Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Contemporary Art
AHIS 363m

Spring 2013
T/Th 12:30-1:50 pm, VKC 102
Discussion sections:
Friday 9:00-9:50 and 10:00-10:50, VKC 261
4 units

Dr. Catherine E. Anderson
Office Hours: T 2:30-3:30 and by appointment
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Lynn Hershman, Roberta Breitmore’s Construction Chart, 1975

From Pop Art of the 1960s to today’s multicultural, international exhibitions, contemporary visual culture often deals with issues of race, gender, and sexuality. This course examines these themes through lectures, discussions, and field trips to local galleries and museums, bringing to life struggles over identity and conflicts with censorship faced by many artists. Through critical analyses of photography, painting, installations, performance, and other forms of visual culture, we’ll investigate topics such as art and activism, the role of representation in civil rights and feminist movements, and the politics of public art. By considering the body in art and the body as art, we’ll engage with a range of progressive material that challenges and transgresses social expectations, including works by political dissidents and outsider art.
Required textbooks, available at the USC Bookstore:

Michael D. Harris, *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation*

Jayne Wark, *Radical Gestures: Feminism and Performance Art in North America*

Jennifer A. González, *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art*

Additionally, you will need to purchase the course reader, available at University Graphics (a.k.a. Magic Machines), in University Village (3309 S. Hoover St.)

Recommended textbooks:

Lucy Lippard, *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America*

Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, eds., *The Power of Feminist Art: The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact*

Course requirements and grading (all requirements must be completed to pass the course):

- Participation in discussions (in sections and in class): 20%
- Midterm exam (February 26): 20%
- Group presentation (weeks 11-13): 20%
- Visual analysis paper (4-6 pages, due April 30): 15%
- Final exam (May 15, 2:00-4:00 pm): 25%

Your regular attendance and active, engaged participation are crucial to your success in this course. Please come to class having completed the assigned readings, and be prepared to ask and answer questions on the day’s topics, both during lectures and discussion sections. Your TA is Kay Wells; her e-mail is katharlw@usc.edu.

Note: There will be NO make-up exams and NO work accepted late, except in the case of a legitimate and documented emergency.

Grading Criteria:

Evaluation of exams, papers, and in-class performance is designed to assess knowledge and understanding of the major concepts of the course, as well as the ability to apply and engage critically with these concepts. The following guidelines will be used to assess letter grades for examinations, presentations, written assignments, and in-class participation:

A: In all aspects, an excellent performance. Each element of the assignment is completely fulfilled and demonstrates a firm grasp of the subject matter. Writing style is lucid and persuasive, and ideas presented orally or in writing are thoughtfully supported with appropriate evidence.
B: Most aspects of the assignment fulfilled, but missing one key element or several minor elements. B level work does show some critical grasp of the material, but fails to demonstrate some manner of intellectual or creative engagement with the subject.

C: Fulfills only the most basic demands of the assignment, and misses at least one key element and several minor elements. C level writing is typically weak, and arguments sloppy and unsupported.

D: Poor performance with several elements missing. Only a rudimentary grasp of the subject matter is indicated.

F: Failure to meet any goals of the assignment.

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**Schedule of topics and readings:**

All readings may be found in the required texts and course reader.

*Please note that assigned readings must be completed before each class where they are listed.*

**Week 1**

**Tuesday, January 15:** Course introduction; constructions of race in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

**Thursday, January 17:** Constructions of race in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries continued

Read: Harris 1-37

**Week 2**

**Tuesday, January 22:** Stereotypes of blackness in the nineteenth century

Read: Harris 39-82

**Thursday, January 24:** Aunt Jemimas and Jezebels: the image of the black woman in modern and contemporary art

Read: Harris 83-147

**Week 3:**

**Tuesday, January 29:** The Harlem Renaissance

Read: Harris 150-187
Thursday, January 31: Race and ethnicity in Nazi Germany: *Entartete Kunst*

**Film:** *Degenerate Art*

Read: excerpts from Stephanie Barron, ed., “*Degenerate Art*: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany” (Barron, Mosse, Guenther)

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**Week 4**

Tuesday, February 5: African American images in contemporary visual culture

Read: Harris 189-258

Thomas McEvilley, “Primitivism in the Works of an Emancipated Negress”

Thursday, February 7: Meet with groups in class

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**Week 5**

Tuesday, February 12: African American images in contemporary visual culture, continued

Read: excerpts from bell hooks, *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics*

Thursday, February 14: Feminism in the 1960s and the beginnings of feminist art

Read: Wark 1-57

Linda Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?”

Recommended: Broude and Garrard, *The Power of Feminist Art*

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**Week 6**

Tuesday, February 19: Feminist art, performance, and identity

Read: Wark 58-85, 124-164

Thursday, February 21: The body as art: Yoko Ono’s *Cut Piece*; Orlan’s operations/performances

Read: Julia Bryan-Wilson, “Remembering Yoko Ono’s *Cut Piece***

Michelle Hirschhorn, “Orlan: Artist in the Post-Human Age of Mechanical Reincarnation: Body as Ready (to be Re-) Made”
Week 7

Tuesday, February 26: Midterm exam

Thursday, February 28: Meet with groups in class

Week 8

Tuesday, March 5: Tuesday, March 26: Film and discussion: Basquiat

Thursday, March 7: Film and discussion: Basquiat, continued

Read: Adam Gopnik, “Madison Avenue Primitive”

bell hooks, “Altars of Sacrifice: Re-membering Basquiat,” from *Art on My Mind* 35-48

Week 9

Tuesday, March 12: California African American Museum visit (to be confirmed)

Thursday, March 14: Pop art and sexual identities

Read: Cécile Whiting, “The Erotics of the Built Environment”

David McCarthy, “Andy Warhol’s Silver Elvises: Meaning through Context at the Ferus Gallery in 1963”

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 18-23

Week 10

Tuesday, March 26: TBA

Thursday, March 28: Meet with groups in class

Week 11

Tuesday, April 2: The body as art: Ana Mendieta (group presentation)

Read: Kaira M. Cabañas, “Ana Mendieta: ‘Pain of Cuba, body I am’”

Anne Raine, “Embodied Geographies: Subj ectivity and Materiality in the Work of Ana Mendieta”

Performing race and gender: Adrian Piper (group presentation)

Read: John P. Bowles, “Adrian Piper as African American Artist”
John P. Bowles, “‘Acting like a Man’: Adrian Piper’s Mythic Being and Black Feminism in the 1970s”

Thursday, April 4: The subject of race in installation art, part 1: James Luna and Fred Wilson (group presentations)

Read: González 22-119

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Week 12

Tuesday, April 9: Race and installation art, part 2: Amalia Mesa-Bains and Pepón Osorio (group presentations)

Read: González 120-202

Thursday, April 11: Race and installation art, part 3: Renée Green (group presentation)

Read: González 204-249

The many identities of Cindy Sherman (group presentation)

Read: Mira Schor, “Backlash and Appropriation,” from The Power of Feminist Art

Betsy Sussler, “An Interview with Cindy Sherman”

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Week 13

Tuesday, April 16: Addressing gender in text and image: Barbara Kruger (group presentation)

Read: Ann Goldstein, “Bring in the World”

Rosalyn Deutsche, “Breaking Ground: Barbara Kruger’s Spatial Practice”

Playing with history in a postcolonial context: Yinka Shonibare (group presentation)

Read: Nancy Hynes and John Picton, “Yinka Shonibare”

Yinka Shonibare, “Of Hedonism, Masquerade, Carnivalesque and Power: A Conversation with Okwui Enwezor”

Thursday, April 18: Confronting tradition in contemporary Asian American art: Hung Liu and Do-hu Suh (group presentations)

Read: Mary H. Fong, “Images of Women in Traditional Chinese Painting”
Allison Arieff, “Cultural Collisions: Identity and History in the Work of Hung Liu”

Reading on Do-ho Suh TBA

Week 14

Tuesday, April 23: Sexuality and censorship: visualizing the body during the AIDS crisis—Robert Mapplethorpe, Keith Haring, David Wojnarowicz, Andres Serrano, Felix Gonzales-Torres, Gilbert and George

Read: Richard Meyer, “The Jesse Helms Theory of Art”


Miwon Kwon, “The Becoming of a Work of Art: FGT and a Possibility of Renewal, a Chance to Share, a Fragile Truce”

Thursday, April 25: Postcolonial identities

Read: Niru Ratnam, “Art and Globalisation”

Recommended: Lippard, Mixed Blessings

Week 15

Tuesday, April 30: Visual analysis papers due; discussion

Thursday, May 2: Review for final exam

Study Days: April 28-May 1

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2:00-4:00 PM

Please note: this schedule is subject to change in the event of unforeseen circumstances and according to the needs of the class.

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Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.
Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.