

Western University  
Department of Visual Arts

I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Neutral peoples, on lands connected to several Treaties including Treaty 6 London Township, Treaty 7 Sombra Township, Treaty 21 Longwoods and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This place continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples who are recognized as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to society.

**VAH 2662G/FILM 3312G**  
**ART AND MASS MEDIA**  
Winter 2021

**Professor:** C. Sprengler

**Office Hours:** By appointment (please email and we will set up a time for a Zoom call)

**Email:** csprengl@uwo.ca

**Teaching Assistants**

Ana Moyer; Email:

Office Hours:

Tessa Oxtoby, Email:

Office Hours:

**Class Time:**

Asynchronous – lectures posted every Monday morning on our OWL course site.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This asynchronous online course examines the complex relationships that have emerged since the mid-twentieth century between art and the mass media, particularly film and television. We will begin with an exploration of the theoretical discourses that help us analyze and contextualize image-making practices. Then, we consider the collaborations and conflicts that have marked the intersections between the art world and the worlds of cinema and television. Specifically, we will focus on how artists have engaged with the content and institutional structures of the mass media as well as how the mass media has represented, and responded to, artists and the art world. This course is lecture-driven. There is no final exam.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### 1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

Students will have a thorough knowledge of the key critical and theoretical frameworks that pertain to the practices being studied and will be able to engage with works of art and other media according to those frameworks. Specifically, this course will familiarize students with the works, theoretical concepts and debates central to investigations into the relationship between art and various forms of mass media.

### 2. Knowledge of Methodologies

Students will acquire the discursive/theoretical vocabularies that are utilized in debates within the field, and will demonstrate their knowledge of the field through the deployment of the vocabulary in writing.

### 3. Application of Knowledge

Students will utilize their knowledge of appropriate methods, the vocabularies pertinent to the field, and their ability to make appropriate judgements, in order to develop a sound argument regarding a particular practice or historical development, and will be able to defend their argument according to a knowledge of scholarly works. Moreover, students will learn to evaluate written texts, analyze a diverse array of visual imagery and think critically about the relationship between art objects and their contexts.

## EVALUATION

### Iconic Image Analysis (Essay #1): 30%

Assigned: January 11, 2021

Due: February 1, 2021 (5:00pm EST)

Length: 750-1000 words (3-4 typed pages)

Essays must be doubled-spaced and submitted through our OWL course site by the deadline. Late essays will receive a 1% penalty per day. For example, if an essay worth 30% of your final grade is due Monday but submitted on Tuesday, the maximum mark you can receive is 29/30. Sources referred to must be cited according to the **Chicago Manual of Style** and a full bibliography included.

<b>Representation of Art on Film or Television Analysis (Essay #2): 40%</b>
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Assigned: February 29, 2021

Due: April 9, 2021 (5:00pm EST)

Length: 1500-1750 words (6-7 typed pages)

<b>Forum Posts: Image/Link Submissions and/or Short Responses: 30%</b>
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Complete **6** of the following 8, worth 5% each. (You may complete more than 6 and only the best 6 will be counted toward your grade)

**Due:** various dates, see weekly schedule below.

Length: 200-250 words each

Please note: The weekly readings will assist you in completing some of these short assignments. You will find definitions of the key terms “appropriation” and “the gaze” in the Sturken and Cartwright textbook. Collectively, these responses will constitute an online discussion and, as such, what you submit will be viewable by your peers. Please take some time to look at submissions from your fellow students in order to see the broad range of images and perspectives that comprise the field of possible responses to the following issues. This is an opportunity for you to produce knowledge for the class and, also, to learn from each other.

**Forum Post #1: Iconic Image (Due January 22)**

Submit one image (or a link to an image) that you think is iconic – according to Sturken and Cartwright’s definition in this week’s reading – and describe its significance to you in 200-250 words. (Consider this practice for the first essay!)

**Forum Post #2: Reflection on Violent Images (Due January 29)**

Reflect in 200-250 words on the value of, or issues associated with, iconic images that show violence.

**Forum Post #3: Appropriated Image (Due February 5)**

Submit one image (or a link to an image) that involves the appropriation of an artwork or still/screen grab from a film. Write a 200-250 word analysis of what you think the author of the image is trying to say.

**Forum Post #4: The Gaze in Art or Film (Due February 12)**

With reference to a specific film or work of art, write a 200-250 word reflection on how the gaze operates in, or is complicated by, your example.

**Forum Post #5: Art about Film (Due February 26)**

Submit one image (or a link to an image) of an artwork that is about some aspect of the cinema. In 200-250 words, reflect on what that artwork is attempting to tell us about film.

**Forum Post #6: Frida Question (Due March 6)**

In 200-250 words, answer one of the following questions about the film *Frida*.

**Forum Post #7: Television and Art Historical Knowledge (Due March 19)**

With reference to an example (a 5-10 minute excerpt) from a television documentary on art history, discuss in 200-250 words what constitutes knowledge about art. In other words, what information was offered about art? What was said? What was shown? What was stressed/privileged as vital information about art?

**Forum Post #8: Art on Television/Television on Art (Due March 26)**

In 200-250 words, describe an example of how art or an aspect of the artworld has been represented on television OR describe an example of how art has critique, explored, or otherwise engaged with television.

**Content Warning:** This course will show material representing violence. As such, some photographs and videos may be disturbing. Please be advised.

**General Course Policies: A Snapshot**

1. Late Assignments: Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Extensions will be given *only* upon official notification from the student's faculty advisor documenting bereavement or serious health issues.
2. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For information concerning UWO's Plagiarism and Academic Offenses (Scholastic Offences) consult the Western Academic Calendar.
3. Emails:
  - a. Assignments will not be accepted through email.
  - b. Be sure to keep emails brief and to the point and use standard formatting.
  - c. Be sure to identify your name and contact information in the email.
  - d. I will make every effort to reply to your email within two business days.
4. I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus throughout the term. Should a change be required, you will be given prior notice.
5. All students will conduct themselves online in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the University community with respect.

**Further Policies/Information**

**Statement on prerequisite checking:**

*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). This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.*

□ **Academic Consideration:**

*The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances, including short-term illness or injury. Reasonable academic consideration is a cooperative process between the University, the student, and academic staff. All participants in the process must act in good faith, and fulfil their respective obligations, if it is to succeed.*

*Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements, may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:*

- (i) Submitting a Self-Reported Absence form, provided that the conditions for submission are met;*
- (ii) For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner, in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or*
- (iii) For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration, in order to be eligible for academic consideration.*

*Students seeking academic consideration:*

- Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;*
- Are encouraged to make appropriate decisions, based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (e.g., upset stomach) or upsets (e.g., argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;*

- **Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;**
- **Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic counselling within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities**

*Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less. The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:*

- Students will be allowed a maximum of two self-reported absences between September and April, and one self-reported absence between May and August;*
- The duration of the excused absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30pm;*
- The duration of the excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period, should the student undertake significant academic responsibilities (e.g., write a test, submit a paper) during that time;*
- The duration of an excused absence will terminate at 8:30am on the day following the last day of classes each semester, regardless of how many days of absence have elapsed;*
- Self-reported absences will not be allowed for scheduled final examinations; for midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations*
- Self-reporting may not be used for assessments (e.g., midterm exams, tests, reports, presentations, or essays) worth more than 30% of any given course;*
- Students must be in touch with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form, to clarify how they will be expected to fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed*

#### **Mandatory 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.

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf)

**Normal Building Access (September 1st to April 30th) (Subject to change):**

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

For the 2020-2021 academic year the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be available by card access only for students who have in-person classes in the building.

**Permission re: Promotion:**

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

**Artwork Installation Liability Release:**

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.

**Removal:**

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

**Academic Sanctions:**

In instances of non-payment of prescribed tuition and other fees, the University shall seal the academic record. When an academic record is sealed, the student will not be able to: a) view grades; b) register in future courses; c) receive transcripts or a degree diploma; d) obtain admission or readmission.

The above prohibitions shall be in force until such time as indebtedness to the University, including payment of fee for removal of the seal, has been cleared to the satisfaction of the University.

[http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading\\_169](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&Keywords=academic%20sanctions&SubHeadingID=169&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_169)

**You may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

**Support Services:**

*There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:*

1. Student Development Centre -- <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>
2. Student Health -- <http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>
5. Mental Health -- [https://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

**Health and Wellness:**

*Western offers a variety of counselling services and several mental health resources for students. If you or a friend are feeling overwhelmed, confused or unsure of your mental health state, please don't ignore it. There are steps you can take to help yourself or help others. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help engage in healthy living while pursuing your degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>.*

*If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwo.com/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.*

**Gender Neutral Bathrooms:**

*Middlesex College does not have specifically gender-neutral bathrooms. There are two gender neutral bathrooms in the JLVAC. One is located in the Artlab and is open only during Artlab hours. A second single stall gender neutral bathroom can be found on the third floor of the JLVAC. Here is the full list of inclusive washrooms at UWO: [http://www.uwo.ca/equity/doc/inclusive\\_washrooms.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/equity/doc/inclusive_washrooms.pdf).*

*Please contact the Media Lab Technician, Jennifer Slauenwhite ([jslauen@uwo.ca](mailto:jslauen@uwo.ca)), for card access to the elevator and stairs if you are in need of the 3rd floor gender neutral/accessible washroom for the academic year.*



## VISUAL ARTS Art History/Museum and Curatorial studies Grade Descriptors

**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 of 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.