

CMNS 488-4 SPECIAL TOPICS: Art Worlds

Handout 1: Syllabus and Outline of Class Sessions

1- Course Administration

This course provides an introduction to research in communications and the social sciences on the visual and performing arts. Themes are described in the outline of class sessions (beginning on page 2 of this handout).

This is a seminar course. There will be lectures but student presentations and discussions are an important component of weekly activities.

Textbook and Study Activities

Required readings will be made available electronically or put on reserve. Most required course materials will be posted on the course site:

<http://webdav.sfu.ca/web/cmns/courses/marontate/2009/488>

To access this folder you must log on to the SFU computer system.

Other study activities include visits to local artistic events. (Some of these may require that students pay admission fees. Plan to reserve at least \$40 for these activities).

Preliminary Grading Scheme (Note Change from Syllabus)

Seminar Participation and Attendance	20%
Short Assignments (Reading Discussion=15%, Art Analysis=25%)	40%
Multi-part Term Assignment (proposal, research paper, round tables)	40%

Note: The School expects that the grades awarded in this course will bear some reasonable relation to established university-wide practices with respect to both levels and distribution of grades. In addition, the School will follow Policy T10.02 with respect to "Intellectual Honesty" and "Academic Discipline". (See the current Calendar, General Regulations Section).

Assignments

Short Assignments

Students are asked to prepare two short assignments consisting of a written report (5 pages each plus bibliography) and short class presentations for each. The objective is to investigate issues relevant to art worlds and communication studies applying theories and concepts covered in the course.

1-Reading Analysis Assignment: This assignment will include a presentation summary and analysis of a required text and a discussion of how it could be applied to the study of a specific case study of an artistic event or phenomenon. Your paper and presentation should present the reading and then critically assess its applicability to a case study of your choice. Your choice of readings must be approved one week prior to your presentation and may include required readings from any part of the course (provided they are approved and announced in the previous class).

2-Artistic Phenomenon Case Study: This assignment focuses on the analysis of a specific artwork, artist or artistic phenomenon of your choice. Your analysis should describe the specific case and analyze it in context in connection with insights and concepts from readings about theories and scholarly work on art worlds. Be sure to relate your observations to at least one specific assigned reading.

Written short reports are due at the beginning of class on the day of your scheduled presentation. A preliminary schedule is outlined in Handout 2. The schedule will be finalized in the second class.

Term Assignment

This is a multi-stage assignment consisting of:

- a one page proposal outlining your topic and the sources and methods you will use to research it (due **March 5th**)
- a 10- page essay (plus bibliography) and
- participation in round tables (as both a discussant and a presenter).

The final **written portion of the term assignment is due on April 2** at the beginning of the last class, however presenters must provide discussants with a one-page summary of their topic five days before their presentations to allow discussants time to prepare. **All students must attend all roundtables.**

Suggested Types of Case Studies for Assignments: Choose a specific phenomenon, for example a specific artistic event (such as an exhibition or a performance), the work or reception of a visual or performing artist, group, genre, activities of other types of participant in art worlds (such as fans, audiences, critics, collectors, publishers) or issues related to an arts organization (such as a controversy at a museum or an issue or debate in an artists' association). **At least one case study must involve your participation in an artistic event in a "public" place**

2-Tentative Outline of Class Sessions and Preliminary Reading List

This is a tentative outline to help you plan your studying by indicating the topic, activities and some of the **core readings** for each class session in the suggested order of reading. Changes and additional readings or activities will be announced in class.

Part I: Art Worlds and/as Communication

The first part of the course introduces major debates and theoretical approaches in social studies of the arts, such as the symbolic interactionist approach Howard Becker suggested with the notion of *art worlds* (as opposed to the idea of a single artistic field). We will also look at post-structuralist ideas of artistic practice proposed by Pierre Bourdieu (who focuses on the high culture model). Some debates about art/society relations have to do with longstanding disagreements between humanists and social scientists. Is art "outside" of society? Are artists unique visionaries or are they better understood as part of society? Does art "reflect" society? Can it shape social issues? What is an artistic event?

Weeks 1-2: Introduction to the course. Course Administration. What is Art? Who are artists? Major theoretical approaches and Debates about Art/Society Relations and Communication Studies.

Required Readings

- Becker, Howard. "Art Worlds", Berkeley: U. California Press, 1982, p.1-2, 35-39.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Production of Belief: Contribution to an Economy of Symbolic Goods" in Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 1994, pp. 74-84, 105-111 and footnotes (especially "Who Creates the 'Creator'?" and "The Circle of Belief", pp. 76-78).
- Mitchell, W.J.T. "Offending Images" in Rothfield, L. (ed.) *Unsettling "Sensation": Arts-Policy Lessons from the Brooklyn Museum of Art Controversy*. Rutgers U. Press. 2001, pp. 115-133.
- Inglis, David. "Thinking 'Art' Sociologically", in Inglis, D. and J. Hughson *The Sociology of Art: Ways of Seeing*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005, pp. 11-29.
- Bennett, Tony. "Culture and the Social: Principles of Analysis", excerpt from "The Work of Culture", *Cultural Sociology*, 2007, 1(1); pp 33-38.

Recommended:

- Becker, Howard. "The Power of Inertia", *Qualitative Sociology*, 18 (1995), pp. 301-309 reprint on <http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/hbecker/Inertia.html>
- Becker, Howard. "Art As Collective Action", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 39, No. 6. (Dec., 1974), pp. 767-776.
- Jenson, Joli. "Introduction" in *Is Art Good for Us?* Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield 2002, pp. 1-9.
- Lane, Jeremy F. "When Does Art Become Art? Assessing Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Artistic Fields" in Inglis, David and John Hughson (ed.) *The Sociology of Art. Ways of Seeing*, 2005, pp. 30-42.
- Luhman, Niklas. "Perception and Communication" in *Art as a Social System*. Stanford U. Press 2000, pp. 5-20.

Part II: Processes and Institutions

This part of the course examines the processes and social institutions (such as museums, and the film, music and publishing industries) related to artistic

"production" or "creation", mediation and reception. How do status hierarchies occur that rank different art forms and artistic practices (ex. "Highbrow" and "Lowbrow" tastes, or the high culture model vs. popular or traditional arts)? What are the socio-historic processes that led to grouping artistic expression within "disciplines"? Different approaches to the study of the arts as social systems also imply various mediation processes and have inspired diverse theories of reception in connection with the recognition of art forms and their makers, and status distinctions of "consumers"(audiences, art publics, etc.). In this section we will examine debates about canons, and theories of artistic centres of excellence, recognition processes, and models for the social organization of artistic work (ex. the place of education, apprenticeships, and artists' organizations in controlling access).

Week 3–4: Who belongs in Art Worlds? Occupations, Institutions and Networks in the Arts.

Required Readings

- Zolberg, Vera. "The Art Object as Social Process". *Constructing a Sociology of the Arts*. Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 79–102.
- Becker, H. "Integrated Professionals, Mavericks, Folk Artists and Naive Artists" *Art Worlds*. Berkeley: U. Calif. Press. 1992, pp. 226–272.
- Peterson, R. and A. Anand. "The Production of Culture Perspective" *Annual Review of Sociology* 2004. 30:311–34 (especially pp. 311–318).

Recommended

- Van Laar, T. and L. Diepeveen, "The Function of Artists in Society: Starving Celebrities and Other Myths", *Active Sights. Art as social interaction.*, London, Mayfield, 1997, pp.51–69.
- Menger, Pierre-Michel, "Artists as Workers: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges" *Poetics*, Vol. 28 (4) pp. 241–254.
- Kasfir, Sidney. "African Art and Authenticity", in Oguibe, Olu and Okwui Enwezor (editors), *Reading the Contemporary. African Art from Theory to the Marketplace*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1999, pp. 88–113
- Levine, Judith. "Art as social service: Theatre for the Forgotten", in Zolberg and Cherbo, *Outsider Art*, Cambridge U. Press 1997, pp.131–145.

Week 5: Mediation-- Gatekeepers, Facilitators, Networks

Required Readings

- Alexander, Victoria. "A Mediated View: The Cultural Diamond", *Sociology of the Arts. Exploring Fine and Popular Forms*. Blackwell, 2003, pp. 60–63.
- Crane, Diana. "Epilogue" and "Unobtrusive Methods for Researching and Art Form" in *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde*, U. Chicago Press 1987, pp. 137–148.
- Shrum, W. "Cultural Mediation and the Status Bargain" and "Note on the Study of Mediation and Reception" in *Fringe and Fortune. The Role of Critics in High and Popular Art*. Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1998, pp.221–222 and pp.25–41.
- Marontate, J. "Museums and the constitution of collective memory", book chapter in *The Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Culture* (ed. Mark Jacobs and Nancy Hanrahan), 2005, pp 286–302.

Recommended

- Bennett, Andy. "Music, Media and Urban Mythscapes: A Study of the 'Canterbury Sound'". *Media, Culture & Society*, vol. 24(1) pp. 87–100, 2002
- Lena, Jennifer. "Meaning and membership: samples in rap music, 1979–1995", *Poetics. Journal of Empirical Research on Culture, the Media and the Arts*. V. 32

(304), 2004. pp. 297–310.

- Ostrower, Francie. *Trustees of Culture. Power, Wealth and Status on Elite Arts Boards*. U. Chicago Press. 2002.
- Peterson, Richard A. *Creating Country Music. Fabricating Authenticity*. U. Chicago Press 1997.
- Zolberg, Vera and Joni Maya Cherbo (ed.) *Outsider Art*. Cambridge U. 1999.

Part III: Social Identities, Social Issues and the Arts

Finally we will focus on questions related to the interplay of the arts, social identities, inequalities and public activism. How do gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity affect the practice of art-making, or access to careers in the arts? What are the rights and responsibilities of artists and publics? Here we consider the arts and socio-political activism, censorship controversies, arguments about access to the arts as a democratic right and the place of the arts in school curricula.

Week 6–7: Theories of Reception and Taste

Required

- Adorno, Theodor. "Types of Musical Conduct", *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*. New York: Seabury Press, 1962, pp. 1–20.
- Bennett, Andy, "Subcultures or Neo-Tribes? Rethinking the Relationship between Youth, Style and Musical Taste" *Sociology*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 599–617, Aug 1999.
- DeNora, Tia. "The role of music in intimate culture", *Feminism and Psychology*. 2002, Vol. 12(2), pp 176–181.
- Halle, David. "Displaying the Dream: The Visual Presentation of Family and Self in the Modern American Household" *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*; Summer91, Vol. 22 Issue 2, p217–229.

Recommended

- DeNora, Tia, "Music as a technology of the self", *Poetics*, 27, 1999, pp. 31–56.
- Ehrenreich, *et al.* "Beatlemania. A Sexually Defiant Consumer Subculture?" in Gelder, Ken and Thornton, Sarah, *The Subcultures Reader*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, pp. 523–536
- Fiske, John. "Elvis: A Body of Controversy", *Power Plays, Power Works*. London: Verso, 1993, pp. 94–107, 122–3.
- Hennion, Antoine. "Music Lovers. Taste as Performance" *Theory, Culture & Society*, Oct 2001 vol. 18, no. 5, pp. 1–22.

Week 8: Ranking the Arts-- The High Culture Model, Highbrow/Lowbrow and Outsider Art Worlds.

Required

- Levine, Lawrence W. "Prologue", from *Highbrow, Lowbrow. The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1988, pp 1–9
- DiMaggio, Paul. "The extension of the high culture model to theater, Opera and the Dance, 1900–1940", in Lamont, M. and M. Fournier, *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, U. Chicago, 1992, pp. 21–57.
- Minahan, Stella and Julie Cox. "Stitch'nBitch: Cyberfeminism, a Third Place and the New Materiality" *Journal of Material Culture*. 2007, 12:5. Recommended:
- Beisel, Nicola. "Constructing a Shifting Moral Boundary: Literature and Obscenity in Nineteenth-Century America", in Lamont, M. and M. Fournier, *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, U. Chicago, 1992, pp. 104–128.

Week 9: Artistic Heritage and Intellectual Property Issues

Required

- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Whose Culture is it? *New York Review of Books*. Vol. 53(2). On-line version.
- Bennett, Andy. "Heritage Rock: Music, Culture and DIY Preservationism" unpublished manuscript (on-line). 2007.
- Gamboni, Dario. "Introduction, Theories and Methods, An Historical Outline", *The Destruction of Art. Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 9–51

Recommended

- Clavir, Miriam. *Preserving What is Valued. Museums, Conservation and first Nations*. UBC Press 2002.
- Clifford, J. "On collecting art and culture" in Mirzoeff. *The Visual Culture Reader*, New York: Routledge, 1998:94–107.
- Michaels, Eric. "A Primer of Restrictions on Picture-Taking in tradition areas of aboriginal Australia", *Bad Aboriginal Art. Tradition, Media and Cultural Horizons*. Minneapolis: U. Minnesota Press, 1994, pp. 1–18.

Week 10: Identities, Inequalities and Access to the Arts.

Required:

- DeNora, Tia. "Music into Action: Performing Gender on the Viennese Concert Stage, 1790–1810" *Poetics*, vol. 30, no. 1–2, pp. 19–33, May 2002
- Michaels, Eric. 1993 (1987). "For a Cultural Future: Francis Jupurrurla Makes TV at Yuendumu" in *Bad Aboriginal Art. Tradition, Media and Technological Horizons*. Theory Out of Bounds Series. Minneapolis: U. Minnesota, pp. 99–124.

Recommended

- Guerilla Girls Web site visit <http://www.guerrillagirls.com/>
- Dean, A.O. "Introduction", *Rural Studio. Samuel Mockbee and an Architecture of Decency*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002, pp. 1–19
- Meyer, Richard. "This is to Enrage You: Gran Fury and the Graphics of Aids Activism", in Felshin, Nina. (ed.). *But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995, pp. 51–83.

Week 11: Artists as Social Activists/Democratization and Censorship Debates

Required:

- Marcus, George E. "Censorship in the Heart of Difference: Cultural Property, Indigenous Peoples' Movements, and Challenges to Western Liberal Thought" in Post, Robert (ed.) *Censorship and Silencing: Practices of Cultural Regulation*. Santa Monica: Getty Research Institute, 1998 pp. 221–242.
- Paterson, D.L. "Theatre of the Oppressed Workshops", <http://www.wvcd.org/action/Boal.html>

Recommended

- Hess, Elizabeth. "Guerrilla Girl Power: Why the Art World Needs a Conscience", in Felshin, Nina (ed.). *But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995, pp. 309–331.
- Heinich, N. "Outside art and insider artists: gauging public reactions to contemporary public art" in Zolberg and Cherbo. *Outsider Art*. Cambridge U. Press 1997, pp. 118–27.

Weeks 12–13: Round Tables on Term Projects