SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2018-2019

HA3079 CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN ART HISTORY

30 credits 11 Weeks + Revision Session

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any school regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR
Dr Mary Pryor m.pryor-hoa@abdn.ac.uk

COURSE TEAM
Mr John Gash (JoGa) j.gash@abdn.ac.uk;
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Students are asked to make themselves familiar with the information on key university policies, which is available on MyAberdeen (https://abdn.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/institution/Policies). These policies are relevant to all students and will be useful throughout your studies. They contain important information, including what to do if you are absent, how to raise an appeal or a complaint, and explain why the University takes your feedback seriously.

These institutional policies should be read in conjunction with the course guide, in which School specific policies are detailed. Further information can be found on the University’s Infohub webpage or by visiting the Infohub.
TIMETABLE & LECTURE SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Students can view their university timetable at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php)

Classes in CB203: Tuesdays 11.00am-1.00pm; Thursdays 4.00-6.00pm

After the introductory class on Tuesday 11th September, there will be two classes for each topic. **Class 1 (Thursdays)** will introduce the topic (usually a lecture); **Class 2 (Tuesdays)** will involve class discussion (based on the set texts, which you will be expected to have read in advance of the class)

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<th>WEEK</th>
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<th>THURSDAY CLASS (4-6)</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course (MP)</td>
<td>Planning &amp; writing a critical bibliography (MP/JM)</td>
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<td>10 - 14 September</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Critiquing a critical bibliography (MP/HP)</td>
<td>Panofsky: Iconology &amp; Iconography I (HP)</td>
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<td>17 – 21 September</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Panofsky: Iconology &amp; Iconography II (HP)</td>
<td>Vasari, Zuccaro &amp; Bellori: Theories of the Renaissance &amp; Baroque I (JoGa)</td>
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<td>24 – 28 September</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Vasari, Zuccaro &amp; Bellori: Theories of the Renaissance &amp; Baroque II (JoGa)</td>
<td>Morelli &amp; Wölfflin: Style in Art I (JoGa)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Morelli &amp; Wölfflin: Style in Art II (JoGa)</td>
<td>Ramsay, Reynolds &amp; Taste I (JM)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Critical annotated bibliography for essay</td>
<td>DUE by 3.00pm, Thursday 12th October</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Ramsay, Reynolds &amp; Taste II (JM)</td>
<td>TJ Clark, Orton &amp; Pollock: Marxism &amp; Social Art History I (AT)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>TJ Clark, Orton &amp; Pollock: Marxism &amp; Social Art History II (AT)</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>22 – 26 October</td>
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8  
29 October – 02 November  
NO CLASSES THIS WEEK:  
FIELDTRIP TO THE BURN, 1st – 2nd NOVEMBER

9  
05 - 09 November  
NO CLASS  
Feminisms I (HP)  
Essay DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 8th November

10  
12 – 16 November  
Feminisms II (HP/MP)  
Fry & Greenberg: Cézanne & Form I (MP)

11  
19 – 23 November  
Fry & Greenberg: Cézanne & Form II (MP)  
NO CLASS

12  
26 – 29 November  
REVISION CLASS (MP/HP)  
NO CLASS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Unlike most other art history courses, this is a text-based course, focusing on a number of selected ‘key texts’ (as specified in the course guide and on MyAberdeen). You are expected to study -- not just read through -- these key texts. In addition, you will find it helpful to consult as much of the background reading as possible. In most sessions, the chosen texts will be examined in relation to a small number of pre-chosen images. Discussion will focus on the way in which the issues raised in the prescribed text can usefully illuminate (or otherwise!) the given images.

This is a ‘historiographical’ rather than ‘philosophical’ course; nevertheless philosophical issues are raised at many points and the course should, therefore, appeal to anyone seriously interested in theoretical aspects of art history. The course is complete in itself but connects usefully with other art history courses.

INTENDED AIDS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course aims to address fundamental questions about the History of Art: its methods and procedures, and how they can be justified. It reflects the greatly increased awareness, both within the discipline itself and outside, of methodological issues.
The ideological bases of the discourse(s) of art history in different periods will be examined, together with the ways that art itself functions within the wider social and political context.

Students will have demonstrated in class discussions and written assessments that they can:

1. Relate art-historical writings to visual imagery
2. Research and write a critical bibliography on a topic of art criticism
3. Research and write a critical essay on a topic of art criticism
4. Display knowledge and comprehension of the course material through the organisation of an essay-based answer in a written examination
5. Analyse critically a short extract of text in a written examination

RECOMMENDED READING / PURCHASE


LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Quick Guide to History of Art Resources](#)
READING & PREPARATION WEEK BY WEEK

WEEK 1

Tuesday 11th September

Introduction to the Course (Mary Pryor)

No preparation is required for this class.

Thursday 13th September

Planning and writing a critical bibliography (Mary Pryor & John Morrison)

No preparation is required for this class.

WEEK 2

Tuesday 18th September

Critiquing a critical bibliography (Mary Pryor & Helen Pierce)

Please come prepared having read the material on MyAberdeen

WEEKS 2-3

Thursday 20th & Tuesday 25th September

Panofsky: Iconography and Iconology (Helen Pierce)

Essential preparation for Tuesday’s class:

Reading (texts supplied on MyAberdeen):


E. Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting (1953), pp. 201-3.


Questions for class discussion

1. What does Panofsky mean by ‘disguised symbolism’?

2. Are you convinced by his ‘reading’ of Van Eyck’s painting, especially in the light of Campbell’s queries?
3. Look at Rubens’ paintings from the Marie de Medici cycle and the Whitehall Ceiling. How much of what is depicted in these Baroque artworks is “real” in any simple sense, and how might this impact upon their intended audience?

4. Apply Panofsky’s approach to Reynold’s portrait of James Beattie.

5. How do we decipher meaning in Raeburn’s Sir John and Lady Clerk, despite its lack of overt symbolism?

Images


Peter Paul Rubens, *The Education of Marie de Medici*, 1622-5, Louvre, Paris

Peter Paul Rubens, *The Disembarkation of Marie de Medici at Marseilles*, 1622-5, Louvre, Paris

Peter Paul Rubens, *The Union of the Crowns*, Whitehall Banqueting House, London

Joshua Reynolds, *Dr James Beattie*, 1773, University of Aberdeen

Henry Raeburn, *Sir John and Lady Clerk*, 1791, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

Background reading


WEEKS 3-4

Thursday 27th September & Tuesday 2nd October

Vasari, Zuccaro & Bellori: Renaissance and Baroque Theories of Art (John Gash)

Thursday Lecture: Vasari on artistic progress and artistic genius

Background reading


Anthony Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450-1600* (OUP; also available as a Google Book).


Panofsky, E, ‘The first page of Giorgio Vasari’s Libro’ in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, pp.206-76


Wittkower, R & M, Born under Saturn (esp. chapter 12) [701.15 Wit]


**Essential preparation for the Tuesday class:**

**Idealist theories of art: from Federico Zuccaro to Giampietro Bellori.**

**Reading Texts**


Question

1. What is understood by the ‘Idea’ in classic-idealist art theory?

Background Reading


E. G. Holt, A Documentary History of Art II: Michelangelo and the Mannerists, the Baroque and the Eighteenth Century, New York, 1958


WEEKS 4-5

Thursday 4th & Tuesday 9th October

Morelli & Wölfflin: Style in Art (John Gash)

Thursday Lecture: Giovanni Morelli: pioneer of connoisseurship

Background reading

Giovanni Morelli, extracts from Italian Painters (1890) in Fernie, text 8, and the note on ‘Connoisseurship’, pp.330-1.

Giovanni Morelli, Italian Masters in German Galleries, 1883 and other editions


Jones, M. Introduction, (‘Why fakes?’) in Fake? the Art of Deception (British Museum, 1990), pp.11-16. [702.874 Jon]

Wind, E, Art and anarchy (on Morelli) [701 Win]

Wollheim, R, Art and the Mind, chapter 9: ‘Giovanni Morelli and the origins of scientific connoisseurship’ [701.15 Wol]

Essential Preparation for the Tuesday class:

Heinrich Wölfflin’s use of formal analysis in defining period styles
Reading Text

Wölfflin *Principles of Art History*, 1915 (Dover paperback), esp. ‘Introduction’ pp.1-17 [709 Wol]. Extract in Fernie, *Art History & its Methods*, pp.127-51. You might also like to look at two other titles by Wölfflin: *Classic Art* (about High Renaissance painting) and *Renaissance and Baroque* (about changing styles in Architecture)

Images

Andrea del Sarto, *Madonna of the Harpies*, 1517, Florence, Uffizi

Giovanni Lanfranco, *The Ecstasy of St Margaret of Cortona*, 1622, Florence, Pitti Palace

Questions

1. What does Wölfflin mean by ‘closed form’ and ‘open form’?
2. What does he mean by the *Zeitgeist*?
3. How useful are Wölfflin’s ‘five pairs of concepts’?

Background reading


Roskill, M, *The Interpretation of Pictures*, pp. 99-102

Sauerlander, W, ‘From stilus to style...’ *Art History*, vol 6, pp.253-70


Wölfflin, H, *Classic Art*, 1952 and subsequent editions

WEEK 5

**Critical annotated bibliography for essay**

**DUE by 3.00pm, Thursday 11th October**
WEEKS 5-6

Thursday 11th & Tuesday 16th October
Ramsay, Reynolds & Taste (John Morrison)
Thursday Lecture: Good and Bad Taste

Essential preparation for the Tuesday class:

Reading
Ramsay – Dialogue on Taste

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=VVgoAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA1&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false


Questions
a) What is Ramsay’s view on ideal beauty?
b) What role does the natural world play in Ramsay’s theory of art?
c) How does Reynolds portraiture relate to Ramsay’s ideas?

Images
A. Ramsay – David Hume
J. Reynolds – Dr Beattie
Raeburn – Mrs Fergusson of Raith
Reynolds – Mrs Elizabeth Delme

Background reading
Allan, D., Scotland in the 18th Century, Chapter 4
Daiches D., Jones, P & J, The Scottish Enlightenment 1730-1790, Chapter 2
Edwards, S. Introduction to Art & its Histories: a Reader, pp.1-15
Fernie, E. Art History & its Methods, pp.356-57 (‘Quality’).
WEEKS 6-7

Thursday 18th & Tuesday 23rd October

Marxism and Social Art History (Aaron Thom) Thursday lecture: Marx and Marxist Art History

Essential Preparation for the Thursday class:

Reading


Karl Marx, Preface to ‘A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy’ (extract in J M Golby, Culture & Society in Britain 1850-1890, 13-14) [9(42)81 Gol]


Definition of Semiotics in Fernie, Art History & its Methods, 359-60.

Questions

1. Is art necessary?
2. What is the ‘value’ of art?

Tuesday class: Oil painting as a reflection of social class

Essential Preparation for the Tuesday class:

Reading

John Ruskin ‘Work’ Lecture 1 from The Crown of Wild Olive, 1866. Full text on line in multiple sources including: http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/crown.html

Images


Frans Hals, *Malle Babbe*, 1635, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin

Thomas Gainsborough, c. 1750, *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, London, National Gallery

Hugh Cameron, *The Harvest*, 1865, Private Collection

William Darling Mckay, *The Stonebreakers*, 1878. Oil on canvas, 48.3 x 68.5 cm. © The Drambuie Collection, Edinburgh

Gustave Courbet, *The Stonebreakers*, 1850, Destroyed

Questions

1. Do you believe Berger’s argument regarding the medium of oil?

2. To what extent can art be described as a social product?

3. How useful is the concept of ideology?

4. How might Cameron’s painting relate to the arguments on work made by Ruskin?

5. Compare and contrast the Courbet and the McKay painting as products of their social context.

Background reading


WEEK 7

NO CLASS on THURSDAY 25th October

WEEK 8

Week 8: 29th October – 2nd November: NO CLASSES
FIELDTRIP TO THE BURN: 1st - 2nd November

WEEK 9

Tuesday 6th November NO CLASS;

ESSAY DUE by 3.00pm, Thursday 8th November

WEEKS 9-10

Thursday 8th & Tuesday 13th November
Feminisms (Helen Pierce/Mary Pryor)

Thursday lecture: Feminist Approaches to the History of Art (HP)

Essential preparation for Tuesday’s tutorial (HP/MP):
View the Guerrilla Girls’ website at [www.guerrillagirls.com](http://www.guerrillagirls.com)

All printed texts available from [MyAberdeen](http://www.collegeart.org/news/2017/06/08/an-interview-with-linda-nochlin/)

Questions for Tuesday’s class discussion:
1. Should art historians continue to ask ‘why have there been no great women artists’?
2. To what extent does ‘The Dinner Party’ challenge Nochlin’s appraisal of women’s artistic achievements? To what extent does this artwork reinforce Nochlin’s perspective?
3. “The work is what it is and hopefully it’s seen as feminist work, or feminist-advised work, but I’m not going to go around espousing theoretical bullshit about feminist
stuff.” (Cindy Sherman) Do you consider Sherman to be an artist with a feminist agenda?
See MyAberdeen for a selection of key images which will be used to support the class discussion.

Further reading on this topic
Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (eds.), Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litan (1982).
Judy Chicago’s ‘The Dinner Party’ at the Brooklyn Museum: https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party/home/

WEEKS 10-11

Thursday 15\textsuperscript{th} & Tuesday 20\textsuperscript{th} November
Fry & Greenberg: Cézanne & Form (Mary Pryor)

Thursday Class: Cézanne and Form

Essential preparation for Tuesday class:
Reading (on MyAberdeen):

Roger Fry, Cézanne: A study of his development, 1927 (extracts)


Questions

1. What main similarities and differences do you perceive between the approaches by Fry and Greenberg to writing about Cézanne’s use of form?

2. Greenberg: ‘Cezanne's aim was to carry over the frank, liberated color of the Impressionists into pictures that would be as firmly and lucidly put together as those of an Old Master like Raphael or Poussin.’ To what extent do you think Greenberg argues that Cézanne succeeded in his aim? Does Fry agree with this?

3. What strengths and weaknesses does Verdi find in Fry’s study of Cézanne?

Images

Please see the selection of images on [MyAberdeen](http://www.unz.org/Pub/AmMercury-1952jun-00069?View=PDFPages), which you can use to evidence your answers to the questions.

Background reading


Roger Fry, Cézanne: A study of his development, 1927, 1952 imprint (759.44 Cez)

1960 imprint (759.44 Cez)


Roger Fry, JB Bullen, Vision & Design, 1981 (709 Fry)

Fry [http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/fyr.htm](http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/fyr.htm)

Greenberg [http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/greenbergc.htm](http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/greenbergc.htm)


WEEKS 11 & 12

Thursday 22nd November: NO CLASS
Tuesday 27th November: REVISION CLASS  
(Mary Pryor & Helen Pierce)

ASSESSMENT

Two written coursework assignments (25% each) = 50% of the final course grade
One 2-hour written examination = 50% of the final course grade

In your coursework assignments, and in the exam, you will be expected to demonstrate first-hand knowledge of the key texts and, where appropriate, the images discussed in relation to these texts.

Students who are retaking the entire course (not just the exam and resits) must submit new essays for their course work. It is not permitted to resubmit previous essays.

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to MyAberdeen - Organisations-Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

COURSEWORK ASSESSMENTS

The two assessments are linked; please read the instructions carefully:

Select ONE question from the list of essay topics given below. You will work on the resulting essay in two stages:

First stage:

Critical Bibliography: DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 11th October (Week 5)

Write a critical annotated bibliography on your chosen topic using four core sources (given in the reading lists) and one further source of your own finding.

Word count: circa 350 words per source; approx. 2,000 words overall (10% margin allowed)

Feedback will focus on your summaries and critical evaluations of the sources, which should include how these sources will be of use for your essay.

SEE Guide to Writing a Critical Annotated Bibliography on MyAberdeen
Second stage:

Essay: DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 8th November (Week 9)
Write an essay on your chosen topic with a bibliography that includes, but is not restricted to, the sources analysed in Assignment 1.

Word count: 2,000 words
Essays should be approximately 2,000 words long, including quotations and footnotes; you should note that you will be penalised for work which is either too long or too short. The acceptable margin below or above the word count for essays is 10%.

LIST OF ESSAY TOPICS
CHOOSE ONE ESSAY TOPIC ONLY AND USE FOR BOTH ASSIGNMENTS:

The critical annotated bibliography & the full essay

Panofsky:
To what extent do you agree with the statement that “without a knowledge of iconography and symbolism, our reading of renaissance and baroque works of art will be at best naive and inadequate”?

Vasari & Bellori:
Does Bellori’s concept of the Ideal owe anything to Vasari’s notion of artistic progress?

Wölfflin:
How successful was Heinrich Wölfflin’s attempt to link his concepts of closed and open form to the predominant artistic styles of particular periods?

Ramsay:
What arguments did Allan Ramsay advance against the notion of ideal beauty?

Marxism:
How accurate is it to describe T.J. Clark’s writing on Courbet as ‘Marxist art history’?

Feminisms:
Choose ONE female artist and discuss the strengths and limits of a feminist analysis of her work.

Cézanne:
Compare and contrast Fry and Greenberg’s perspectives on the use of space and colour in Cézanne’s works.
ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

1. Critical Bibliography is DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 11th October 2018
2. Final Essay is DUE by 3.00pm on Thursday 8th November 2018

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

When uploading assignments, please do the following:

Submit by the due date, no hard copy will be required unless directly requested by the Course Coordinator through MyAberdeen

In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student ID number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 HA3079 Essay.

When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 HA3079 Essay.

If you have been granted an extension, please upload the completed Extension Form (signed by yourself and course co-ordinator) along with your submission.

When you submit your work, please also tick the ‘Mark Reviewed’ Box.

Please note: Failure to submit by the due date (unless a prior arrangement has been made) will result in a deduction of marks. Where no submission is received, this will result in a mark of zero.

Please note: SafeAssign text matching software will be used, however the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy reserves the right to also submit material to TurnitinUK when deemed necessary.

NB In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a CAS mark of at least 6 (six) on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CAS 8 (eight) for the course as a whole.
EXAMINATION

One two-hour examination held in December. This exam will consist of:

- **ONE** compulsory question based on the analysis of a short passage from a key text discussed in class. Students choose **ONE** of three passages to discuss.
- **ONE** essay-based question selected from a list of four choices. The questions will relate closely to the material addressed in the classes.

*Past exam papers can be viewed at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/).*

**Please Note:** For this course, candidates for whom English is not their first language may refer to English/native tongue dictionaries. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in the examination venue. Invigilators are entitled to request inspection of dictionaries prior to the examination.