

ARTS 310- 004- ARTS & IDEAS- SPRING 2007
The Intersection of Art, Politics, and Culture

“I’d like to believe that the ongoing initiation into art deepens our capacity for experiencing ourselves as well as others, thereby deepening our capacity for personhood, our achievement of humanity” - Edward Hirsch

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Art and Ideas is not an art appreciation course or an introduction to any of the particular arts, but stresses the human significance of art, its social role, its foundation in aesthetics, and its importance as a way of interpreting reality. This survey class includes reading of literature, attendance at outside performances and events, guest artists, classroom presentations and performances, informal discussion and the development of the written response.

The focus of this section will be to examine the intersection of art, politics and culture. We will study a wide variety of works from this perspective. We will look briefly and occasionally at ancient and classical art, but focus primarily on contemporary, American works. We will study literature, film, theater, music, dance, and visual art. We will look at art whose purpose is to create social change or promote a specific political ideal. We will also examine the issue of censorship, the politics of identity, the role of the artist as witness, public versus private art, and the political content of mainstream art and popular culture. In addition, we will occasionally explore some gentle art-making processes that will deepen your understanding of the creative process itself.

My hope is that through active participation in this class you will begin to see the relevance of art to your daily life and how it shapes your interpretation of the world in which you live.

Course Goals: At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Interpret art from a variety of perspectives.
2. Look critically at art, especially in popular culture.
3. Discuss the social and personal role of the arts in American society.
4. Discuss the economic, political, historical, and social influences on art.
5. Discuss the role of the audience in the arts.
6. Express their own ideas concerning the role of the arts in their personal life and American society.

Texts:

Uncle Tom’s Cabin- Harriet Beecher Stowe

My Year of Meats Ruth L. Ozeki

Additional reading/viewing assignments handed out in class or on-line as indicated in your syllabus.

Participation: Because discussion is a vital component of this class it is extremely important that you come to class prepared and ready to talk. That means you will need to complete the assigned reading, formulate questions and responses, and enthusiastically share your opinions, questions and ideas with others. Learning to interpret and analyze works of art and to effectively communicate your response is a chief goal of this class. I will rarely “lecture” in this class. Therefore the responsibility lies with you to participate in a meaningful dialogue about the viewing and reading assignments. What this also means is that you will be learning as much from your classmates as you will from me. I encourage you to keep notes on the class discussions, so that you will remember the issues raised.

Some questions to keep in mind while reading or viewing the artwork that we will discuss include the following: **What is the identity of the artist?** (Race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) **Who is the intended audience? What political or social issues are raised? Or not raised? What is the political or cultural context in which the work was created? How are groups outside of the dominant culture portrayed? Are they visible? Stereotyped? How does a particular image, passage, or moment make you feel? Do you think your response is what the artist intended? How has the artist shaped the aesthetics of the piece to convey a particular message or point of view?**

I will occasionally assign in-class-writing exercises to help you formulate your responses to art we have seen. These exercises will not be graded but will count towards your class participation grade.

Attendance: Since this class meets only once a week it is important that you are present. Missing one class is akin to missing one week of your other classes. Excessive absences will have a negative impact on your grade. Perfect attendance will have a positive impact on your grade.

Lateness: Arriving in class more than 15 minutes late (or leaving class early) is the equivalent of half an absence. If you are late please check with me after class to make sure that you receive credit for attendance.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given to ensure that students have completed the assigned reading. If you miss half the questions on a quiz you will receive no credit for the quiz. In addition, a student’s failure on a quiz indicates that the student has not read the assigned material and therefore cannot meaningfully participate in the class discussion. Occasionally I may request that students formulate interpretive questions to the text they are reading in lieu of a quiz. If you are absent the day of a quiz you must make arrangements with me to take a make up quiz or you will receive a zero.

Arts Events: You are required to attend 2 cultural events outside of class in addition to attending any other arts events scheduled during class time. You will be expected to write a 2 page typed critique of 2 events of your choice that you attend outside of class time. The other cultural events you attend can be on or off campus and may include exhibits at museums or art galleries, performing arts events (music, dance, theater, performance art), literary readings,

poetry slams, etc. Renting a video and watching a movie at home does not count as an arts event. However you may watch one film in a public theater and write a critique. You can locate art events at [http:// unca.edu/humanities/events.htm](http://unca.edu/humanities/events.htm) or in the *Mountain Express* or *Take 5* in the *Asheville Citizen Times*. If you have any question about whether an event will count- please check with me first. Please include a ticket stub or program with your paper.

Reflection Paper: Approximately every 3 weeks, you will write and hand in a brief reflection paper responding to the topics and artworks we have explored in class. Your reflection papers should be typed and 1-2 pages long. These are not to be mere summaries of our class discussions; they should include your own questions and responses to the issues raised and art work discussed. The reflection paper should demonstrate your familiarity with the work and also your views about its significance. **Late papers will not be accepted.**

Mid -Term: There will be a written mid-term exam distributed on **March 1st**. This will be a take home exam for which you may use your texts and notes. You must turn in the completed exam by the next class period, **March 15**.

Final Arts Project: You will create an original piece of art that expresses a point of view about a specific social or political issue. You may work in small groups, but each person will be graded individually on their participation. The project must be approved by the instructor. Following the presentation, you will discuss your work with the class. Be prepared to discuss the political or social issues raised, the aesthetic choices that you made, and your creative process.

Grades:

Grades will be on a ten-point scale and calculated as follows:

Class participation: 25%

Reading quizzes: 10%

4 Reflection Papers 25%

Mid-term 15%

Final Art Project or presentation 15%

2 Critiques of Arts Events Outside of Class 10%

EXTRA CREDIT:

Two events may be attended beyond the three required events. Well written, typed, critical essays (2-3 pages) accompanied with a ticket will earn extra credit ranging from zero to five points added to total points for the term, depending upon the quality of the reviews.

Selected Chapters of Uncle Tom's Cabin

<i>Chapter I</i>	<i>In Which the Reader is Introduced ...</i>
<i>Chapter III</i>	<i>The Husband and Father</i>
<i>Chapter IV</i>	<i>An Evening in Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>
<i>Chapter V</i>	<i>Showing the Feelings of Living Property ...</i>
<i>Chapter VII</i>	<i>The Mother's Struggle</i>
<i>Chapter IX</i>	<i>In Which it Appears that a Senator</i>
<i>Chapter X</i>	<i>The Property is Carried Off</i>
<i>Chapter XI</i>	<i>In Which Property Gets Into an Improper</i>
<i>Chapter XII</i>	<i>Select Incident of Lawful Trade</i>
<i>Chapter XIII</i>	<i>The Quaker Settlement</i>
<i>Chapter XV</i>	<i>Of Tom's New Master, and Various ...</i>
<i>Chapter XVI</i>	<i>Tom's Mistress and Her Opinions</i>
<i>Chapter XVII</i>	<i>The Freeman's Defense</i>
<i>Chapter XVIII</i>	<i>Miss Ophelia's Experiences and Opinions</i>
<i>Chapter XX</i>	<i>Topsy</i>
<i>Chapter XXIV</i>	<i>Foreshadowings</i>
<i>Chapter XXV</i>	<i>The Little Evangelist</i>
<i>Chapter XXVI</i>	<i>Death</i>
<i>Chapter XXVIII</i>	<i>Reunion</i>
<i>Chapter XXIX</i>	<i>The Unprotected</i>
<i>Chapter XXX</i>	<i>The Slave Warehouse</i>
<i>Chapter XXXII</i>	<i>Dark Places</i>
<i>Chapter XXXIII</i>	<i>Cassy</i>
<i>Chapter XXXVII</i>	<i>Liberty</i>
<i>Chapter XXXVIII</i>	<i>The Victory</i>
<i>Chapter XL</i>	<i>The Martyr</i>
<i>Chapter XLI</i>	<i>The Young Master</i>
<i>Chapter XLII</i>	<i>An Authentic Ghost Story</i>
<i>Chapter XLIII</i>	<i>Results</i>
<i>Chapter XLIV</i>	<i>The Liberator</i>
<i>Chapter XLV</i>	<i>Concluding Remarks</i>

Schedule

(Please note that this is subject to change as opportunities make themselves available. Readings and topics for dates that are blank will be announced later)

January

18: Introduction/Syllabus/Discussion

25: Class discussion -reading & viewing assignments

Handout: "Principles of Interpretation"

Online reading and Viewing: Nussbaum's "Victims and Agents: What Greek Tragedy Can teach Us about Sympathy and Responsibility"

<http://www.bostonreview.net/BR23.1/nussbaum.html>

Online Reading and Viewing: **Images of War**

Delacroix- Liberty Leading the People- (click on pix to enlarge painting)

<http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/delacroix/liberte>

Goya- The Shootings of May 3rd 1808

http://www.artchive.com/artchive/G/goya/may_3rd.jpg.html

Picasso - Guernica-

<http://www.mala.bc.ca/~lanes/english/hemngway/picasso/guernica.htm>

<http://www.pbs.org/treasuresoftheworld/guernica/gmain.html>

February

1: Art of Social Protest and Censorship: (film) **Cradle Will Rock**

Online reading: The Federal Theater Project

<http://novaonline.nv.cc.va.us/eli/spd130et/federaltheatre.htm>

Online Reading & Viewing- Diego Rivera's Bio

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/rivera_d.html

Incomplete man at the CrossRoads

<http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/photony.html>

Man at the Crossroads

<http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/encrucci.html>

Modern Industry

<http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/nwsny2.html>

8: Class discussion about Cradle Will Rock and the Federal Theater Project

Degenerate Art (film)

1st reflection paper due

Out of Class Art Event- Feb 13 or 14- Dayton Contemporary Dance Company- The Jacob Lawrence Project-Diana Wortham Theater- Pack Place- 8pm- \$6

<http://www.whitney.org/jacoblawrence/art/index.html>

15: Uncle Tom's Cabin (all indicated chapters) - QUIZ-

Handout - "Dogs" - Tim Siebles

22: The Wrestling Season- Carol Belk Theater-8pm- \$5

March

1: Spike Lee's Do the Right Thing or Bamboozled (film)

2nd reflection paper due

Pick up take-home Mid-Term

1st Critique of outside arts event due

SPRING BREAK

15: Women's Work: Form and Personal Identity

Judy Chicago/ Faith Ringold/Quilts of Gee's Bend

Turn in Mid-term

22: TBA

29: Common Threads: Stories from the Aids Quilt (film)

Online Reading: Jesse Green's -*When Political Art Mattered*

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?sec=health&res=9807E3DE113AF934A35751C1A9659C8B63>

April

5: Art, Politics, and Popular Culture- Disney and Thomas Kinkade

On-line viewing: www.thomaskinkade.com

Art for Everybody (Handout)

Bring in quilt squares

12: The Politics of Mass Media - QUIZ

My Year of Meats (entire novel)

3rd reflection paper due

19: Fieldtrip- Asheville Area Arts Council -11 Bitmore Ave, Asheville-6pm

26: Last class- The Role of Music in Apartheid

Amandala! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony (Film)

Final Projects for graduating seniors

4th reflection paper and final critique for art event due for graduating seniors

May

3:Exam Day- 6:30- 9:00pm- Presentation of final projects

All 4th reflection Papers & Final Art Event Critiques Due

Tickets for Dayton Contemporary Dance Company can be purchased at the Highsmith Union Box Office (M-Fri 9-9 Sat & Sun 2-6) You can attend either Feb 13 or 14th- @ 8pm be sure to keep your tix stub as proof of attendance- \$6 w student id

Tickets for Wrestling Season on Feb 22 can be purchased at the Theater Box office- 10-4pm- Carol Belk Theater- They go on sale one week before the show opens- \$5 (232-2291)