



Claude Cahun, *Don't Kiss Me, I Am in Training*, 1927.

Reading Reports

Due throughout the semester

Each post may earn up to 5 participation points

Five posts required by May 10

Report on at least five assigned readings through posts on the class blog located on Blackboard. Posts may be made on required readings as well as optional readings posted on the class Assignments page.

Reading Reports should offer, in complete sentences and focused thought, three main points or “take aways” from the reading. Please avoid discussing how interesting the reading was - the goal is to demonstrate that you read the text. Rather, make a goal of formulating three general ideas learned while engaging with the text, and record them in your blog post. Challenge yourself to discuss points that have not been made in previous posts by other students.

Visual Thinker Lecture Series Report

Due within two weeks of attendance

25 points

Attend a lecture in the Visual Thinker Lecture Series, the Art History Symposium, or the Bensussen Lecture, and submit a VTLS Report on Blackboard within two weeks of the event. Please answer the questions on the Art Department’s VTLS form. Copy or photograph the form before submitting at the event. Submit your copy or photo via Blackboard.

Assignment Proposal

Due Wednesday, February 14

Students will develop descriptive and analytic skills through written assignments that are proposed and developed during the third week of class. Each student may propose a variety of assignments, or a single research project. The following essay and Research Paper prompts are intended as suggestions. You may propose entirely new essay subjects, or refine the suggested questions.

All written assignments must utilize CMS (no Bibliography) footnote citations, and will be worth a total of 225 points. The following are requirements for essay and Research Papers:

Essays will be worth 75 points each and must meet the following:

- Be 6 to 7 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, and 1” margins on all sides;
- Identify works of art with artistic attribution, underlined or *italicized* titles, and dates (in that order), when possible;
- Attempt to address most questions from the essay prompt;
- Include two or more properly formatted Chicago Manual of Style footnote citations to credible, scholarly, college level materials. Please note: works of art should not be cited unless a point is being made concerning different versions or installations of the work.;
- Present a clear thesis and offer visual and/or scholarly evidence to support your claims; and
- Offer personal insights that demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the subject & reading materials.

Please respond to the Blackboard assignment with a clear description of what essay subjects (identify by option number if using the suggested essays below) you plan to write about, or with a proposed research thesis if you have decided to write a Research Paper.

Suggested Essays

Essay Option 1

Read *Were the First Artists Mostly Women?* and consider the following.

What historical evidence suggests that *The Woman of Willendorf*, and other figurines like it, may have been crafted by a woman? Why do we customarily assume that artwork from any period was made by a male artist? When we assume that *The Woman of Willendorf* was made by a heterosexual male, what interpretations do we easily leap to? When we suppose that the work was made by a woman, do we arrive at alternative interpretations? What physical clues indicate that this sculpture represents a prehistoric concept of womanhood, the power of her reproductive system, and/or reverence for womanliness rather than a specific individual woman?

Essay Option 2

Why was the embroidered work, *The Bayeux Tapestry*, 11th century created? Who likely commissioned the piece, and what historical events does it document? Weigh the evidence and general logic behind each argument - that *The Bayeux Tapestry* was created (or at least designed) by a group of rare male embroiderers, and that the work was entirely created by female Opus Anglicanum embroiderers. There is a tendency in art history to describe works made by men as “art” and things made by women as “craft.” Consider the distinction between the two categories and how it relates to Late Medieval and Renaissance prohibitions of women’s memberships in guilds as a mechanism of sexism. Finally, discuss how the debate on the gender of the artists who crafted The Bayeux Tapestry reflects the patriarchal order in western civilization.

Essay Option 3

Discuss the circumstances under which Sofonisba Anguissola created, *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola*, c. 1559. How did the artist learn to paint? Why was this an unusual circumstance for her time? What commentary does the artist offer concerning the opportunity? In what way does the artist address the expectation of virtuoso in the work? Consider what we know about the artist’s biography and how it informs our understanding of and appreciation for her work.

Essay Option 4

Compare and contrast Artemisia Gentileschi’s, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1610 and *Judith and Her Maidservant with the Head of Holofernes*, c. 1620. Who are the women depicted in each work and what are their stories? What part of their narratives does the artist depict, and why? Consider the artist’s biography and the attractiveness of a revenge motive to describe the meaning of the work. Given the critical considerations in the Chadwick text, and Reclaiming Female Agency, what access might the artist have had to proto-feminist critique of her age through her work? What other interpretations might explain the artist’s and her patron’s interest in such subjects?

Essay Option 5

Read John Berger’s *Ways of Seeing*.

Compare and contrast a work made by an artist identifying as male, and an artist identifying as female, from the Baroque Era or Age of Enlightenment. Consider how the representation of male and female subjects conveys power and access vs. subordination and oppression. What devices are used by the artists to convey social positions such as class and other degrees of privilege? Do the artists comply with traditional approaches, or do they appear to diverge from expected messages? Reflect on images from current popular media (movies, music videos, advertisements, etc.). Do the same

power structures and devices conveying social positions appear to be in operation? How might such methods of representation be changed?

Essay Option 6

Discuss Rousseau's concept of the Good Mother as it relates to Elisabeth Louise Vigée Lebrun's *Portrait of Marie Antoinette with Her Children*, 1787 and Angelica Kauffman's, *Cornelia Pointing to Her Children*, c. 1785. Identify the symbols and metaphors employed by the artists to convey messages about the mother and her responsibilities to her children. How do the visual elements in the work assist the overall meaning of the painting? Consider the artist's biographies and what influences their experiences as professionals may have had on the work.

Essay Option 7

Read in *Reclaiming Female Agency*, "Depoliticizing Women: Female Agency, the French Revolution, and the Art of Boucher and David."

Consider either Edmonia Lewis's *Death of Cleopatra*, 1876, or Paula Modersohn-Becker's *Kneeling Mother and Child*, 1906 relative to the following questions.

Each of these artworks considers mythic or historic characters that convey so-called universal feminine themes. Identify the mythic type and discuss the feminine theme that is cultural understood and conveyed in the work. Does the woman artist comply to cultural measures of womanhood in her handling of the subject? Does the woman artist offer any counter to prevailing notions of womanhood in the work? Utilize formal description and visual analysis to identify material evidence that supports your position(s). Consider the position of women at the time, and within the culture, that the work was made in. Under what circumstances did the woman artist either comply or counter the cultural demands of womanhood? What did the artist risk or gain in her approach?

Essay Option 8

Read in *Reclaiming Female Agency*, "Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman or the Cult of True Womanhood" and "The Gendering of Impressionism."

Cassatt's *Mother and Child* (yellow dress), Morisot's *Summer's Day* or Valadon's *Abandoned Doll*
In what style is the work painted? Describe the artist's composition and use of the painted mark. In terms of the colors and gestures used, how is this work avant-garde? How do the subjects interact with each other and the viewer? What desires do the subjects communicate? What aspects of the artist's biography's seem to relate to the desires conveyed by the subjects of their work? How might viewers of the time have related to the subjects of the work?

Essay Option 9

Read in *Reclaiming Female Agency*, "Claude Cahun, Marcel Moore and the Collaborative Construction of a Lesbian Subjectivity" and "Querying and Queering the Virgin: Iconography and Iconoclasm in the Art of Frida Kahlo"

Consider either Claude Cahun's, *Don't Kiss Me, I Am in Training*, 1927 or Frida Kahlo's, *The Two Fridas*, 1939. Both of the artists have remarkable biographies that inform our understandings of their work. How did the artist utilize aspects of their identities and life stories to convey meaning in the work you are considering? What subconscious desires are on display in this work? As a viewer, what negotiations between the id, ego, and superego appear to be at play in this work? Unpack the meaning of either of these works utilizing biography and psychoanalytic theory.

Essay Option 10

Analyze a work made by a woman in the early modern period (1850 to 1940) using a Marxist approach. What socio-economic classes are represented in the work? What visual clues convey this class distinction? How are the subjects treated - are the Othered, made noble, assumed superior? Whom would the artist have assumed to be the viewer of this work? What message would this work have conveyed to the viewer concerning class? What social class was the artist? Did her class have anything to do with her profession, her success or dismissal in her profession? Does the artist's handling of class convey, reinforce understandings of womanhood or offer a feminist critique of their position?

Essay Option 11

Use a feminist approach to compare and contrast a work by a female and a male artist working in the same artistic period. Consider who the artist assumes the viewer of the work to be, and from whom's perspective the action or story unfolds. Who is the main subject, and what significance does their gender play in understanding the meaning of the work? What subjects exhibit power in the work, and how is that power understood (for example, logical, rebellious, odd, or conforming)? Do all subjects depicted in the work exhibit agency (power, freedom of choice, action)? Is there a gender division in the display of authority and/or action as depicted? Consider whether the work reinforces or critically evaluates gender stereotypes? Finally, discuss how the works were received, and whether the two works were equally valued in their time.

Essay Option 12

Compose a timeline that creatively incorporates text and images to describe at least ten key works of art with relevant historical, political, cultural, and/or socio-economic events relative to women's contributions to the western art tradition. Works of art should be properly identified with artist, title, and date, and exemplify the artistic concerns of women artists working during the era(s) you have chosen to examine. Include concise explanatory text to connect the key events with the exemplary works of art you have identified.

Consider creating a digital timeline like the Top 50 Works of Modern Art on artstory.org. TimelineJS, an open source tool may prove an interesting way of making a dynamic art historical timeline. See: <https://timeline.knightlab.com>

Please provide CMS Endnotes or Bibliography to cite at least two credible sources of information you consulted while developing your timeline. This can be printed/glued to the back of your timeline, if making a poster.

Research Paper

In lieu of submitting shorter essays on three different topics, you may choose to write a more extensive Research Paper on a topic relevant to our study of women's contributions to the western art historical tradition. If you accept this challenge, your resulting paper should reflect what you have learned this semester and strongly confirm your work and research.

Thesis Proposal

Due Wednesday, February 14
25 points

Your paper should begin with a clearly stated purpose. Your purpose may be to investigate the career of a single artist, consider the development of an issue relevant to women's participation in the arts, or to explore a specific art historical theory relative to works made by women. Whichever you chose,

your thesis should establish a point of view from which you will visually describe and analyze a minimum of four relevant works of art. The analysis that you develop must make skilled use of the art historical methodologies. As well, your thesis should be well supported by a minimum of five CMS footnotes from five different, credible, scholarly sources.

Write a paragraph that proposes an artist, issue, theory, or other area of exploration relevant to the study of the contributions of women artists in the western tradition. Outline the questions you intend to explore and the debates you would like to investigate. If you are new to the subject of interest, evaluate what draws you to this topic and what you anticipate you will discover by exploring it further. Please submit your thesis proposal on Blackboard.

Paper Plan

Due Monday, March 12

25 points

Your Research Paper must include analysis of a minimum of three works of art. Your discussion of these works should be anchored by your thesis position or question, and include both visual description and analysis that skillfully utilizes relevant art historical methodologies. Identify the three works of art you plan to analyze in your research paper on Blackboard in a Paper Plan.

You are required to cite at least five credible scholarly sources of information in your Research Paper. Please identify at least five sources that you intend to use. In your Paper Plan, offer a complete, correctly formatted CMS bibliographic entry for five sources you plan to use in your paper.

Research Paper Grading Rubric			
Essay	Confirms extensive college level research	out of 25 points	out of 50 points
	Strong thesis anchoring the discussion	out of 5 points	
	Connection to course material	out of 10 points	
	Writing style and use of technical language	out of 10 points	
Analysis	Use of art historical methods to interpret	out of 25 points	out of 70 points
	Consideration of art historical context	out of 25 points	
	Three artworks considered in depth	out of 15 points	
	Full visual descriptions of works	out of 5 points	
CMS & Citations	Five scholarly sources cited	out of 10 points	out of 55 points
	Use of sources to support claim	out of 25 points	
	Footnote formatting	out of 10 points	
	Margins, font size, spacing, etc.	out of 10 points	
Total			out of 175 points

Count Infographic

Due Monday, April 2

75 Points

Students are asked to conduct a count on the participation and inclusion of women’s contributions to a grouping of your choice, and create an infographic offering details of the results that includes an analysis of equity issues demonstrated in the tally. For example, you might count the number of studies by scientists identifying as women referenced in your Biology textbook, or attend an exhibition and tally the number of artists included by their gender.

Based on the data you have collected, create a 24 X 36 inch infographic poster that conveys the information you’ve gathered in a meaningful way. If you are submitting your poster to Micol Hebron’s Gallery Tally project, it will need to include: the institution’s name, the date, the city (if relevant), the year the poster was made, and the name of the artist (poster maker).

A summary that is at least two pages should be submitted with your infographic. The summary should provide background on the issues involved in your count (i.e. wage gap, women in tech, motherhood, etc.), outline your methodology (how you went about counting), and discuss factors/conditions that may influence the data you collected. Importantly, this consideration should include at least two CMS footnote citations from different credible, scholarly sources offering interpretations of the conditions of equity or inequity that your data illustrates.

Infographic Grading Rubric	
Summary	out of 25 points
Methodology	out of 10 points
Research & CMS footnotes	out of 15 points
Use of graphic devices to connect image & meaning	out of 10 points
Unpacking meaning of the work	out of 15 points
	out of 75 points

Extra Credit

Due by Wednesday, May 9

Maximum 25 points

View Sofia Coppola’s movie, *Marie Antoinette* and answer the following questions.

From whose perspective is the story told? Is this the traditional approach to telling Marie Antoinette’s story? If not, explain from whose perspective it is usually told and why? When the Austrian princess, Maria Antonia travels to France to become the bride of Louis XVI, a “crossing over ceremony” takes place. Describe what happens in this event and explain the symbolic meaning of this ceremony. Similarly, what message does the changing of her name to Marie Antoinette carry? Consider the soundtrack to the movie and describe the genre of music used to support the telling of the story. Why this particular kind of music? What meaning and message does this unconventional choice of music lend to our understanding of Marie Antoinette? Consider how the movie ends – what is portrayed, and what is omitted. Why did Coppola chose to end the story here? Why not continue the story until the Queen’s death? How is the Queen’s and the monarchy’s demise suggested in the last scene?

Socratic Circle Final Exam

Monday, May 14 1:30 to 4 PM

Socratic seminars (a.k.a. Socratic Circles) are formal discussions, based on a text, in which the leader asks open-ended questions, and participants are encouraged to engage in thoughtful reflection that collaboratively builds meaning. Reflecting Socrates' belief that the answers to all human questions and problems reside within us, Socrates was convinced that the surest way to discover those answers and attain reliable knowledge was through the practice of disciplined conversation. He called this method the dialectic. A Socratic Circle is not a debate, and the point is not to determine "right" or "wrong," rather, to thoughtfully share, listen, and develop meaningful dialogue.

The text we will discuss is, *Gardner's Art Through the Ages*, Chapters 21 through 30 of the 14th edition and Chapters 14 through 24 of the 15th edition. Each student is asked to sign up to be an expert on a specific artistic style studied this semester, and to know the text covering your style thoroughly.

Here's how the Socratic Circle will work:

- Students will be arranged in an inner circle and an outer circle, each composed of ten.
- The inner circle will be asked an open-ended question, and participants will develop understanding fluidly. Meanwhile, participants in the outer circle will observe and create new questions, which will be asked during the following round.
- After 10 minutes of discussion, participants will switch from inner to outer circle.
- Questioning, "piggy-back" responses, and communal problem-solving will be encouraged over rebuttals, persuasive rhetoric, and debate. Participants are encouraged to respectfully challenge, and to offer alternative views. Remember that Socrates loved playing "Devil's advocate" and feigning ignorance of a topic to delve deeply into a subject.

Grading Rubric				
	Deficient	Minimal/Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Content and Development	Art not identified and/or unacceptable choice of artwork. Student did not follow assignment guidelines.	Art not fully identified: Title; culture; date. Content is incomplete. Utility of analyzing formal characteristics for understanding artwork is unclear.	Art fully identified: Title; culture; date. Utility of analyzing formal characteristics for understanding artwork is expressed.	Art fully identified: Title; culture; date. Utility of analyzing formal characteristics for understanding artwork is clear.
Analysis	Makes inaccurate statements. Does not address visual images/objects.	Analysis tends to be simplistic, superficial, or implausible. Formal description included but vague. Describes visual images/objects but without formal/ semiotic/ contextual analysis.	Analysis is plausible and begins to account for ambiguity or contradictory evidence. Clear formal description of art to support analysis and references course content. Describes visual images/objects and provides a plausible formal/semiotic/ contextual analysis of them.	Analysis is clear, nuanced, and sophisticated. Clear and well-integrated formal description of art connects to analysis and references course content. Formal/ semiotic / contextual analysis of visual images/ objects is integral to the thesis.
Organization of argument	No discernible organization; minimal or faulty transitions. Student either did not submit the assignment or was unable to demonstrate enough knowledge to receive credit for the assignment.	Organization and structure detract from the message of the writer. Handout or other documentation (if required) incomplete. Paragraphs are disjointed and lack transition.	Structure is mostly clear and easy to follow. Handout or other documentation (if required) is completed. Paragraph transitions present.	Structure of the paper is clear and easy to follow. Handout or other documentation (if required) is thoughtfully completed. Paragraph transitions are logical.
Vocabulary	Vocabulary is not appropriate to the subject.	Vocabulary choices are clear but remain prosaic and banal. Vocabulary is appropriate to the subject, but lacks precision.	Vocabulary choices enhance presentation's effectiveness. Uses art historical terms effectively and treats visual complexity appropriately.	Vocabulary is sophisticated and appropriate to the subject.
Grammar, punctuation, and spelling	Paper contains numerous grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. Language uses jargon or conversational tone.	Paper contains grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. Language lacks clarity or includes the use of some jargon or conversational tone.	Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed; spelling is correct. Language is clear; sentences display varied structure.	Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed; spelling is correct. Language is clear and precise; sentences display consistently strong, varied structure.