Amanda Depew

Junior Seminar

Final Project Outline

John Berger’s article is a reflection of historical art to contemporary times. It analyses people perceptions of other people, especially about their gender. *Ways of Seeing* illustrates people’s representation, and how others perceive them. It distinguishes the presence of men and women, as per societal outlook. Men are allowed to scrutinize women and not the other way around. Also, examination of women by their fellow women is acceptable. According to Berger, contemporary reproductions of works of art have altered the people’s perception of them, rendering them powerless and less meaningful, as compared to their significance in past civilizations.

Gender roles are a prominent theme in the article. Despite societal advancements, present day gender distinction is not so much different from the recent past. The quote ‘men act, women appear’, summarizes this concept (Berger, 1973). Potency is the measure of a man’s presence. On the other hand, the presence of a woman relates only to itself, and is not the external environment. Thus, a woman is subjective of the beholder's point of view. The woman figure is not representative of her capabilities, but rather, only self. Consequently, the self-consciousness of a woman is always on a high note. A woman is predestined to be cautious of her actions since they alone determine what other people think of her. A woman’s self-value originates from her depiction.

Women have assumed role, taking care of men, stems from the biblical representation of Adam and Eve. Thereon, a woman transforms into an object. It is through this biblical perception that women are rendered subservient to men. In the same manner, Eve fed Adam the apple, feminine illustrations in works of art feed an appetite other than theirs. Through this perception, women become insecure, since as objects, perfection is the only choice (Berger, 1973). Also, a man’s actions are just that, whereas the deeds of women are an indication of the kind of treatment she prefers. The title, *Ways of Seeing* illustrates the different ways masculinity and femininity is seen.

Bibliography

Berger, J. (1973). *Ways of seeing; a book made by John Berger*. New York: Viking Press.