



French Visual Culture, 1789–1914

[Course Number(s)] | MW, [Time] | [Location]

Instructor: Kaylee Alexander (kaylee.alexander@duke.edu)

Office Hours: [Time] | [Location], or by appointment

Curricular Codes: ALP & R

Course Description

French society in the nineteenth century was steeped in spectacle. Bearing witness to the carefully orchestrated theatre of the guillotine in the wake of the Revolution, the invention of photography, and the rise of public entertainments, it was an era in which people sought to see and to be seen on a previously unmatched scale. The purpose of this course will be to investigate spaces of conflict, entertainment, violence, sex, and everything in between. Organized spatially and chronologically, students will explore a variety of sites (the illustrated press, the Paris Morgue, the brothel, the panorama, etc.), developing an intimate knowledge of the spectrum of visual cultures existing in France from the start of the French Revolution in 1789 to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. This course is intended for majors and non-majors alike, and no prerequisites are required.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Describe and discuss categories of visual culture in nineteenth-century France in relation to historical and theoretical contexts.
2. Evaluate the role of spectacle, the spectacular, and spectatorship in visual cultural debates.
3. Compose a research paper that critically investigates an aspect of visual culture in France between 1789 and 1914.

Required Texts

Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przblyski, eds. *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004. (ISBN: 978-0415308663)

Vanessa R. Schwartz. *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998. (ISBN: 978-0520221680)

All additional readings are posted in Resources on Sakai.

Graded Assignments

*All assignments are to be submitted as PDF attachments via the assignments page of Sakai. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due by **11:50pm** on the designated due date.*

Reading Logs: In advance of each class, students will prepare a Reading Log for one of the texts that they have read for that session. Using the template in the Resources folder of Sakai, students will summarize the author's main argument(s) and identify three pieces of supporting evidence. For maximum credit (✓+), students may also evaluate the author's claims in the context of previous readings. Logs are due the evening **before** the class for which reading has been assigned, and will be used to facilitate in-class discussion. Students must complete at least 15 of the 20 possible logs.

Material Analysis (due Feb. 11): Students will write a material analysis (600–800 words, approx. 2–4 pages) of an object or site relevant to 19th-century French visual culture. The object or site that is chosen may or may not be related to the student's Final Research Paper. While students are encouraged to write about objects/sites they can consult in person, this is not expected nor required. This is not a research paper, and outside sources should be used minimally. A guide to writing a material analysis and a grading rubric for this assignment are available under Resources in Sakai.

Midterm Exam (Mar. 6): The in-class Midterm Exam will be held on March 6th in our regular class meeting room. This exam will consist of three sections: **1)** definition of key terminologies, **2)** slide identifications, and **3)** one essay question. Additional details of the exam will be discussed in class two weeks prior to the exam date.

Research Proposal (due Mar. 18): Using the suggested template available in the Resources folder of Sakai, students will propose the topic of their final research paper. Proposals will include a 1–2 page description of the topic identifying the key questions to be addressed, specific objects or sites (with images) to be discussed, and how the paper relates to material from the course. In addition, students will include a bibliography of at least ten scholarly sources (books, chapters, journal articles, etc.) to be used in the paper. Students will be required to meet with the instructor to discuss their Research Proposals within one week of submission.

Final Research Paper (due May 1): In consultation with the instructor, students will develop and write a Research Paper (3000–4000 words, approx. 10–14 pages) addressing a key issue in 19th-century French visual culture. Detailed assignment guidelines and a grading rubric are available under Resources in Sakai, and will be discussed in class the week after Spring Break.

Students are invited to submit 1 draft of their Final Research Paper in any stage of completion up to two weeks before the due date (**by April 17th**). The instructor will provide feedback on the draft within 3 business days of receipt. Drafts submitted any time after **11:50pm on April 17th** will not be read, however the instructor will be available to discuss questions related to paper development during office hours.

Course Policies

Grading:

Class Participation & Reading Logs	15%
Material Analysis	15%
Midterm Exam	25%
Research Proposal (10%) & Final Paper (35%)	45%

Reading Logs will be graded daily with a ✓+, ✓, or ✓-. Receiving a ✓+ for a Reading Log is only possible if the evaluation of the author's argument has been included. Any Logs that are not turned in on time will receive 0 credit. Likewise, students will receive a zero for Participation on days of unexcused absences (in excess of the two permitted). The first two unexcused absences, and any university-approved absences, will not factor into the student's grade.

All other assignments will receive a letter grade. Students should not expect to receive an A for merely completing the assignment. Perfect scores are rare and reserved for outstanding performance only.

A	Exceptional	C+	Average
A-	Excellent	C/C-	Satisfactory
B+	Very Good	D	Needs Significant Improvements
B/B-	Good	F	Failing/Unsatisfactory

Note: While the instructor is happy to meet with students during office hours to explain grading, grades will not be changed and work may not be redone for higher scores.

Participation: While lecturing will be necessary at times, the instructor finds that students achieve learning outcomes best by doing. For this reason, individual class sessions may consist of lectures, group discussions, and/or research and writing workshops. In order to effectively achieve learning outcomes, students are expected to come to class prepared to take notes, discuss readings, offer relevant commentary on course material, and complete all in-class exercises.

Attendance: Each student may have up to 2 unexcused absences. If class is to be missed due to a university-approved absence (illness, religious observation, athletic travel, etc.), the student must inform the instructor by submitting appropriate documentation in advance of class. Students are responsible for completing missed work within one week of the missed class, and for arranging to obtain missed notes from other students in the class. **Arriving 15 or more minutes late to class counts as one unexcused absence.**

Taking Notes & Using Electronics: Students are expected to take hand-written notes, which has been proven more effective for retaining information.¹ Further, all course notes should be kept together and brought to each class to facilitate studying and referencing of past information. Laptops, tablets and phones are not permitted in class.

Late Policy: Extensions to assignment deadlines will not be granted, and late submissions will not be accepted.

¹ See, for example, Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, "The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking," *Psychological Science* 25, no. 6 (2014): 1159–1168.

Formatting & Citations: All written work should be formatted in 12pt font, double-spaced, and with 1-inch margins. Please use footnotes to cite your sources and include a bibliography at the end of the paper, formatted according to the [Chicago Manual of Style](#). Be sure to also include any relevant images (with figure numbers and captions) of objects, sites, etc. that you make reference to in your text. See resources below for links to citation guides, or contact the instructor with any questions you may have.

Academic Integrity

The “Duke Community Standard” states: “Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and non-academic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity. To uphold the Duke Community Standard:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;
- I will conduct myself honorably in all my endeavors; and
- I will act if the Standard is compromised.”²

Disability Statement

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in the class are encouraged to contact the Student Disabilities Access Office at 919.668.1267 or disabilities@aes.duke.edu as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Office Hours

Students are encouraged to come by freely during office hours to clarify course material, discuss assignments, or address general academic concerns. If unable to attend office hours, students may email the instructor to request an alternate meeting time.

Preferred Contact

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor via email (kaylee.alexander@duke.edu) with any questions or comments. Expect a response within one business day of email delivery.

Resources

Citation Guides

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

<https://sites.google.com/a/colgate.edu/colgatevr/citing-images/citing-images-chicago>

Thompson Writing Studio

<https://twp.duke.edu/twp-writing-studio/appointments/what-to-expect>

<https://twp.duke.edu/twp-writing-studio/resources-students>

Lilly Library

https://guides.library.duke.edu/prf.php?account_id=33359

² See “Duke Community Standard,” Office of Student Conduct, Duke University, accessed November 1, 2017, <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/conduct/about-us/duke-community-standard>.

Proposed Course Schedule

Readings and Reading Logs are to be completed in advance of each session for which they are assigned.

VCR = The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader; SR = Spectacular Realities

Week 1

Jan. 9 (W) – Introduction: What is Visual Culture?

Readings:

M. Wilson (2004), VCR Chapter 3.

S. Alpers, et al. (1996), “Visual Culture Questionnaire.”

Week 2

Jan. 14 (M) – The Guillotine

Readings:

L. Graybill (2016), “The Guillotine in Perspective.”

S. O’Rourke (2016), “Beholder, Beheaded: Theatrics of the Guillotine and the Spectacle of Rupture.”

Jan. 16 (W) – The Revolutionary Festival

Readings:

M. Ozouf (1975), “Space and Time in the Festivals of the French Revolution.”

I. Junyk (2008), “Spectacles of Virtue: Classicism, Waxworks and the Festivals of the French Revolution.”

Week 3

Jan. 21 (M) – **NO CLASSES (MLK DAY)**

Jan. 23 (W) – What is Material Analysis?

Readings [no log due]:

D. Morgan (unpublished), “A Guide to Material Analysis.”

V. Schwartz (1998), SR Introduction.

V. Schwartz and J. Przyblyski (2004), VCR Chapter 1.

Week 4

Jan. 28 (M) – The Salon

Readings:

P. Mainardi (1994), “Pictures to See and Pictures to Sell.”

S. Siegfried (2015), “Salon and Early Republican Experiments in State Patronage.”

M. Marrinan (2009), “Staying In: The Culture and Cliques of Paris Salons.”

Jan. 30 (W) – The Art Dealer

Readings:

N. Green (1989), “Circuits of Production, Circuits of Consumption: The Case of Mid-Nineteenth-Century French Art Dealing.”

S. Adams (2013), “‘Noising Things Abroad’: Art, Commodity, and Commerce in Post-Revolutionary Paris.”

Week 5

Feb. 4 (M) – The Brothel

Readings:

- L. Choquette (1997), “Degenerate or Degendered? Images of Prostitution and Homosexuality in the French Third Republic.”
- A. Corbin (1986), “Commercial Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century France: A System of Images and Regulations.”

Feb. 6 (W) – The Morgue

Readings:

- A. Mitchell (1976), “The Paris Morgue as a Social Institution in the Nineteenth Century.”
- V. Schwartz (1998), SR Chapter 2.
- E. Zola (1867), *Thérèse Raquin* Chapter XIII. **[cannot be chosen for a Reading Log]**
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/6626/6626-h/6626-h.htm>

Week 6

Feb. 11 (M) – The Museum

Readings:

- A. McClellan (1988), “The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror.”
- A. McClellan (1994), Introduction of *Inventing the Louvre*.
- D. Sherman (1987), VCR Chapter 17.

Assignment Due: Material Analysis (600–800 words)

Feb. 13 (W) – The Print Seller

Readings:

- R. Taws (2007), “Trompe-l’Oeil and Trauma: Money and Memory after the Terror.”
- P. Mainardi (2017), “Drawing’s Stepchild: Lithography and Caricature.”

Week 7

Feb. 18 (M) – The Illustrated Press

Readings:

- P. Mainardi (2017), “Spreading the News: The Illustrated Press.”
- K. Barnhurst and J. Nerone (2001), “Civic Picturing: The Regime of Illustrated News, 1856–1901.”
- T. Gretton (2000), “Difference and Competition: the Imitation and Reproduction of Fine Art in a Nineteenth-century Illustrated Weekly News Magazine.”

Feb. 20 (W) – Library Resources Workshop **[class meets at Lilly Library]**

Week 8

Feb. 25 (M) – The Diorama and the Panorama

Readings:

- J. Crary (2002), "Géricault, the Panorama, and Sites of Reality in the Early Nineteenth Century."
V. Schwartz (1998), SR Chapter 4.
S. Thomas (2008), "Making Visible: The Diorama, the Double, and the Gothic Subject."

Feb. 27 (W) – The Wax Museum

Readings:

- M. Bloom (2003), "A Brief History of Wax."
L. Graybill (2016), "A Proximate Violence: Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors."
V. Schwartz (1998), SR Chapter 3.

Week 9

Mar. 4 (M) – Midterm Exam Review

Mar. 6 (W) – **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 10

Mar. 11 (M) – **NO CLASSES (SPRING BREAK)**

Mar. 13 (W) – **NO CLASSES (SPRING BREAK)**

Week 11

Mar. 18 (M) – The Opera and the Theatre

Readings:

- S. Hibberd (2013), "*Le Naufrage de la Méduse* and Operatic Spectacle in 1830s Paris."
A. Mungen (2001), "Entering the Musical Picture: Richard Wagner and 19th-Century Multimedia Entertainments."
G. Cogeval and B. Avanzi, eds. (2010), "Romanticism" in *Drama and Desire*.

Assignment Due: Research Proposal

Students must also schedule the required meeting with the instructor to discuss proposals. A sign-up sheet will be distributed via email before class on this day.

Mar. 20 (W) – The Photographer's Studio

Readings:

- S. Kracauer (1927), VCR Chapter 9.
W. Benjamin (1936), VCR Chapter 10.
S. Bann (2009), "'When I Was a Photographer': Nadar and History."
E. McCauley (1994), "Photographers: Images and Realities."

Week 12

Mar. 25 (M) – The City

Readings:

- V. Schwartz (1998), SR Chapter 1.
- G. Simmel (1903), VCR Chapter 6.
- W. Benjamin (1969), “Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century.”
- M. Marrinan (2009), “The City as Witness and Battlefield.”

Mar. 27 (W) – The Cemetery

Readings:

- P. Nora (1989), VCR Chapter 26.
- N. Pantano (1997), “Liberal Politics and the Parisian Cemetery: David d’Angers and Léon Vaudoyer’s Monument to General Foy, 1825–1831.”
- T. Kselman (1993), “From Churchyard to Cemetery.”

Week 13

Apr. 1 (M) – The Cinema

Readings:

- V. Schwartz, SR Chapter 5 and Conclusion.
- G. Weisberg (2010), “The Early Naturalist Cinema: Mass Media and Painting Traditions.”
- R. Gordon (2001), “From Charcot to Charlot: Unconscious Imitation and Spectatorship in French Cabaret and Early Cinema.”

Watch: “Les victims de l’alcoolisme” (Ferdinand Zecca, 1902 [5:43])

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWAYZ_00vi4&t=6s

Watch: “Le Voyage dans la lune” (Georges Méliès, 1902 [12:51])

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_FrdVdKlxUk

Apr. 3 (W) – The Department Store

Readings:

- K. Marx (1867), VCR Chapter 5.
- M. Miller (1981), *The Bon Marché*, pp. 3–74.
- M. Clausen (1984), “Department Stores and Zola’s ‘Cathédrale du Commerce Moderne.’”

Week 14

Apr. 8 (M) – The Train

Readings:

- W. Schivelbusch (1977), VCR Chapter 14.
- N. Green (1990), *The Spectacle of Nature*, pp. 80–94.

Apr. 10 (W) – The Countryside

Readings:

- N. Green (1990), *The Spectacle of Nature*, pp. 1–16 & 153–186.

Spring 2019

Week 15

Apr. 15 (M) – Student Research Roundtable 1

Apr. 17 (W) – Student Research Roundtable 2

Week 16

Apr. 22 (M) – Student Research Roundtable 3 [depending on class size]

Apr. 24 (W) – Conclusion: What is Nineteenth-Century French Visual Culture?

****May 1 (W) – Final Research Paper due by 11:50pm****