

Art 6

Name _____

Women Artists in History

Due Date _____

You earned _____ out of 20 possible points.

Worksheet 4

Using Formalism and Feminism as Methodologies

Formalism - considers the visual elements of a work such as line, composition, color, media to interpret meaning

Feminism - considers the socio-economic position of women represented, implied, making, or viewing the work, as well as issues of equality and power (or the lack thereof) to interpret meaning



Emily Dickinson's setting



Judy Chicago. **The Dinner Party**. 1974 -79.



Sojourner Truth's setting

Read Amelia Jones' "The Sexual Politics of the Dinner Party" and answer the following.

According to Jones, why do modernist art critics seem to hate The Dinner Party? How does the work challenge modernist structures of judgment and modern formalism?

The Dinner Party has been viewed by record-breaking crowds and has been celebrated by the general public. Explain how this is proof to modernist art critics that the work is "low art," "kitsch" and unworthy of critical attention. According to Jones, what gender bias is present in Greenberg's demand that art should remain "pure" and avoid kitsch?

In 1991 an admirer of The Dinner Party proposed buying the work and donating it to a federally supported college in Washington D.C. Congress debated the donation and ultimately decided against the gift. What were the arguments against the work? What do these arguments reveal about the continuing power of ideas that prevent women's professional participation in the arts?

Define "essentialism." What aspects of The Dinner Party are interpreted as essentialist? What are some of the problems with an essentialist point of view? Consider Donna Haraway's point that "there is nothing about being female that naturally binds women."

What were some of the criticisms of The Dinner Party by non-white and gay women and artists? What could have Chicago done differently to resolve these problems?

Identify a paragraph in the essay where Jones uses a feminist method to better understand the work and write the first few lines here:
