

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Art and Design
Department of History of Art and Material Culture
HAMC 3305, Semester 2, 2002-3
Module Leader: Emily Baines

STUDIES IN MATERIAL CULTURE: CONTEMPORARY CRAFTS

Contents

Introduction	p. 2
Learning Outcomes	p. 2
Teaching and Learning	p. 2
Timetable	p. 3
Assessment:	p. 4
Notes On Assessment	p. 4
Coursework Deadlines	p. 5
Exhibition Review	p. 5
Seminar Presentation	p. 5
Essay	p. 8
Referencing and Bibliographies	p. 10
Notes on Plagiarism	p. 11
Bibliography	p. 11
Appendix: Assessment Sheets	p. 22

Introduction

This module will examine issues raised by contemporary craft production. Students will engage in debates on the significance of skill and creativity in defining the crafts; the distinction between art and craft; function and decoration in the crafts; the relation to industry and use of technology; the relevance of vernacular tradition; the relation between professional status and amateur handicrafts; and the ethics of sustainable production. The module will take a global perspective on these issues, with particular involvement from specialists in South Asian crafts. The issues are also situated in relation to critical theory of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Modernism and Postmodernism. We will also consider the broader relation of craft to society, covering gender and class issues; access to and emphasis in education; the role of museum/ gallery displays; interpretation of social, political and

religious meanings and the relation of making to theory. The economic and structural context is examined, particularly the influence of government, commercial and institutional patronage on craft; issues of global trade and international aid; retail and marketing of crafts. Students will be encouraged to respond to the challenge of writing critically about the crafts, with analysis of the writings of key crafts theorists, review of current crafts exhibitions and discussion of the work of practitioners.

[\(Back to contents list\)](#)

Learning Outcomes

As a result of studying this module, you should have:

- An understanding of key concepts and issues relating to craft production.
- An appreciation of the cultural, political and economic context of craft production in a range of societies.
- A greater knowledge of craft objects and craft history, particularly in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.
- Skills of critical analysis and interpretation of craft objects.
- An improvement in your confidence and skills in giving public presentations.
- An ability to research in depth, select and analyse material.

[\(Back to contents list\)](#)

Teaching and Learning

The format of the module is based on the separate elements of lectures, seminars and personal tutorials. The lecture programme will introduce key concepts and theoretical approaches to contemporary crafts practice and to craft production as material culture. Formal lectures will be complemented with workshop discussion and activities, visits by students to exhibitions and student presentations. The student is expected to read around the issues discussed in lectures (developing a familiarity with crafts theory) and to maintain an active interest in crafts literature and the media for discussion of relevant issues.

The module leader is Emily Baines, based in room G4.3G (telephone ext. 7417, email EBaines@dmu.ac.uk). Richard Fynes (office in G4.3D, at the end of the corridor) will also be teaching on the module. Tutorial appointments can be booked in the seminar or on the list outside G4.3G. Notes to notify of absence, etc., can be put under the door of G4.3G or given to Kathleen Proffitt (the HAMC secretary) who will forward them to the staff pigeonholes. Her office is in G6.3H (telephone 0116 2506371). She is available in the afternoons: if a problem occurs in the morning, leave a phone message, email or talk to Jenny Jones in G6.2A.

[\(Back to contents list\)](#)

Timetable

Week 1	Lecture:	Introduction to Module: Craft Definitions
	Seminar:	Discussion; introduction to text analysis
Week 2	Lecture:	The Arts and Crafts Movement and the Ethics of Production
	Seminar:	Workshop discussion; text analysis discussion
Week 3	Lecture:	Social and Religious Context: Craft in S.E. Asia
	Seminar:	Research methods; exhibition review analysis
Week 4	Lecture:	Vernacular Tradition
	Seminar:	Workshop discussion; presentation preparation
Week 5	Lecture:	Modernism and the Function Debate
	Seminar:	Presentations; workshop discussion
Week 6	Lecture:	Influence and Inspiration: Other Cultures
	Seminar:	Design Analysis; workshop discussion
Week 7	Lecture:	Political Intervention and Patronage
	Seminar:	Presentations; workshop discussion
Week 8	Lecture:	Gender
	Seminar:	Presentations; workshop discussion
Week 9	Lecture:	Craft, Decoration and Art
	Seminar:	Presentations; workshop discussion; essay preparation
Week 10	Lecture:	Consumption, Marketing and Cultural Value
	Seminar:	Presentations; workshop discussion
Week 11	Lecture:	Case Study: Khatri Embroidery
	Seminar:	Presentations; workshop discussion; feedback
EASTER		
Week 12	Lecture:	The Status and Presentation of Crafts in the Museum
	Seminar:	Discussion

[\(Back to contents list\)](#)

Assessment

The assessed components of this module are:

	Weighting
Seminar Presentation	30%
Exhibition Review	20%
Essay	50%

Assessment criteria for the presentation, report and essay is indicated in the mark sheets provided in Appendix A. Written work should be handed in for assessment at the Faculty Reception (Ground Floor, Fletcher Building, by the bike stands, before you come to the Health Centre and courtyard). Make sure that a coversheet (with two coloured carbons) is attached to your work and is signed and dated by the Faculty receptionist. It should state the module leader (Emily Baines), module number (HAMC 3305), programme title (your degree: Ceramics and Glass, Decorative Artefacts, etc.) and the assignment title (essay or exhibition review). The work itself should also be clearly marked with your name, your module tutor, module name and module code (in case the coversheet is lost). It is also important to keep a copy of your work.

If having problems with the work, see your module tutor before the deadline! If you are ill or have other personal difficulties, an extension can be arranged. Evidence of mitigating circumstances (such as a doctor's note) should be provided, if possible. Students with dyslexia will also be given extensions, if needed. Note that if the work is late, without an extension, marks will be deducted according to HAMC regulations (10 marks deducted if within one week late: after one week, the work can be failed). If there are mitigating circumstances that resulted in non-completion of the module (e.g. essay not handed in or very late), the circumstances should be explained to the module tutor. An Extenuating Circumstances form must be filled in and relevant evidence forwarded to the Faculty committee via the Fletcher Faculty office. Check the deadline for these forms if there is any possibility of finding yourself in this situation! If the module is failed due to failure of the presentation, report or essay, you will be required to resubmit the failed work (if it is the presentation, a presentation report is submitted).

Deadlines

Exhibition Review deadline: Wednesday 12th March (Week 7)

Presentation: **On the date specified by your tutor.** If the presentation is not given on the correct date, a later slot will be given. In this case, 10 marks will be deducted for lateness, unless an extension has been given due to illness or other serious mitigating circumstances.

Essay deadline: Thursday 8th May 2003 (Week 13)

Exhibition Review

This is a 1,000-1,500 word review of a contemporary craft exhibition you have visited. The exhibition review should demonstrate visual literacy, ability to analyse and compare craft objects, an understanding of museological issues of display and an ability to apply relevant theoretical issues.

It should cover:

- The overall aim of the exhibition. How do you know this? Compare aims stated in text panels/catalogues with their achievement in the exhibition and the validity of these aims.
- An analysis of the layout of the exhibition, to indicate the structure and semiotics of the display. Consider how well the objects are displayed, the criteria for selection of objects, the professionalism shown and any points relevant to curatorial/ exhibition management decisions.

- Analysis of the craft objects themselves (aesthetic quality, style/ approach of maker, skill, etc.).
What is the basis of your critical response or qualitative judgements of the objects?
- Context and significance. Are there any relevant craft issues or theory? Does it relate to any social or political issue or context? Does the work relate to a contemporary style/ trend or movement within that craft or design generally? Is there any wider significance to the exhibition, or is the only significance the changes to the maker's previous work?

Try to provide illustrations of the exhibition, either photographs or postcards. Take notes of any text panel information and get copies (if possible) of any catalogues, artist statements, etc. Note the layout of the exhibition: is there a particular narrative implied, or specific way to follow the exhibition? It is useful, if possible, to talk to the exhibition organiser and find out a bit more information about the criteria and process of selection, reason/ aims of exhibition, etc. If you do find this out, how evident is this from the final exhibition and the textual information available?

Presentation

Analyse a text and present the issues to the seminar group. The presentation should be about 10 minutes long, leading into general group discussion of the issues raised. Students will research the work of writers, thinkers and practitioners who have been influential on contemporary crafts, or texts that raise issues relevant to contemporary craft practice, and make presentations designed to promote debate. The seminar presentation should demonstrate the ability of the student to analyse and apply concepts to craft practice and to critically analyse texts. It also offers opportunities for peer and tutor feedback and to improve the professional quality of oral presentation skills. The text analysis should include:

- A statement of the bibliographical facts relevant to the text: author; title; editor if a collection of essays or commissioning editor if part of a series, the book, journal or series in which it appears; publisher; where published; date originally published and current edition of work if in book form, or details of journal number and date, if applicable. In what form does the text appear - an article in a journal or newspaper, an essay in an anthology, a complete book or a book commissioned as part of a series?
- State the **subject position** of the author, and the **context** in which the piece appears. For example, does the author speak as an expert in a particular discipline? Is the journal, book or series based on a particular discipline or theoretical approach? What is the context of publication. In the debates and events relevant to its publication?
- Consider the **type, approach and research quality** of the text. Is it a piece of academic research, thoroughly footnoted? Or a statement of opinion by a maker? How would you define it?
- Analyse the argument, picking out the key themes or **issues**. How does the author's views relate to the views of previous or contemporary writers on this issue? Question the evidence given by the writer to support their view. Do you agree with their views? It may be useful to show an OHP of a particular example used by the writer, to explain their argument.

- Relate the issue raised and viewpoint of the writer to current practice and work. Are the ideas **relevant to craft production today?** It is useful to bring OHPs of relevant examples or actual craft objects.
- Open the issue up to **debate** within the seminar group. Prepare questions for the group and lead a brief seminar debate on the issue/s raised. Is the issue relevant to all areas of craft production? Would it be relevant to industrial production?

Choice of Presentation Texts

Vernacular

Brouwer, J. *The Makers of the World: Caste, Craft and Mind of South Indian Artisans*, Oxford U. P., 1995.

Dean, D. 'A Slipware Dish by Samuel Malkin: An Analysis of Vernacular Design', *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1994, pp153-168.

Mayer, C. 'Shared Territory and Contested Spaces: An Anthropological Perspective', in Greenhalgh, P. (ed.) *The Persistence of Craft*, A. & C. Black (Publishers) Ltd., 2002, pp173-184.

Meuli, J. 'Writing About Objects We Don't Understand', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

Spooner, B. 'Weavers and Dealers: Authenticity and Oriental Carpets' in Appadurai, A. (ed) *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge U. P., 1992.

A & C/ Modernist Ethics of Craft

Ashbee, C.R. 'Decorative Art from a Workshop Point of View', 1889 in Ashbee, C.R. *Workshop Reconstruction and Citizenship: An Endeavour*, Garland Publishing, 1978 (reprint of 1894 publication).

Day, L. 'The Use In Ornament' chapter in Day, L. *Everyday Art*, Garland Publishing, 1977 (first published in 1882).

Leach, P. *A Potter's Book*, Faber & Faber, 1940.

Mairet, E. *Handweaving Today*, Faber & Faber, 1939.

Morris, W. 'The Lesser Arts' 1878 in *News From Nowhere and Selected Writings and Designs*, Penguin Books, 1962, pp84-105.

*Ruskin, J. 'On the Nature of Gothic' chapter or initial chapter in *The Stones of Venice*, DaCapo Press, 1985.

Staite Murray, W. 'Pottery from the Artist's Point of View', *Artwork*, Vol. 1, No. 4, May-August 1925.

Technology and Craft/ Industry Divisions

French, N. 'CAD/CAM and the British Ceramics Tableware Industry', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

*Pye, D. *The Nature and Art of Workmanship*, Cambridge University Press, 1968.

Greenhalgh, P. 'The Progress of Captain Ludd', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

Dormer, P. 'Textiles and Technology', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

Day, L. 'The Workman and his Tools' chapter in Day, L. *Everyday Art*, Garland Publishing, 1977 (first published in 1882).

Gender

Parker, R. *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine*, The Women's Press, 1984, chapter 1

Paper from Elinor, G. et al (eds.) *Women and Craft*, Virago, 1987.

Kirkham, P. 'Women and the Interwar Handicrafts Revival', *A View from the Interior*, pp174-183.

Paper on spinning from Jones, A.R. & Stallybrass, P. *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Day, L. 'To Ladies and Amateurs', in *Everyday Art*, Garland Publishing, 1977 (first published in 1882).

Sparke, P. 'Those Extravagant Draperies': Domesticity Contested, in Sparke, P. *As Long As It's Pink*, Harper Collins Publishers, 1995, pp (Ruskin, Eastlake and Design Reform).

Taziker, A. 'Sitting, Knitting and Serving: the Portrayal of Women in Industrial Museums', in Devonshire, A. & Wood, B. (eds) *Women in Industry and Technology from Prehistory to the Present Day: Current Research and the Museum Experience*, Museum of London, 1996.

Chapter from Anscombe, I. *A Woman's Touch: Women in Design From 1680 to the Present Day*, Virago, 1984.

Art/ craft role

*Dormer, P. 'The ideal world of Vermeer's little lacemaker', in Thackera, J. (ed.) *Design after Modernism*, Thames and Hudson, 1988.

Dormer, P. 'Craft and the Turing Test for Practical Thinking', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

Greenhalgh, P. 'The History of Craft', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

*Kenji, K. 'Studio Craft and Craftical Formations', in Greenhalgh, P. (ed.) *The Persistence of Craft*, A. & C. Black (Publishers) Ltd., 2002, pp28-36.

Metcalf, B. 'Craft and Art, Culture and Biology', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

'Potters of the 1920s', in Elinor, G. et al (eds.) *Women and Craft*, Virago, 1987.

Heslop, T.A. 'Hierarchies and Medieval Art', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

Marketing

*Hickey, G. 'Craft within a Consuming Society', in Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

Thomas, A. 'Craft Fairs';

Ross, C. 'Co-operative Craft on Arran';

Hobbs, J. 'The Bitter Fruit of Success: Creating a Craft Centre';

Kennard, J. 'Money and Success: Markets for Jewellery';

All from Elinor, G. et al (eds.) *Women and Craft*, Virago, 1987.

Herefordshire 'City of Living Crafts', 2002 marketing policy document

Essay

The essay should be of 2500-3000 words. It is intended to allow you to research in depth a specific topic of interest to you, in order to demonstrate knowledge, analytical ability and an understanding of relevant theoretical issues. If your interests are not covered by the questions below, a modified version or new question can be developed in discussion with the module tutor. Some of the questions are very broad, to allow for a wide range of interests, but will require a narrow period or limited number of contrasting examples to be chosen.

1. Compare 2 or 3 crafts people who could be considered part of the Arts and Crafts Movement and examine their practice and views on use of machines and the value of craft.
2. Compare the changing practice, products and ethical views of post-war designer/ makers in two different craft fields who have moved into batch or mass production.
3. Examine the way that the history of one craft during the 20th Century is presented in a range of sources: what are seen as the most important events, trends and makers? Why are they important to that writer – do they fit a particular theory or view of what is of aesthetic or social value? Are any groups of makers or types of work omitted or undervalued that you consider important?
4. Analyse a Decorative Arts museum exhibition and interpret the construction of value within craft history as shown in the display.
5. Examine an example of craft used to revive a local economy. Is it sustainable? How does it relate to regional craft traditions or cultural heritage?
6. Analyse the work of a craft person who worked in a foreign country and the way that a different way of working, social role and the 'foreign' artefacts themselves influenced them.
7. Analyse the political significance of a particular group or type of craft objects and explain the social and political context to their production.
8. How has the use of craft in schools, and the perception of its value in education, changed in the 20th century?
9. Consider the value of postmodern ideas and theory to two late 20th C. designer/ makers.
10. Compare the craft objects sold in a Craft Gallery and a Heritage Centre/ Visitor Centre shop or high street retailer. Why are they purchased – are the particular meanings or values for the consumer or in their function as a Gift different?

11. Examine the way that religion is relevant to the production and meanings of the craft work of a particular group of makers or the work of two makers.
12. Who do you consider to be significant in reviving or changing one craft field in the 20th Century? Choose one craftsman and analyse the key aspects of their views and practice and relate to contemporary debates and developments in the crafts/ design/ art worlds as relevant. Do not use someone that you have previously analysed in a HAMC essay.
13. Compare the response of two craft designers of different periods to gender issues and the gendered environment in which they worked.
14. Examine a particular 'handicraft' and the differences between the way that it is/ was presented, perceived and commercialised as an amateur or hobby craft compared to its production and sale as a professional craft product.
15. Analyse the debate on the role of craft as functional or art object during the 20th century, contrasting particular craft products and the way that they were presented.

Note: A high quality essay should have:

- Clarity of structure. A focused process of analysis of the design subject using key points, structured by section titles.
- A high quality of critical analysis, of the subject, theories or analytical methods used and sources. This should demonstrate comprehension of the subject and theory, particularly key concepts used. The best essays have a significant degree of insight and originality (not uncritically derivative of sources used).
- Thorough substantiation of statements in your analysis with evidence, well referenced.
- Thorough research, indicated in the bibliography and apparent as the basis of the essay. Ideally, you should have a good range of sources for each theoretical approach as well as subject sources.
- Quality of language and writing style. Make sure that you use formal, analytical language in academic essays. You should use the third person as far as possible (it, rather than I). Check the grammar and spelling.
- Presentation. Legibility and clarity of structure are most important. Word-process your essay if possible. Make sure the essay is securely fastened together or bound in a lightweight folder, but avoid putting pages in individual sleeves.

Referencing and Bibliographies

The following layout should be used in a bibliography:

Harrod, T. *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*, Yale University Press, 1999.

Articles should be listed as shown:

Dean, D. 'A Slipware Dish by Samuel Malkin: An Analysis of Vernacular Design', *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1994, pp153-168.

Citation is the system in which you give the source for quotes or key facts. You can reference works using footnotes or endnotes: a superscript number or a number in brackets is given at the end of a quote or the end of a sentence including key facts. This is linked to numbered footnotes (at the base of the page) or endnotes (at the end of the essay or article), as follows:¹ To avoid repetition of source details in footnotes, use *ibid.* (to indicate the same source as the one listed in the previous reference)² or *op. cit.* (to indicate a source that has been previously referenced, but not the one immediately before this one).³ Make sure that your references are all consecutively numbered (rather than numbered according to source).

Remember, you need to use footnotes/ endnotes when:

- a) You use a quote. State the person who said it, date and context if possible, as well as the source in which you found it.
- b) You give the views of anyone (or likes, influences, etc.), even when not in a quote.
- c) You give specific facts that need to be substantiated. For example, if you state figures, prices, dates or particularly surprising/ controversial information.
- d) You are using the ideas of a specific theorist, even if the theorist is not named in the discussion: preferably give the page reference, but if the ideas are basic to the source, just give that.

Note: Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious matter. A simple definition of plagiarism is "direct, unattributed quotation from the work of others", or in a word, "copying" the work of others. The University takes a very severe view of plagiarism, so briefly, DON'T DO IT!!

Misuse of academic conventions occurs when students may not adequately reference the material that they have used through ignorance of the correct procedures. Such misuse might involve not giving clear and accurate references to the material used in the assignment, or paraphrasing material without indicating the source, or quoting directly and failing to reference the source of the quoted passages or to place it in quotation marks. Misuse, or non-use, of academic conventions is a fault often encountered in the first year, when students are learning the 'tools of the trade.'

A much more serious matter is the misuse of the work of others with intent to deceive, and to gain an advantage by unfair means. Here "direct, unattributed quotation" from the work of others, or close paraphrasing without a reference to the source of the material, or even submitting the work of another student as your own are all very serious matters and you should NOT engage in them. You should note that where "extensive, direct, unattributed, quotation from the work of others" is found by staff in

¹ Bourdieu, P. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, p92.

² *Ibid.*, p70.

³ Harrod, T., *op. cit.*, p43.

an essay this will in itself be taken as evidence of intent to deceive, and this is what is meant by "Plagiarism".

Always give references.

Always acknowledge quotations.

Always take references for whatever notes you take.

Always write your material in your words.

[\(Back to contents list\)](#)

Bibliography

Craft Theory

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* Dormer, P. (ed.) *The Culture of Craft*, Manchester University Press, 1997.

* Harrod, T. *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*, Yale University Press, 1999.

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Design Ethics and Theory

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- Papanek, V. *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*, Thames and Hudson, 1991.
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Cultural Theory and Interpretation

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Authenticity, the Vernacular, Ethnicity and Orientalism

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[\(Back to contents list\)](#)

HAMC 3305: Contemporary Crafts

ASSESSMENT SHEET: EXHIBITION REVIEW

STUDENT NAME:

Tutor's Assessment

Level of critical analysis of exhibition aims, layout and relevant issues	
Quality of critical appreciation and analysis of craft objects	
Structure and sustained argument	
Contextual research / knowledge of subject demonstrated	
Effective use of visual aids	
Quality of written communication	
Further comments	

Semester Date:

Mark for consideration by the Subject Authority Board:

HAMC 3305: Contemporary Crafts

ASSESSMENT SHEET: PRESENTATION

STUDENT NAME:

Tutor's Assessment

Ability to critically analyse the theoretical approach and argument of text	
Ability to define subject position of author and context of text	
Ability in assessing the source material and evidence basis of text	
Contextual research into subject demonstrated	
Organisation of Material	
Verbal ability and presentation of material	
Ability in leading group discussion	
Further Comments	

Date of seminar presentation:

Mark for consideration by the Subject Authority Board:

HAMC 3305: Contemporary Crafts

ASSESSMENT SHEET: ESSAY

STUDENT NAME:

Tutor's Assessment

Level of critical analysis	
Structure and sustained argument	
Quality of research and bibliography	
Substantiation of statements with evidence / referencing.	
Effective use of visual aids	
Quality of written communication	
Further comments	

Semester Date:

Mark for consideration by the Subject Authority Board: