof. Heather Horton ▪ heather.horton@qc.cuny.edu ▪ Office Hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course introduces students to a wide range of art historical methods, such as iconography, social art history, and semiotics, as well as major issues in the discipline, such as question of originality, authorship, globalism, feminism, and decolonization. In the course of in-class discussions, presentations, and a research paper, students will develop their oral and written skills, their research skills, and their broader ability effectively to communicate their research and ideas, including the technical requirements of properly citing sources and compiling them into a bibliography (“scholarly apparatus”). In addition, they will become fluent with elements of academic writing, including formulating a thesis and demonstrating its applicability through appropriate analysis and relevant evidence.

Course requirements include readings, discussions, response papers, and an individual research project culminating in a final presentation and 8-page paper.

Course Resources

There is no required textbook for this course. If you would like additional background reading, I am happy to recommend sources.

Milanote: Our class site is available on Milanote. Each week you should expect to find: readings, discussion prompts and notes, main images, etc. Access it here --
<https://app.milanote.com/1SJ3pi16j8ha2K?p=pPrDNUwaGcv>

Brightspace: Brightspace will be used to submit assignments and receive feedback in a private manner.

Email: In case of a change in class plans (snow days, Covid closure, etc.), I must have a working email address to reach you. I rely on CUNYFirst lists. If you know that your address is outdated, tell me where to reach you.

Course Requirements

Grade Breakdown:

Arnolfini Presentation = 5%
Participation = 15%
Article Reviews (2) = 20%
Discussion Leader = 15%

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography = 5%
Presentation = 15%
Research Paper = 25%

Attendance: Attendance is essential. Attendance is not a separate part of the grade, but semester after semester, I have seen that attendance corresponds to the final grade.

Required Readings: All readings must be completed before class. The bulk of our class meetings will be discussion of the readings. If anyone would like additional optional readings, I am very happy to provide them.

Participation: Everyone needs to contribute to our class meetings for this to be a successful class. I will provide opportunities for multiple types of participation.

Article Reviews (20%): Twice during the semester you will submit a review (outline provided) of one of the readings. Due on the day that article is discussed, on our shared site. Your review will be shared with the class. (Feedback will be provided privately.)

Discussion Leader (20%): Twice during the semester, working with a partner, you will lead the class discussion of the reading. Students should propose discussion questions, gather relevant images, and guide the in-class discussion. Discussion questions should be posted on our shared site by the Monday before our class meeting.

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (5%): The proposal is due before our individual meeting to begin to define your research topic. After our meeting, you will gather and annotate sources as a start to the research process.

Presentation (15%): Presentation based on your research and in preparation for the final version of your research paper. You can think of this as a “first draft” of your paper. Detailed instructions to follow.

Research Paper (20%)

A 8-page research paper on a single work of art, analyzing at least 3 different approaches or methods. Detailed instructions to follow.

Course Policies

Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to accommodations to support their learning. Please visit the Office of Special Services website to learn more, and inform me of your needs/accommodations as soon as possible. <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/studentlife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>

Academic Integrity

The work you submit in this course should always be your own. Instances of plagiarism (or other forms of academic dishonesty) will adversely affect your grade, and you will not be allowed to resubmit work that has been dishonestly produced or presented. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism (or academic dishonesty more broadly), please review CUNY’s policies on academic integrity.

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>

Use of Student Work

All programs in New York State undergo periodic reviews by accreditation agencies. For these purposes, samples of student work are occasionally made available to those professionals conducting the review. Anonymity is assured under these circumstances. If you do not wish to have your work made available for these purposes, please let the professor know before the start of the second class. Thank you for your cooperation.

Class Schedule

8/29 Introduction

- Research Methods and components of a Research Paper
- How to find and read an academic article or book
- What are we going to do about AI?

9/5 Identifying Methods -- The Arnolfini Portrait

Student group presentations on the readings

Everyone will sign up for one of the following articles (2-3 people for each article). Each group will present their article in 10-15 minutes, with an emphasis on discussing the questions the author asks, the ways that they answer those questions, and the evidence they cite. In sum: how does the author’s approach or method, direct their interpretations?

- Panofsky, Erwin, "Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait," *Burlington Magazine* 64, 1934, 117-27.
- Carroll, Margaret D. "“In the Name of God and Profit’: Jan Van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait.” *Representations*, no. 44, 1993, pp. 96–132.
- Linda Seidel, "Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait: Business as Usual?" *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Autumn, 1989), pp. 54-86.
- Craig Harbison. "Sexuality and Social Standing in Jan Van Eyck's Arnolfini Double Portrait." *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 2, 1990, pp. 249–291.
- James Elkins, "On the Arnolfini Portrait and the Lucca Madonna: Did Jan van Eyck Have a Perspectival System?" *The Art Bulletin*, 73(1), 1991, 53–62.

9/12 Looking: Style, Connoisseurship, and the Object

- Vernon Hyde Minor, "Visual Supremacy: Connoisseurship, Style, Formalism," in *Art History's History*, 2001, 125-139.
- J. Hurwitt, "[The Kritios Boy: Discovery Reconstruction, and Date](#)," *American Journal of Archeology*, 1989, 41-80.
- (Extra) Sonja Drimmer, "[AI-Generated Images Are Spreading Paranoia and Misinformation. Can Art Historians Help?](#)" *Art in America*, 8/21/2004

***Article Review #1 Due

9/19 Contextual Analysis: Social Art History and Visual Culture

- Vernon Hyde Minor, "Sociological and Marxist Perspectives" and "The New Art History and Visual Studies," in *Art History's History*, 2001, 140-56.
- T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers*, New York: Knopf, 1985. (Excerpts)

***Come to class with 3 possible research objects.

9/26 Word and Image: Iconography, Iconology, Semiotics

- Vernon Hyde Minor, "Reading Art History: Word, Image, Iconology, Semiotics," in *Art History's History*, 2001, 166-84.
- Sheldon Nodelman, "How to Read a Roman Portrait," *Art in America* 1975, 26-33. [Reprinted](#)

***Article Review #2 Due

10/3 No class. College Closed.

10/10 Authorship and Genius

- Giorgio Vasari, "Life of Leonardo," pp. 625-40.
- Richard Turner, "Giorgio Vasari Invents Leonardo," in *Inventing Leonardo*, 1993, pp. 55-68.

10/17 Gender

- Nochlin, “Why are there no great women artists?” (excerpts)
- Spies-Gans, P. A. (2022). Why Do We Think There Have Been No Great Women Artists? Revisiting Linda Nochlin and the Archive. *The Art Bulletin*, 104(4), 70–94.
- Getsy, D.J. (2022), “How to Teach Manet’s Olympia after Transgender Studies,” *Art History*, 45: 342-369.

*** Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due

10/24 Art and Anthropology

- Carolyn Dean, “The Trouble with (the Term) Art,” *Art Journal*, Vol. 65 (2) (2006), 24-33.
- Ross Bowden, “What Is Wrong with an Art Forgery?: An Anthropological Perspective,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 57(3) (Summer, 1999), pp. 333- 343.

10/31 No Class, Individual Meetings with me to discuss presentation and paper topic

11/7 Whose story? Museum as Narrative

- Charles Saumarez Smith, “Narratives of Display at the National Gallery, London,” *Art History* 30:4 (September 2007), pp. 611-627.
- Tapati Guha-Thakurta, “‘Our Gods, Their Museums’: The Contrary Careers of India’s Art Objects,” *Art History* 30:4 (September 2007), pp. 628-657.
- Nina Simon, The Participatory Museum – TED Talk and Website - <https://participatorymuseum.org>

11/14 Who owns art? Repatriation

- Karen Warren, “A Philosophical Perspective on the Ethics and Resolution of Cultural Properties Issues,” in *The Ethics of Collecting*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999, 1-30.
- David Frum, “Who Benefits When Western Museums Return Looted Art?,” *The Atlantic*, October 2022. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2022/10/benin-bronzes-nigeria-return-stolen-art/671245/>
- David Frum, “The West is Returning Priceless African Art to a Single Nigerian Citizen; Should It?” *The Atlantic* July 2023. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/07/benin-bronzes-nigeria-western-museums/674650/>

11/21 **Presentations**

11/28 **No class, Thanksgiving**

12/5 **Presentations**

12/12 **Presentations and Peer Editing**

12/19 **Final Paper Due**

ARTH300/740: Art History Methods Colloquium
Research Paper and Research Presentation

Introduction:

Your research paper and, based on it, your in-class presentation will examine the scholarly literature on a canonical work of art or architecture—something on the order of importance of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, Rembrandt's *Night Watch*, Manet's *Olympia*, Picasso's *Demaiselles d'Avignon*, etc. A canonical work of art or architecture is one that critics and historians have extensively written about, and that can be found in leading art history surveys like Gardner's, Janson's or Stokstad's. Please note that you cannot use the objects and buildings that we discuss, in depth, in class.

The aim of your research paper will be to compare and contrast different ways art historians and scholars have analyzed and interpreted your work, including identifying the different methodological approaches, theories, and viewpoints they have brought to it. In other words, the goal of your research paper is not to write about the singular meaning of the work you've chosen but, rather, to compare and contrast the plural, even contradictory meanings that art historians have ascribed to it.

Detailed Instructions for Research Papers:

1. Your paper should create a kind of dialogue among the art historians who have written about your work, by focusing on how they have dis/agreed about it; different methodological approaches and viewpoints they have brought to it; different, even contradictory conclusions they have drawn from it; etc.
2. Once you have selected your artwork, you will need to research it and the artist who made it. In addition to researching the exact work you chose, you should also consider researching similar works by the same artist: for example, from the same period, or about the same subject or on the same theme, or using the same media, style and techniques, etc.
3. By "research," this assignment does not include (the following are not peer-reviewed):
 - a. Items that are only published online: for example, museum websites, Wikipedia, etc.
 - b. Items that are not published at all: for example, museum wall labels, audio-guide tours, etc.
 - c. Items that do not include citations and bibliographies: for example, Encyclopedia Britannica, the New York Times and Time magazine, Taschen's popular series of artists' biographies, etc.
 - d. Reading assignments for this course. (Although you may use them, they do not count as research for this paper.)
 - e. Art History textbooks such as Gardner's, Janson's or Stokstad's.
4. By "research," this assignment only includes articles and essays, books and catalogs, which have been peer-reviewed and include the typical Components of a Research Publication.
 - a. For info on research services available through the QC Art Library:
<https://library.qc.cuny.edu/research/questions.php>.
 - b. For finding articles and essays: <http://library.qc.cuny.edu/research/databases.php>.
 - i. Leading scholarly databases in art history, which this website lists alphabetically, are:
 1. Academic Search Complete (Ebsco); JSTOR; ProQuest Databases.
 2. Also: Academic One File (Gale); Project Muse.
 - ii. Leading scholarly journals in art history, which these databases include, are:
 1. US: American Art; Art Bulletin; Art Journal; Critical Inquiry; Grey Room; History of Photography; Modernism / Modernity; Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide; October; Page 4 of 6 Representations; RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics; SECAC Review; Source: Notes in the

History of Art; Woman's Art Journal.

2. UK: Art History; Burlington Magazine; Oxford Art Journal; Screen; Third Text; Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal / Visual Enquiry.

3. Elsewhere, but with English-language essays: Artibus et Historiae; Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte.

iii. For finding books and catalogs: <http://library.qc.cuny.edu>.

1. Then select "Find Books and Media" from the "Quick Links" menu on the left side of the screen.

c. If a third or more of your research is thirty to fifty years old, or older, then you're probably focusing on the first items that appear in your online searches, regardless of their relevance or quality. Finding any research—a fifty-year-old book on Matisse, an article discussing Picasso in the Journal of Endocrinology, a passing reference to Roy Lichtenstein in an essay that's basically about Andy Warhol—is not the same as finding the best and most relevant research for your paper.

5. Once you have completed your research, you will need to write a typed, double-spaced paper, 2,500–3,000 words in length (around 8 pages, although length can vary considerably depending on font style and size, margins, etc.), including citations (footnotes or endnotes) and bibliography, which uses the analyses and arguments, factual and interpretative information that you uncovered in your research.

6. Your paper should be structured with section headings. For example, you could organize your paper around the different theories and methodologies art historians have applied to your work.

7. You must carefully edit and proofread your paper for grammar and style before turning it in. Awkward phraseology, careless grammar, spelling errors, etc. will adversely affect your grade.

a. For info on tutoring services available through the QC Writing Center:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/SupportPrograms/SupportCenter/Pages/default.aspx>.

8. Your paper must include citations to and a bibliography of sources. Failure to do so will adversely affect your grade.

a. Citations: In art history, the two standard styles for citing sources are: (1) Chicago, which uses endnotes or footnotes (you may use either) that follow the body of the text; and (2) MLA, which uses in-text parenthetical citations that it incorporates into the body of the text. You may use either style.

i. Copies of manuals for both styles are on reserve at the QC library.

ii. An excellent resource for Chicago is:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html;

iii. and for both styles is: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>.

b. Bibliographies must include an alphabetical list (by authors' last names) of all sources you consulted while researching and writing your paper, even ones that you do not cite as sources in your endnotes or footnotes.

c. Unlike endnotes or footnotes, do not number the individual, alphabetical entries in your bibliography.

d. Unlike endnotes or footnotes, always include the full page-ranges for articles from journals, and for chapters from books.

e. If they're not your own ideas or words, you must clearly cite in an endnote or footnote whose ideas or words they are. If your paper in any way relies on any source that is not clearly and explicitly documented in your endnotes or footnotes and bibliography, it will be failed.

9. Your paper must be illustrated. The work that you have chosen to research should be the first illustration. Include other illustrations that support the arguments made by the scholars that you have

discovered. Each illustration should be labeled with a figure number (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.) and the title of the piece illustrated. Place all the illustrations at the end of the paper after the bibliography.

10. Other Important Details:

- a. Your name, the title of your research paper, and my name must appear on the cover page.
- b. All pages of texts, endnotes (if used), and bibliography must be consecutively numbered.
- c. And you should keep a copy of your paper for your records..
- d. Upload to Brightspace as a PDF file.