

Kansas City Art Institute: Fall 2009
ARTHI4035-07: SEMINAR IN FEMINIST ART AND THEORY
Wednesdays: 2:30-5:20

Professor: Dr. Maria Elena Buszek

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Office Hours: T/Th: 11:00am-12:30pm, or by appointment

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(go to "Feminist Art and Theory" to enter our class' primary site)

Course description and objectives: This course will address ways in which feminist theory concerning gender has affected the visual arts since the early 20th century, with an emphasis on second- and third-wave feminist thought since World War II. Students will explore influences upon the ways Western culture has defined art and artists in gendered terms, and be encouraged to adopt a critical perspective regarding the arts, gender, and culture. Through weekly readings, assignments, and discussions, a mid-term essay exam, and a final research paper/presentation on a related topic of their choosing, students will consider how gender is relevant to the creation and study of arts and culture, and the socio-cultural factors influencing gender and sexuality in the arts.

Evaluation and grading: Your grade will be based on weekly questions/class participation (20%), one take-home essay exam (20%), one extensive research paper (40%) and a conference-style presentation based on your research (20%), evaluated based on the above objectives and specific tenets to be articulated in the assignments/examination to come. Because you will have plenty of lead-time to research and compose your questions/papers, **late work will not be accepted under any circumstances.** Students' grades will be assessed based on the student's average performance at midterm (at which point downgrades will be given for those earning a C- or less) and the end of the term. This course's grading scale is as follows: 100%-93%=A, 92%-90%=A-, 89%-86%=B+, 85%-83%=B, 82%-80%=B-, 79%-76%=C+, 55%-73%=C, 72%-70%=C-, 69%-66%=D+, 65%-63%=D, 62%-60%=D-, 59% and below, F.

Attendance and absence policy: Attendance in class is mandatory, not just because much of the material will not necessarily be directly or extensively addressed in class readings, but also because discussion will be a crucial part of how we learn (and how students are graded) in this course. As such, one's success in the course will be entirely dependent upon one's presence and active participation in the seminar. **Each student will be allowed TWO unexcused absences from class over the course of the semester.** Absences will only be excused when accompanied by official documentation from the Academic Resource Center confirming one's illness or extreme/unusual personal crisis, which must be presented to the professor within a reasonable amount of time. **In any case, unless I am presented with the proper and timely documentation for a student's absence/s, upon the third unexcused absence, the student will automatically receive a failing grade ("F") in the class.** Remember that it is *the student's* responsibility to contact me and deal with absences as soon as possible! Please keep this attendance policy in mind when mulling over your use of the "free" absences—I can assure you that you will regret those days you skipped the day a flat tire/broken alarm/change in your work schedule occurs after you've used up your freebies.

Class participation and conduct: Active participation on the part of each student is essential to the success of this class. Indeed, dialogue will be a crucial part of the way this class addresses the information at hand, and students will be graded on their participation in our class discussions. Contrary to popular belief, some teachers do *not* necessarily enjoy talking to themselves, and *really* want to hear your thoughts and insights into the material being discussed. (By the way...I am one of those teachers!) **Dialogue drives my classes, and allows me to shape each one to your interests! So, don't be afraid to speak up! Or freak out!**

That said: while I try to foster a classroom situation in which discourse and debate may flourish, students are also expected to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a professional and educational setting and demonstrate collegial support of their peers. Students are required to observe the code of conduct articulated in the KCAI Student Handbook, which includes an anti-discrimination statement and no harassment policy.

Disabilities: KCAI will provide services and accommodations as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students requesting accommodations based on disability status should provide KCAI appropriate documentation. The documentation must be in written form from a licensed health care professional or educational professional who is qualified to diagnose the disability and recommend specific accommodations. Documentation must be within 3 years of being current. KCAI has the right to require a student to supplement the documentation if it is determined that the information in the initial documentation is incomplete, inadequate, or the qualifications of the health care provider or professional are in question. The documentation should state the specific disability and include recommended accommodations with a rationale if needed.

All documentation will be kept confidential. Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to provide documentation whether or not they opt to have accommodations in place so that if a specific need arises, an accommodation can be put in place in a timely manner. **Accommodations are not made on a Post Facto basis. Accommodations are not put in place unless requested by the student. All requests are confidential,** and should be directed toward: Kathy Keller, Disabilities Coordinator [kkeller@kcai.edu] Phone: 816-802-3485.

Cheating and plagiarism: Students are expected to be honest in both their test taking and paper writing assignments, and cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. The KCAI Student Handbook clearly defines academic dishonesty as follows:

- A) The copying of another student's work or the use of unauthorized notes and materials during examinations,
- B) Plagiarism, or the presentation of either the written or visual work of others (including that of other students), as one's own
- C) Plagiarism is a serious offense in the academy, as well as illegal in the context of our nation's copyright law. As such, it is important to know what plagiarism is in both one's studio- and liberal arts work. According to the Modern Language Association, plagiarism is "the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own." In other words, plagiarism is the use of not just words but ideas borrowed from someone else without crediting the source. *Students are required to learn the arts-standard, Chicago Manual of Style guidelines for citing sources referenced in their own work, and must follow them carefully in their research and writing projects.*

Any dishonest student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an automatic "zero" on the exam/project at hand and be penalized to the fullest extent of KCAI's Academic Dishonesty policy:

All academic dishonesty is taken as an offense against the Institute and may result in penalties assessed by the faculty member teaching the course in which the offense has occurred and the Judicial Board, up to and including expulsion.

When a faculty member has reason to believe that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred, s/he will inform the student/s involved, the head of the department (or director/dean, if applicable) in which the course is offered, and the head of the department (or director/dean, if applicable) in which the student is majoring. The faculty member will forward a report in writing to the Dean of Student Life for presentation before the KCAI Judicial Board. The Judicial Board will interview and/or receive written statements from the student accused of academic dishonesty prior to making any determination.

Once a determination has been made that an offense did occur, faculty members maintain the right to assign a failing grade to the student. [...] Additional penalties, up to and including expulsion, will be determined by the Judicial Board working in tandem with the faculty member who reported the offense.

Questions? Problems? Frustrations? These, my friends, are what your professors are here to help you deal with! I place a priority upon making myself accessible to students, and do my best to be extremely flexible when it comes to meeting and talking with students who would like help. My crucial numbers (phone, e-mail, office) are located above, and I am always willing to answer questions, discuss problems, and ease anxiety.

A note on class readings: Your textbooks for this class are: **Estelle B. Freedman (ed.), *The Essential Feminist Reader (EFR)*** and **Amelia Jones (ed.) *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader (FVCR)***. You will also be assigned reserve readings accessible through the Jannes Library website AND our course website as they come up on our schedule. The required readings are listed in our course schedule with specific chapters/pages/authors following each day's lecture theme. I expect students to **read ahead for each day's lecture**, as our readings will be directly addressed in that day's class discussion, and students' participation grade will largely be based on their ability to address/ask questions about that day's readings.

CLASS SCHEDULE: FALL 2009

AUGUST:

26: Introduction: Gender, sexuality and feminist politics

Suggested readings: bell hooks, Excerpts, *Feminism is for Everybody* (Jannes reserve)
Amelia Jones et al. "Part One: Provocations" (FVCR, 9-31)

SEPTEMBER:

2: Case study: Dada, Gender, Sexuality

Readings: Hannah Hoch, "The Painter" (Jannes reserve)
Leah Ollman, "The Lives of Hannah Hoch" (Jannes reserve)
Brigid Doherty, "Fashionable Ladies, Dada Dandies" (Jannes reserve)
Susan Fillin-Yeh, "Dandies, Marginality, and Modernism" (Jannes reserve)
Amelia Jones, "Equivocal masculinity," (Jannes reserve)

9: Early feminist theory and activism

Readings: Mary Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (EFR, 24-36)
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" (EFR, 57-62)
Sojourner Truth, "Two Speeches" (EFR, 63-66)
Henrik Ibsen, from *The Doll's House* (EFR, 92-99)
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (EFR, 128-144)
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Why I Wrote 'The Yellow Wallpaper,'" (Jannes reserve)

16: Fundamental feminist thought/feminist art after suffrage

Readings: Joan Riviere, "Womanliness as Masquerade" (Jannes reserve)
Anais Nin, from *The Diary (1937)* (Jannes reserve)
Funmilayo Ranome-Kuti, "We Had Equality..." (EFR, 247-250)
Simone de Beauvoir, from *The Second Sex* (EFR, 251-263)
Betty Friedan, from *The Feminine Mystique* (EFR, 269-282)

23: Creating a feminist art/history in the wake of "women's liberation"

Readings: Kate Millett, from *Sexual Politics* (Jannes reserve)
Pat Mainardi, "The Politics of Housework" (EFR, 288-294)
Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" (FVCR, 229-233)
Luce Irigaray, "Approaching Abjection" (FVCR, 389-391)
Helene Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" (EFR, 317-324)
Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, "Female Imagery" (FVCR, 40-43)
Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools..." (EFR, 331-335)

30: Feminist film criticism: considering popular culture/audiences

Readings: John Berger, from *Ways of Seeing* (FVCR, 37-39)
Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (FVCR, 44-53)
Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade" (FVCR, 60-71)
bell hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze," (FVCR, 94-105)

OCTOBER:

7: **Final project proposals due this week: Sign up for meetings**

14: **Sex Wars: Queering feminism**

Readings: Andrea Dworkin, "Pornography" (*FVCR*, 387-389)
Carole S. Vance, "Pleasure and Danger" (Jannes reserve)
Eleanor Heartney, "In Defense of Pornography" (Jannes reserve)
Monique Wittig, "One Is Not Born a Woman" (*EFR*, 359-366)
Sue-Ellen Case, "Toward a Butch-Femme Aesthetic" (*FVCR*, 402-414)
Jose Esteban Muñoz, "The White to be Angry" (*FVCR*, 217-224)

21: **New freedoms and old limits: "becoming the third wave"**

Readings: Adrian Piper, "The Triple-Negation of Colored Women Artists" (*FVCR*, 239-248)
Mira Schor, "Patrilineage" (*FVCR*, 249-256)
Amelia Jones, "Feminism, Incorporated" (*FVCR*, 314-329)
Rebecca Walker, "Becoming the Third Wave," (*EFR*, 397-401)
Kathleen Hanna, "Riot Grrrl Manifesto" (*EFR*, 394-396)
Jennifer Baumgardner, from *Manifesta* (*EFR*, 424-426)

28: **Future partners, future selves, future activism**

Readings: Jonah Gokova, "Challenging Men to Reject Gender Stereotypes," (*EFR*, 420-423)
Harry Brod, "Studying Masculinities as Superordinate Studies" (Jannes reserve)
Jack Kahn, from *An Introduction to Masculinities* (Jannes reserve)
Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (*FVCR*, 392-402)
Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto" (*FVCR*, 476-497)

NOVEMBER:

4: **Midterm exam!**

11: **Presentations (Speakers TBA)**

18: **Presentations (Speakers TBA)**

25: **NO CLASS! Thanksgiving holiday**

DECEMBER:

2: **Presentations (Speakers TBA)**

FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS DUE/DISCUSSED IN CLASS: Wednesday, December 9th

NOTE ON LOGGING IN TO JANNES RESERVES: This is the first class for which I am using Jannes Library's new "e-reserve" system rather than putting all outside readings on my class website. To access "Jannes reserve" readings listed above:

- Go to the Jannes Library main catalog page (also linked to our website):
<http://wilo.missouri.edu/search~S10>
- Scroll down to and click on the link marked "course reserves: retrieve by instructor name"
- Enter "Buszek" into the instructor box, which should bring up my full list of reserves after "search" is clicked
- Select the required reading/s (one at a time) for the appropriate class BY CLICKING "VIEW IMAGE," and login the following where prompted:
 - YOUR NAME
 - YOUR CAMPUS ID NUMBER, followed by KCAI (no spaces between the two)
 - THE COURSE PASSWORD: feministart

This should bring up the appropriate reading as an easily-read/printed .pdf file.