

Winter 2016

Western University
Department of Visual Arts
VAH 2287G Sexuality and Modern Visual Culture
Professor: Marielle Aylen
Teaching Assistant

Tuesdays: 8:30-11:30

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This course explores how modern and contemporary artists engage with the complex and contentious domain of sexuality. Historically, in many European countries, religious, medical, and juridical institutions guided attitudes about sexual behaviour in relation to the social good. Not surprisingly, interpretations of sexuality in Western art generally focused on the religious and social mores in which art was produced and consumed. In these interpretations, bodies are seen as allegories either of beauty, purity and the sacred, or of profane desire, social taboo and transgression. While Modern visual culture seemingly liberated the body from its prior symbolic functions and moral strictures, sexual identities in some ways became less fluid than they had been in previous centuries, and the mass media has taken over as a primary force in generating idealized and exclusionary fantasies about the body and identity. We will examine not only the representation of historically-specific cultural fantasies about gender, the body, and intersexual and LGBTQ2 (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning or two-spirited) identities in Modern visual culture, but also art's potential for exploring and politicizing aspects of sexuality. Readings focus on influential works, debates, and theories in the field of Modern Visual Culture. Projects encourage students to explore and to engage creatively with the issues raised by the course material.

** Students taking this course are consenting to viewing material that many find controversial and graphic in nature. The distinctions between and among art, pornography, and the erotic, and what is gratuitous, or profoundly political, for example, are sites of heated debate and subject to change depending on the historical and cultural circumstances that frame the objects. **If the material poses a problem, it must be brought to the attention of the professor during the first week of classes.** Be assured that readings will guide us through contentious issues, and the course is structured to encourage thoughtful discussions that demonstrate interest in, and respect for, diverse constituencies and perspectives. With this spirit in mind, students are expected to engage responsibly in class discussions.*

ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 26	Response to readings: hardcopy in-class	15%
Feb. 09	Take-home test based on readings: Turnitin submission on OWL	15%
March 08	Proposal: Final essay (250-500 words) and Bibliography: hardcopy in-class	15%
April 05	Final essay (1250-1500 words): Hardcopy and Turnitin submissions)	25%
Final exam		30%

N. B. failure to meet the deadlines and submission requirements (hardcopy, OWL Turnitin, or both) will result in deductions of up to 10%/week (see policies).

Required Reading

- Amelia Jones, ed. *Sexuality*, (MIT Press, 2014): Available at the Western Bookstore
- Readings posted to OWL

Course Objectives and Resources

Attendance: Students are expected to not only attend all class sessions and be prepared to participate in all lectures, discussions and/or critiques, but also to arrive on time. Under University regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in final tests, evaluations and/or critiques. **If a student is consistently absent from a 3-hour class for one hour, they will exceed the 15% cut off. Persistent tardiness of under an hour will result in a lower mark.**

Students are responsible for making themselves aware of all assignments, procedures, demonstrations and due dates. Failure to attend an important demonstration without due cause will result in the student researching the technical information for themselves.

Attendance and Assignments: Tests and projects draw on the readings, lectures, and films screened in class. Missing lectures means missing course material presented during class, and will affect your ability to respond to test questions. For this reason, it is advised that students partner with others to share notes. If you have a documented illness, you must seek accommodation (see the medical policy below).

Submissions: Note which assignments require that hardcopies be submitted in class, and which are to be submitted on OWL using the Turnitin function (or both). Failure to meet the submission requirements and deadlines will result in deductions of 2%/day excluding weekends (i.e. 10%/week).

Technology: Students can only use technology for note taking. Turn off cell phones. Texting, surfing the net, writing papers, and responding to e-mail during class is also prohibited. The latter practices are disruptive for lecturers and other members of the class, so students who fail to respect these prohibitions will be asked to leave the lecture. Late arrivals and early departures are also disruptive.

E-mail: I check E-mail once daily. Be sure that the **subject line** of your e-mail conveys a sense of the message content; otherwise, the *spam* filter might delete your message.

- **Assignments will not be accepted through e-mail**
- **Grades will not be provided or discussed through e-mail**
- **Consult policy and other documents before sending e-mail queries: is the answer to your question in the materials posted to OWL?**
- **Keep questions brief and see me during office hours for more involved questions**
- **Include your *full* name and student number in all messages.**

Enrollment: You are responsible for ensuring that you have completed course prerequisites, and that you have not taken an antirequisite course.

Late and missed assignments: Late projects receive a 2% per weekday deduction. Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. **Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.** For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>. For the downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading.

I will NOT accept any missed assignments, whether totaling more than 10% or less than 10%, unless the student has arranged accommodation through the Dean's Office. **Requests for extensions** must be made in person during office hours, or by appointment **prior to the due date.**

Medical Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less

than 10% of assignments.

Mental health policy: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Grade Change: As course director, I welcome students during office hours to discuss the course materials and projects. Feel free to bring questions about the readings, your research, points of confusion and ideas you would like to explore. As for the marks received on assignments, read the comments carefully and then consult with the person who marked your assignment one week after it is returned to you. If a Teaching Assistant marked it, you will meet with her/him. I give clear instructions to the assistants, and re-assess a segment of the class for each assignment. Before meeting, prepare specific questions about the method of evaluation. This will lower your stress level, and lead to a more productive meeting. Think strategically. Contextualize this mark in relation to your final grade: do you really only want to raise your mark *one or two points* to receive a better *letter grade*? If so, it would be more strategic to work on improving the next project: how can you re-capture the marks on a more heavily weighted assignment? How are you progressing with the readings and lectures? Think of this meeting as part of a larger picture. Getting to know each other's expectations will do more to improve your final grade than a few marks on one project.

If after you have discussed the assessment with your T.A., and only after, you can approach the course director with your questions.

Essays/tests: All essays are due at the beginning of class and you must be on time for tests. If you are late for a test, be sure to not disrupt other students, and be advised the lost time will not be made up. ***You are also responsible for all submitted projects until you receive official confirmation of your final grades.*** Keep a computer file version of all your essays, and the marked hard copies until you receive the final transcript for the course. This protects you in the event that one of your projects is lost, stolen, or plagiarized.

Learning Outcomes (Course Objectives): In this course, students explore Modern Visual Culture's engagement with issues of sexuality. Readings provide an introduction to, and in depth exploration of, key issues and debates about desire, representation, identity, embodiment, visibility, eroticism, pornography, art and sexual politics. Students will develop proficiency in articulating analytical responses to readings and to cinematic texts, as well as their own research. More specifically, they will develop proficiency in engaging with polemical arguments, and articulating a position in relation to them. Students will gain a thorough knowledge of how the field of Art History and Visual Culture not only contributes to the understanding of a fundamental aspect of human experience, but participates in guiding and shaping it.

Readings: Required readings are Amelia Jones, *Sexuality* (available at the bookstore), and articles posted to OWL.

OWL: The syllabus and readings are posted as pdf files on Sakai. Use your UWO user name and password to log on. For technical assistance see the web site, or contact [HTTPS://OWL.UWO.CA](https://owl.uwo.ca) or ITS: (519) 661-3800.

Accommodations: Students who require academic accommodation must register with the Student Development Centre, meet with a counselor, and provide appropriate documentation of special needs. For more information, see the centre web site: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/paths.html?students>.

Citation of Sources and Academic Honesty: Plagiarism is serious a academic offence. See below, and the Scholastic Offence Policy in the current Academic Calendar. All work must be: 1) entirely your own; 2) produced exclusively for this course. Submitting portions of the same work in more than one course is a form of plagiarism. If you intend to revisit topics in more than one course see me beforehand, and cite

yourself in your bibliography. **All sources must be cited using the *Chicago Manual of Style, Humanities format*.** Inform professors if you intend to explore related projects in more than one course. “Sharing” essays with friends is a form of plagiarism that results in automatic failure for both students, and can lead to more serious penalties (not exactly a solid foundation for a lasting friendship). Support friends by urging them to consult their instructors for assistance.

Writing Centre: WSS Building, 4th floor, <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>

The Writing Centre offers individual instruction on all aspects of writing and is not solely for undergraduate students, and those having difficulty. See the web site for details.

Visual Arts Department

POLICIES

Student Conduct:

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

Attendance:

A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

Prerequisites:

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). (Refer to www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg113.html# or the 2014/2015 Western Academic Calendar, p. 19, with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.)

Medical Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

Mental Health:

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

Building Access:

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:30 pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00 noon-5:00 pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:30 pm and 5:00 pm. You must also sign-in with the

building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

Please remember:

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Prof. David Merritt (tel. 519-661-3440; vaugc@uwo.ca). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty, IGA Building, Room 1N20 (Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the counselors for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities).

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services to students including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: www.lib.uwo.ca.

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students.

Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail, finaid@uwo.ca; or check out their website at http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html

August 4, 2014

VISUAL ARTS Undergraduate Grading Guidelines - Art History

These guidelines are benchmarks that are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades in first year courses are generally lower than in fourth year.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The **writing** shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding **research**, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The **writing** shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding **research**, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The **writing** shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding **research**, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

70-74 (Good, B)

The **writing** shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding **research**, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The **writing** demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding **research**, an insufficient number secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The **writing** shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding **research**, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The **writing** demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding **research**, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.

Bibliography and Suggested Readings

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Angier, Nathalie, "Intersexual Healing: An Anomoly Finds a Group (1996)," *Reading Women's Lives*, compiled Kim Verwaayen and Marielle Aylen (Boston, Mass.: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2005/06), 365-369.

Balsamo, Anne, "On the Cutting Edge: Cosmetic Surgery and the Technological Production of the Gendered Body," Nicholas Mirzoeff ed., *The Visual Culture Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002), 685-694.

Berheimer, Kate, "The Rapturous Form," *Marvels & Tales*, 20:1 (2006), 67-83.

Betterton, Rosemary, "Louise Bourgeois, Ageing and Maternal Bodies," *Feminist Review*, no. 93 (2009): 27-45.

Bowditch, Lucy, "Unpacking Pollock's "Male and Female": Art, Persona, Hermaphrodite, Anima and Individuation," *Notes in the History of Art*, 27: 2/3, *Special Issue on Art and Psychoanalysis* (Winter/Spring 2008): 65-69.

Bryce, Niall, "Lucian Freud: in the Flesh," *Lancet*, Feb. 2012, 379 (9817): 701.

Callen, Anthea, "Ideal Masculinities: An Anatomy of Power," Nicholas Mirzoeff ed., *The Visual Culture Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002), 401-414.

Campbell, Patrick, "Censoring the Body: Whores, Goddesses, and Annie Sprinkle," *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 10: 3 (2000): 53-68.

Chave, Anna C., "New Encounters with Les Demoiselles d'Avignon," Kymberly N. Pinder, ed. *Race-ing Art History* (London: Routledge: 2002): 261-278.

Dodds, Joseph, "Farewell Lucian Freud, (1922-2011), Master Painter of the Subjective Body," *PSYART* (Gainesville: University of Florida, 2012): 1-2.

Doyle, Jennifer, "Queer Wallpaper," Donald Preziosi ed., *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Dykstra, Jean, "Putting Herself in the Picture: Autobiographical Images of Illness and the Body," *Reading Women's Lives*, compiled Kim Verwaayen and Marielle Aylen (Boston, Mass.: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2005/06), 147-171.

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Fausto-Sterling, Anne, "The Five Sexes Revisited," (2000), *Reading Women's Lives*, compiled Kim Verwaayen and Marielle Aylen (Boston, Mass.: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2005/06), 353-363.

Freud, Sigmund, "Civilization and Its Discontents," *The Penguin Freud Library, Vol 12* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin), 1986.

Friedberg, Anne, "The Mobilized and Virtual Gaze in Modernity: Flâneur/Flâneuse," Nicholas Mirzoeff ed., *The Visual Culture Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002), 252-263.

- Garb, Tamar, "The Forbidden Gaze: Women Artists and the Male Nude in Late Nineteenth-Century France," Nicholas Mirzoeff ed., *The Visual Culture Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002), 415-422.
- Anne Higonnet, Making Babies, Painting Bodies: Women, Art, and Paula Modersohn-Becker's Productivity *Woman's Art Journal*, 30:2 (Fall/Winter, 2009): 15-21.
- Hults, Linda C, *The Witch as Muse: Art, Gender, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 37-107.
- Kelley, Carolyn A., "Aubrey Beardsley and H. D.'s *Astrid*: The Ghost and Mrs. Pugh of Decadent Aestheticism and Modernity," *Modernism/Modernity* 15: 3: (2008): 447-475.
- Kramer, Heinrich and James Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum Maleficarum* (1484), *Reading Women's Lives*, compiled Kim Verwayen and Marielle Aylen (Boston, Mass.: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2005/06), 173-181.
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- Mckenzie, Susan, "Queering Gender: Anima/Animus and the Paradigm of Emergence," *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 06/2006, 51: 3: 401-421
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Wright, Alison E., "The Hottentot Venus: An Alternative Iconography," *The British Journal* XIV: 1 (March 2013): 59-70.

Wullschlager, Jackie, "Witches and Wicked Bodies, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh – Review," *FinancialTimes.com*, July 20, 2013.