

Visual Art and Culture I

Contemporary Arts 167

Section: E100

Term: 2013 Fall

Instructor: Dorothy Barenscott

Discussion Topics: This course provides an introduction to the complex ways in which social and political change, and ideologies of gender, class, race and ethnicity, worked to shape aspects of 19th century visual art and culture in Europe and North America. Emphasis will be placed on the roles played by industrialization, political revolution, rapid urban growth, global commerce, and the new media technologies of an expanding consumer culture in defining a wide range of visual culture. Throughout the term we will also examine different representations and debates around the idea of modernity and the modern. Since the time period under investigation has often been called The First Modern Century, we will pay particular attention to shifting ideas related to labour and leisure, urban social space and spectacle, and issues bearing on Euro-American expansion of empires in relation to indigenous populations, throughout the 19th century.

Importantly, this class is not intended to be all-inclusive in which each and every monument contributing to the canon of Western art is studied. Therefore, we will also consider the constructed nature of the discipline of art history in order to trouble assumptions, both historical and contemporary, regarding the nature of art, its relation to different social and political institutions, and issues of patronage and viewing publics. Furthermore, through an introduction to critical and historical methods, students will develop the basic tools and terminology for analyzing visual art and culture, a skill set of crucial importance in understanding the barrage of images and technological stimulus at play in our postmodern world.

Grading: Midterm Exam 25% ,
In-Class Writing Assignments (5% each) 20% ,
Group Poster Project 15% ,
Final Exam 40%

Required Texts:

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies:

Prerequisite/Corequisite:

Notes:

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