

WAYS OF THINKING. SESSION .

CRITICAL THINKING. ESSAY WRITING SKILLS.

Estéfani Bouza: e.bouza-arnoso@uwtsd.ac.uk/ October 2024

SESSION OVERVIEW

We will begin today's session with a group activity. For this, we are going to do research and find out a definition of 'critical thinking'.

Then we will focus on writing skills. Some of the topics that we will cover are: assessment criteria, the purpose of an essay, formal language, and presentation skills.

RECAP FROM PREVIOUS SESSION

Some of the ideas that we discussed in our previous session:

ACTIVITY

Activity - 10min.

- What is critical thinking?
- Find a definition and discuss in groups why do you think it is an important skill in your education? Or maybe you do not think is important, what are your arguments one way or the other?

CRITICAL THINKING

- Critical thinking involves first discovering the who, what, when, where, and how things - finding answers.
- Critical thinking is an interactive process, one that demands participation on the part of the teacher and students alike.
- Critical thinking requires discernment. It is a way of approaching ideas that aims to understand core, underlying truths, not simply that superficial truth that may be most obviously visible.

CRITICAL THINKING

- Educational ethos - what makes a good education?
- What are your expectations of what you will be learning in this class?

Bell hooks in her book *Teaching Critical Thinking. Practical Wisdom* from 2010 writes: ‘a “good education” was not just one that would give us knowledge and prepare us for a vocation, it was also an education that would encourage an ongoing commitment to social justice [...]; (p. 1).

‘Their embodiment of both a superior intellect and an ethical morality shaped my sense of school as a place where the longing to know could be nurtured and grow’; (p. 1).

Help students to become self-directed learners.

CRITICAL THINKING

‘Thinking is an action. For all aspiring intellectuals, thoughts are the laboratory where one goes to pose questions and find answers, and the places where visions of theory and praxis come together. The heartbeat of critical thinking is the longing to know - to understand how life works. Children are organically predisposed to be critical thinkers’. (bell hooks, p.7).

WHAT IS AN ESSAY?

An essay is a piece of writing in which you present a reasoned argument in response to a particular question.

WHY AN ESSAY?

Because in an essay you have to demonstrate that you are capable of doing research, assessing information critically, and organising it in a clear structure.

WRITING AN ESSAY - REMINDER

Do not leave essay writing to the last minute. Writing is a practice that needs time to develop the same as your artistic practice. Ideas need time to generate and change.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

First stage. Revising brief and learning outcomes.

- Read the assignment brief and assessment criteria.
- Read the learning outcomes.

In these documents you will find the information of what exactly is expected from you for this module.

ASSIGNMENT BRIEF AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

DashboardMy modulesMoodle ArchivesUseful Links

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Estéfani Bouza FINE ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

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Final Submission Ways of Thinking - 13th December by 5pm

Hidden from students

Check your final draft ONLY, for similarities before submission

Hidden from students

ExLibris Leganto

Reading List for Ways of Thinking

Assessment Specification Ways of Thinking

PDF document

Referencing, Bibliography, Library Resources

Essays Examples

Introduction to Ways of Thinking

PDF document

Session 2. Representing and Reading the World around Us: Thoughts on Gathering.

PDF document

MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

After the completion of this module, you should be able to:

- Identify and discuss the diversity of approaches to understanding elements of cultural endeavour.
- Apply a range of critical theories to the analysis of any given cultural product.
- Make reference to academic sources by employing appropriate citation and referencing conventions.

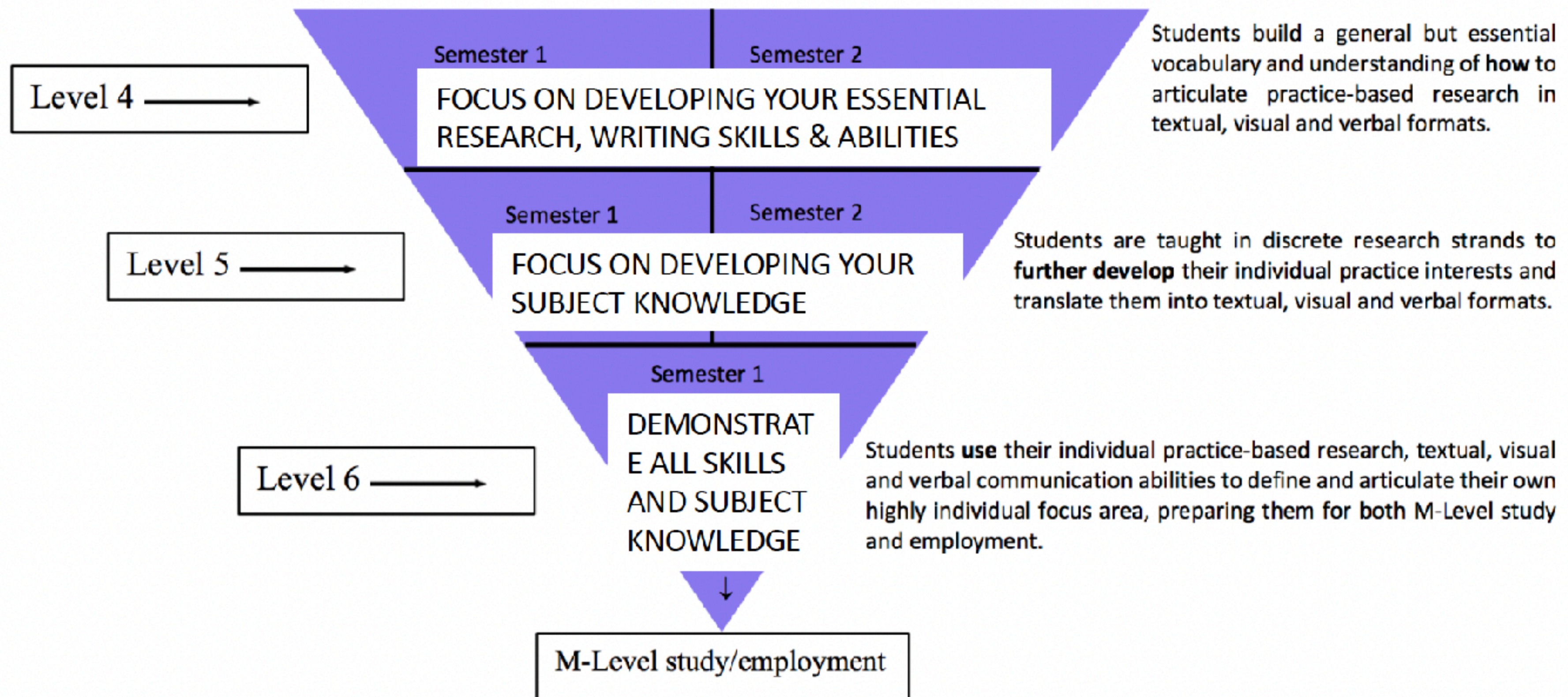
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Module 1: Ways of Thinking

1. Engagement with Literature Skills 40%
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills 10%
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills 10%
4. Practical Application Skills 30%
5. Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice 10%

Module 2: Ways of Perceiving

1. Engagement with Literature Skills 40%
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills 10%
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills 10%
4. Practical Application Skills 20%
5. Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice 20%



1. ENGAGEMENT WITH LITERATURE SKILLS 40%

1. Engagement with Literature Skills

Your work must be informed and supported by scholarly material that is *relevant* to and *focused* on the task(s) set. You should provide evidence that you have accessed an appropriate *range* of sources, which may be academic, governmental and industrial; these sources may include academic journal articles, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites. You should consider the *credibility* of your sources; academic journals are normally highly credible sources while websites require careful consideration/selection and should be used sparingly. Any sources you use should be current and up-to-date, mostly published within the last five years or so, though seminal/important works in the field may be older. You must provide *evidence* of your research/own reading throughout your work, using a suitable referencing system, including in-text citations in the main body of your work and a reference list at the end of your work.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

- *Show you can engage with a range of relevant literature.*
- *Use discussion, critique and referencing to demonstrate your awareness of key theories and concepts.*
- *Apply your referencing skills clearly and consistently.*

4. PRACTICAL APPLICATION SKILLS 30%

4. Practical Skills

At level 4, you should be able to apply the basic underlying concepts and principles to evaluate and interpret these within the context of your area of study. You should be able to demonstrate how the subject-related concepts and ideas relate to real world situations and/or a particular context. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in that context, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or solutions to solve problems, or to create artefacts. This is likely to involve, for instance, the use of real world artefacts, examples and cases, the application of a model within an organisation and/or benchmarking one theory or organisation against others based on stated criteria.

Guidance specific to this assessment:

- *Assimilate and apply the rules and criteria of the required format to your text.*
- *Organise information into a coherent framework which identifies a range of concepts and theories.*
- *Consistently apply referencing conventions to suit the required format.*

SUBMISSION - IMPORTANT NOTE

Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 40%. Over one week late 0%. Only the extenuating circumstances panel may approve a change to submission dates.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Essay writing. Choose one of the following questions and write a 1,500 word essay.

1. Identify and discuss two art movements and evaluate through their differences and similarities the worldviews and principles they propose.
2. De-construct the meaning of an artwork in relation to one of the politics of representation from the perspective of gender studies, the postcolonial condition or the visualisation of violence.
3. Applying a range of critical theories, identify and discuss an artwork of your own choosing.

All essays need to be fully referenced using Harvard Referencing and must include a bibliography of sources used such as books/ journals/ articles.

In week **seven**, **Tue 12 Nov 2024**, you will submit a draft 500 words for feedback.

In week **eleven**, **Tue 10 Dec 2024**, you will submit your 1,500 word text.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Second stage. Answer the essay question.

- Consider what it is being asked from you and answer the question. Try to not deviate from the question asked.
- What are you being asked and how are you planning to write about it?
- What are the key words in the essay and what do they mean?

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Second stage. Interpreting essay's questions.

To interpret an essay question identify the following:

- The topic or *what* you are being asked to write about.
- The process or *how* you are being asked to write about that topic.
- The scope or what you should and should not include.

Second stage. Interpreting essay's questions.

Essay writing: Choose one of the following questions and write a 1,500-word essay.

1. **De-construct** the meaning of an artwork in relation to the **politics of representation** from one of the following perspectives: **gender studies**, the **postcolonial condition** or the **ethics in the visualisation of violence**.
2. Applying a range of **critical theories**, which you need to state in your essay, **identify**, **discuss** and **evaluate** an artwork of your own choosing.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All essays need to be fully referenced using Harvard Referencing and must include a reference list with a minimum of 3-5 written academic sources used in your research such as books/ journals/ articles. Your chosen artwork needs to be contemporary, in this instance this includes any artwork produced in the last 24 years.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Second stage. Interpreting essay's questions.

Process in **bold**

Analyse: Look at something in close detail and depth; break down the component parts and explain how they relate to each other.

Contrast: Examine the differences between two or more arguments, theories or ideas; indicate if these differences are significant in any way and, if appropriate, say why one idea or argument may be preferable.

De-construct: Analyse an artwork by breaking it down in its constituent parts in order to re-interpret it.

Discuss: Provide the most important points/aspects of an idea or theory; give arguments for and against including criticisms and debate. Examine the implications of these arguments and criticism.

Identify: Indicate, recognise and distinguish specific aspects, theories or arguments.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Second stage. Interpreting essay's questions.

Process in **bold** - **OTHER EXAMPLES**

Account for: Give reason for, explain why something happens and provide supportive evidence.

Assess: Estimate the importance of something (giving a clear context).

Comment on: Identify the main issues by provide intellectual argument based on academic reading.

Consider: Take into account.

Critically evaluate/analyse/discuss: If you are asked to 'critically' evaluate, analyse or discuss a topic, you should apply the usual parameters of analysis, evaluation or discussion in your essay in addition to assessing which arguments, theories, models or ideas are preferable and/or introduce alternatives based on original, logical thought.

Criticise: Give your intellectual judgement and support this by a discussion of the available evidence.

Define: Give the precise meaning of something and, if relevant, demonstrate that you understand why the definition may be problematic.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Second stage. Interpreting essay's questions.

Process in **bold** - **OTHER EXAMPLES**

Describe: Provide the main characteristics or features; detail the main events.

Distinguish between: Identify and examine the differences between two (or more) contrasting and possibly confusable items.

Evaluate: Appraise the merit/worth, importance or usefulness of something using evidence; identify arguments for and against this appraisal.

Examine: Investigate, scrutinise and question in detail using all of the available evidence. If appropriate 'critically evaluate' the topic also.

Explain: Make clear how/why something happens, or why something is the way it is.

Illustrate: Give examples or use evidence to make an argument, theory or idea clear and explicit.

Interpret: Give meaning and relevance to data or other information, theories, ideas.

Justify: Give evidence to support an argument or idea; show adequate grounds for decisions or conclusions; make a case for a particular perspective or objection.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Second stage. Interpreting essay's questions.

Process in **bold** - **OTHER EXAMPLES**

Outline: Give only the main points, showing the main structure.

Relate: Explicitly show how two or more ideas, theories or arguments are similar or connected.

Review: Make a survey of; examine the subject carefully.

State: Provide the main features of something clearly and simply (like a simple list but expressed in full sentences).

Summarise: Give a concise account of the main points; avoid unnecessary details or examples. Similar to **outline**.

To what extent: Consider how far something is true or not, or contributes to a final outcome. The answer usually lies somewhere between 'completely' and 'not at all'.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Third stage. Generate ideas. Research.

- Are you familiar with the topic? Do you need to do research?
- Research go from general to specific and further reading.
- Anthology books dealing with the broad area of your topic and then move to more specialised literature.
- Use further reading that you will find in books.
- Check footnotes and bibliographies.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Third stage. Generate ideas. Research.

Writing a good essay involves doing a considerable amount of reading to gather examples and evidence to support the claims that you make in your essay.

Research would strengthen your arguments and you will learn about current debates so you are familiar with the topic and can use it later on.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

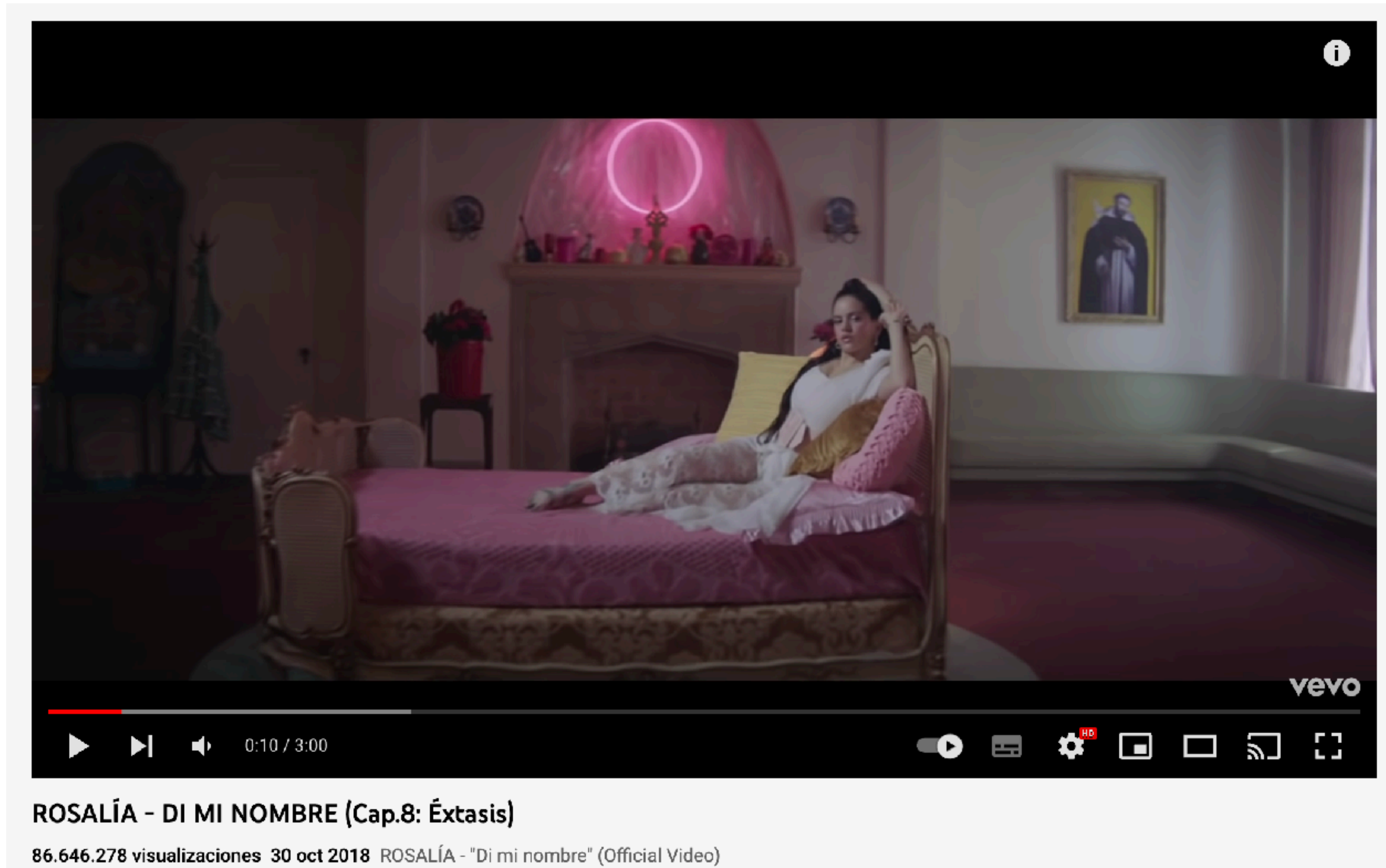
Third stage. Generate ideas. Research. Mind mapping.

ACTIVITY

Mind mapping for Rosalía.

3. Applying a range of **critical theories**, **identify** and **discuss** an **artwork** of your own choosing.

ROSALÍA - TIZIANO - VELÁZQUEZ - GOYA - MANET



Rosalía, *Di mi nombre*, (2018).

ROSALÍA - TIZIANO - VELÁZQUEZ - GOYA - MANET



Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, *La maja desnuda*, (1795-1800).

ROSALÍA - TIZIANO - VELÁZQUEZ - GOYA - MANET



Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, *La maja vestida*, (1800- 1807).

ROSALÍA - TIZIANO - VELÁZQUEZ - GOYA - MANET



Vecellio Di Gregorio Tiziano, *Venus of Urbino*, (1538).

ROSALÍA - TIZIANO - VELÁZQUEZ - GOYA - MANET



Diego Velázquez, *The Rokeby Venus*, (1647-1651).

ROSALÍA - TIZIANO - VELÁZQUEZ - GOYA - MANET



Édouard Manet, *Olympia*, (1863).

VISUAL REPRESENTATION - ANALYSIS

The message without a code

Denoted

‘The Literal’

What the image shows

Objective / Natural

Indexical

Given by the Photographer / Sender

The coded message

Connoted

‘The Symbolic’

What is implied by the image

Invested / Cultural

Constructed

Invested by the Receiver / Viewer

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Fourth stage. Planning your essay.

1 Introduction.

2 Rosalía's *Di mi nombre*, in relation to classic painting and the representation of the Venus.

3 The male gaze and the feminist position.

5 Conclusion.

6 Bibliography.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction sets out the tone for an essay and should act as a guide to your reader.

Content:

- Introduce the topic of the essay (for example, highlight why the topic is of interest, the main debates and/or background information).
- Indicate the aims of the essay (you should set out what you plan to do).
- Indicate your approach and the range of theories that you will be using for your essay.
- Outline the essay structure (introduce the main points that you will discuss in the order they will be presented).
- Introduction should be around 10% of your word count.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction needs to:

- Link the title in the introductory paragraph.
- Give background information on the subject.
- Tells the reader the general significance of the question.
- Sets out the aim of the essay.
- Gives the writer's approach to the topic (their argument).
- Outlines the main ideas the essay will deal with and signals the structure.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

Fifth stage. Paragraphs.

What is the main point in each paragraph. Write out the topic sentence.

WRITING AN ESSAY - STAGES

The body of the essay.

In the main body of your essay you develop your argument and line of reasoning through presenting and discussing your evidence. Go from the general to the specific.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is the final part of your essay. It should flow logically from the previously presented text; therefore, you should avoid introducing new ideas, or a new direction.

Link your conclusion to your introduction as both frame your essay. Sum up the main points of your research.

Ideally, the conclusion should leave the reader with a clear understanding of your essay and the main ideas addressed in it.

CONCLUSION

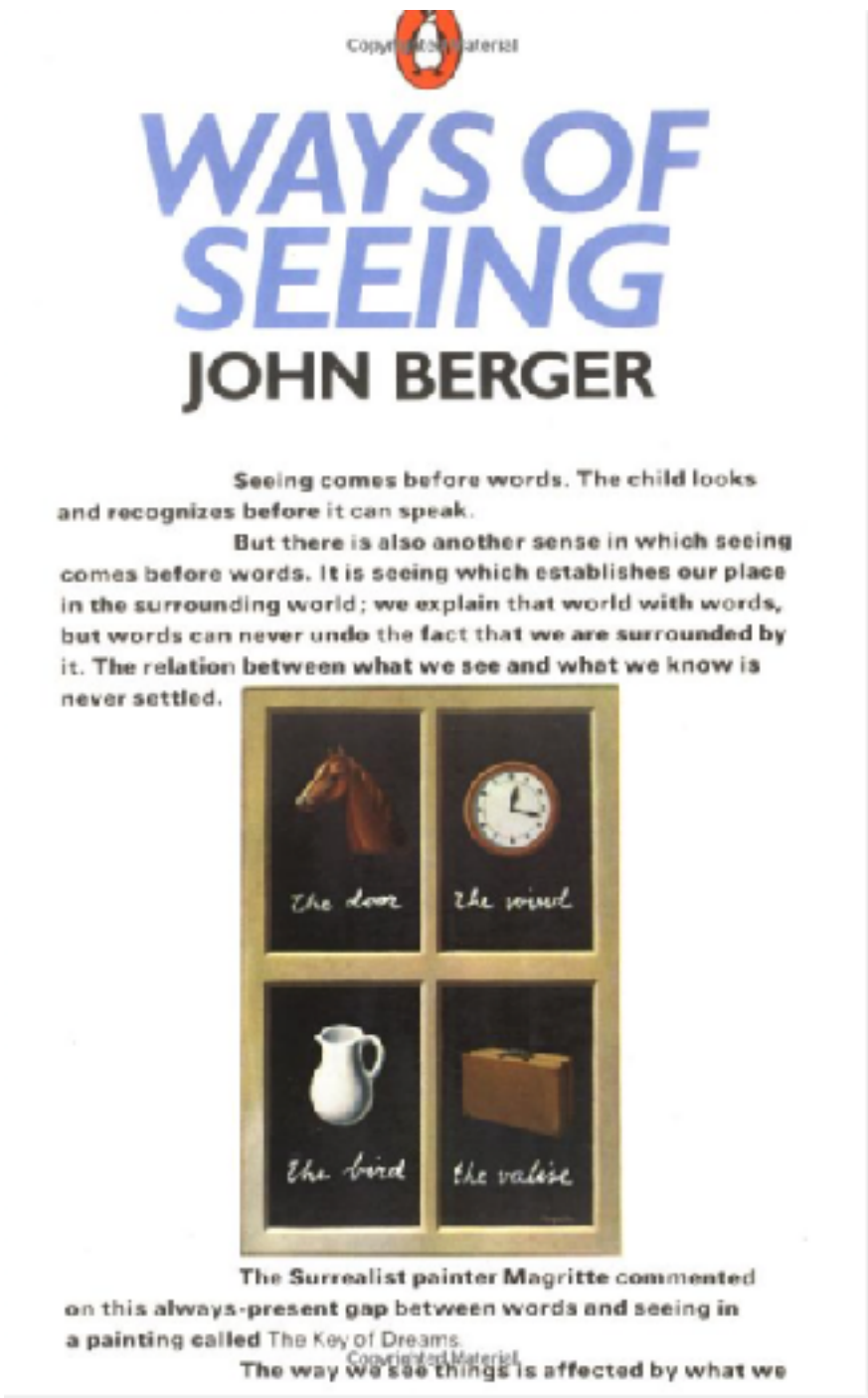
As a guidance the conclusion should address the essay question and should:

- Summarise the main arguments and themes.
- State your general conclusions.
- Make it clear why those conclusions are significant.
- Refer back to the essay question, and directly address it or 'answer' it.
- Make recommendations, or suggest a way forward.
- Do not present new material.

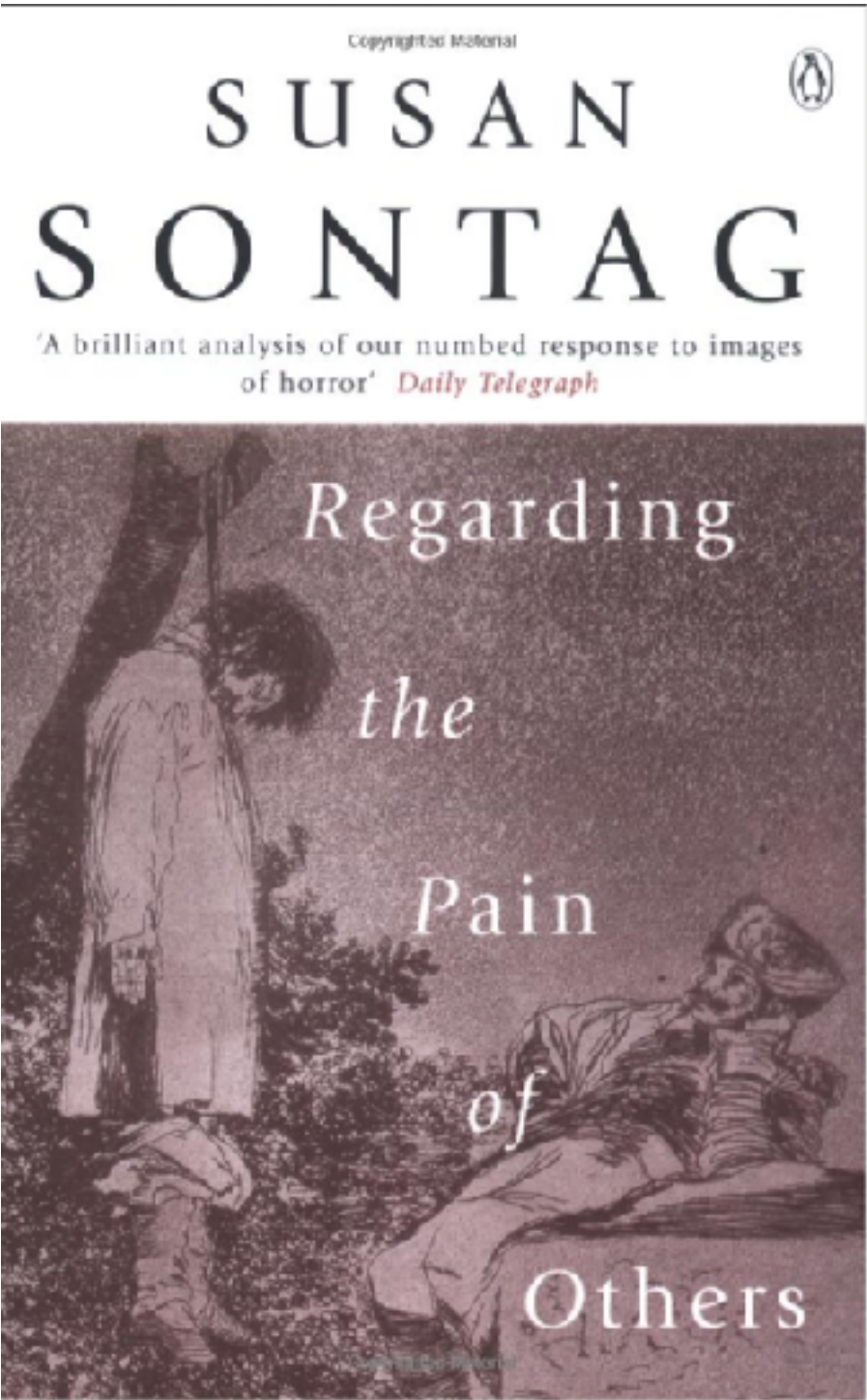
CRITICAL READING - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- It means reading with the intention of evaluating the ideas as you read them. So it is different as when you are reading a novel, for example.
- Consider what are the arguments that the writer is making and how are they validating them?
- Do you agree or disagree? How can you support your claim.
- Question what you read. Do not take things for granted.
- Contextualise the research with other similar researchers.

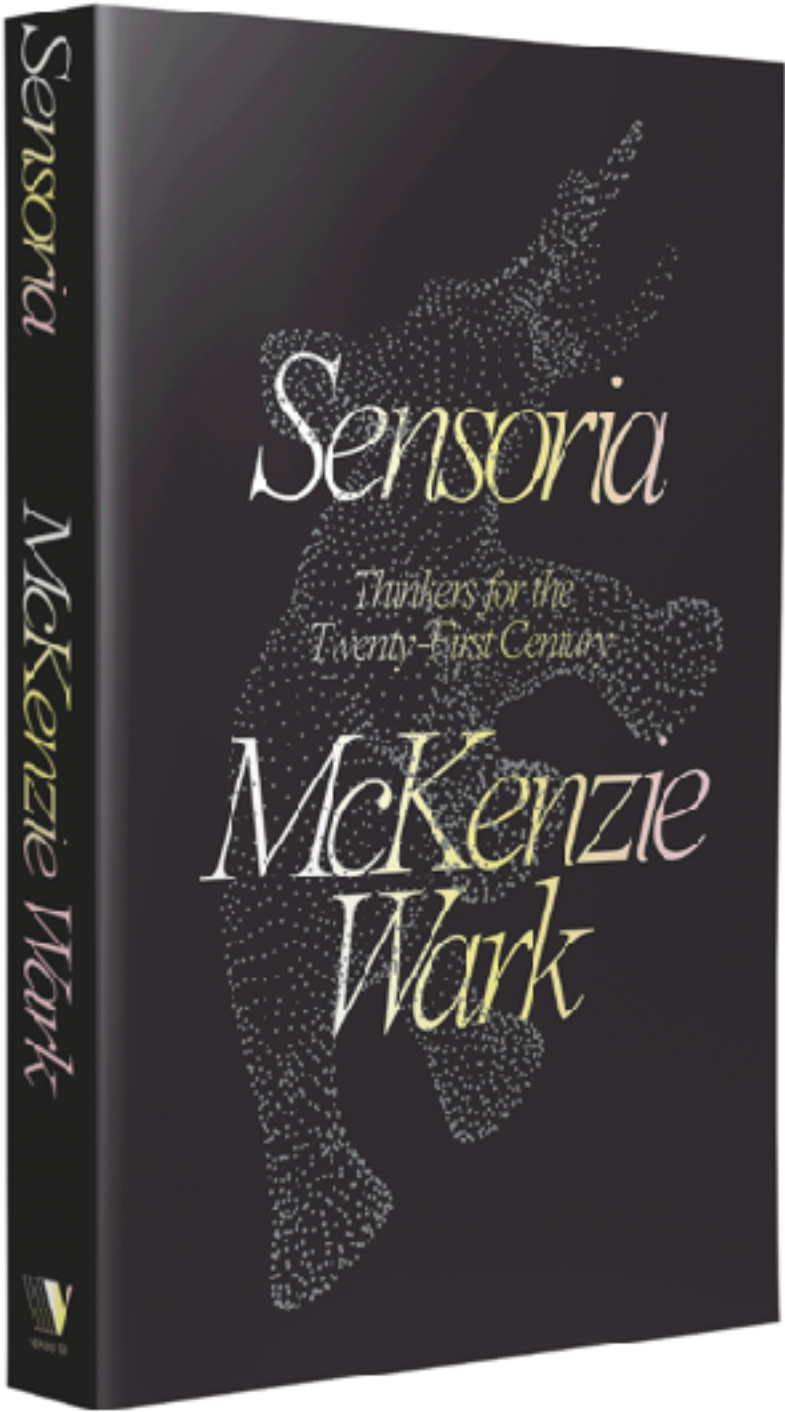
THEORIES AND BOOKS DISCUSSED



First Edition 1972.



First Edition 2003.



First Edition 2020.

PICTURES GENERATION - DOUGLAS CRIMP'S WRITING



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October / Vol. 8, Spring,...

October



Vol. 8, Spring, 1979

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 The MIT Press

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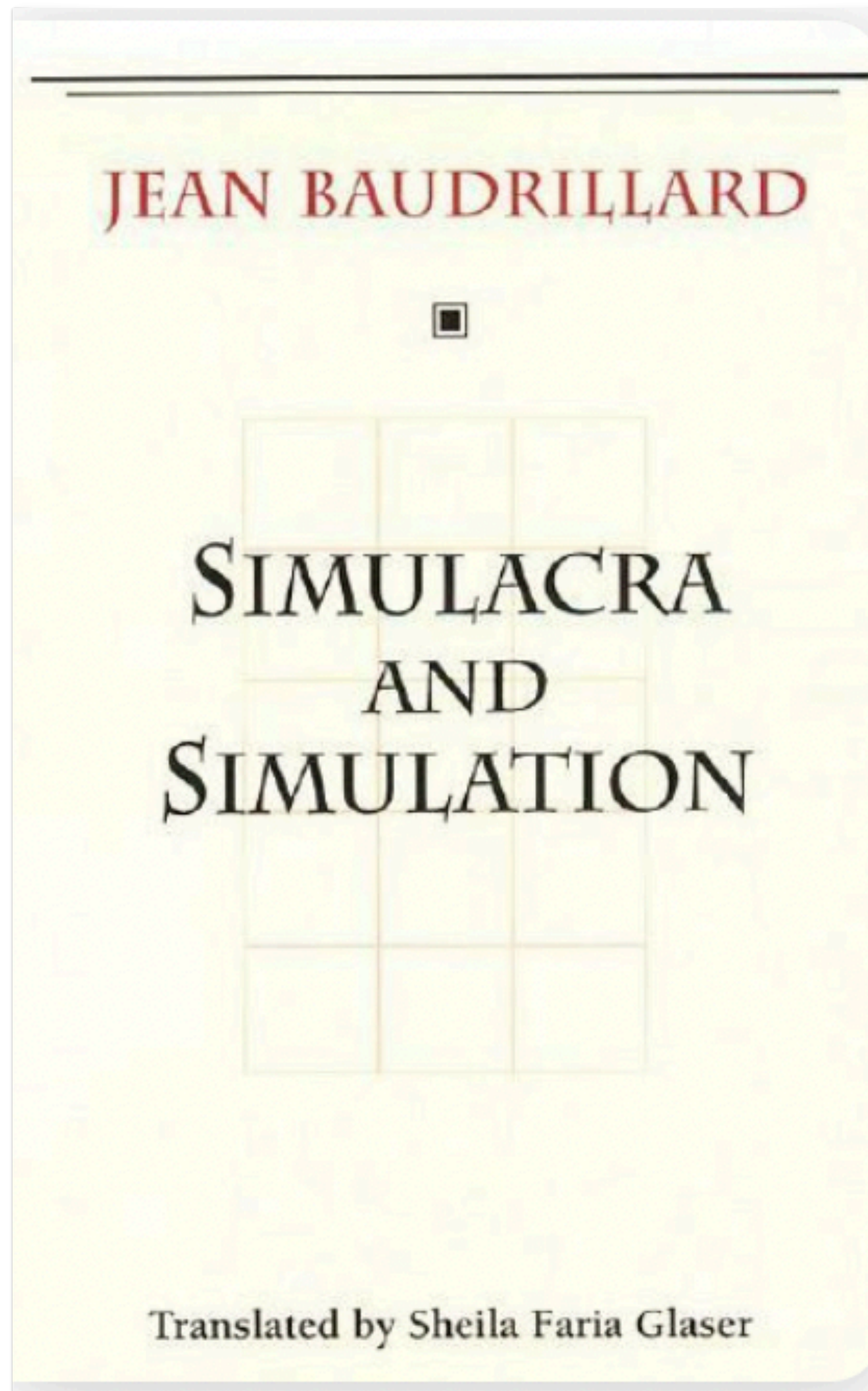
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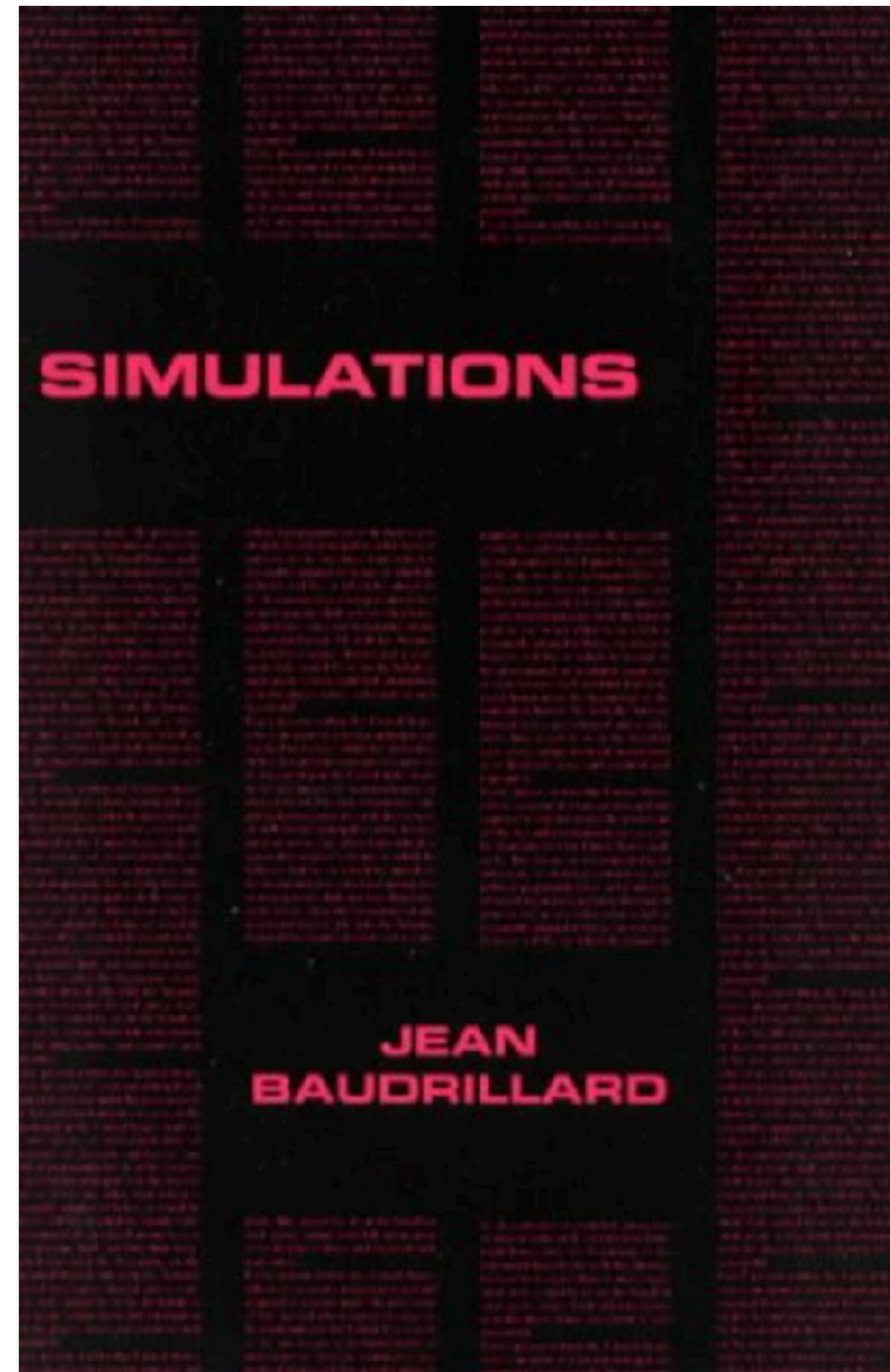
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KEY AUTHOR - JEAN BAUDRILLARD

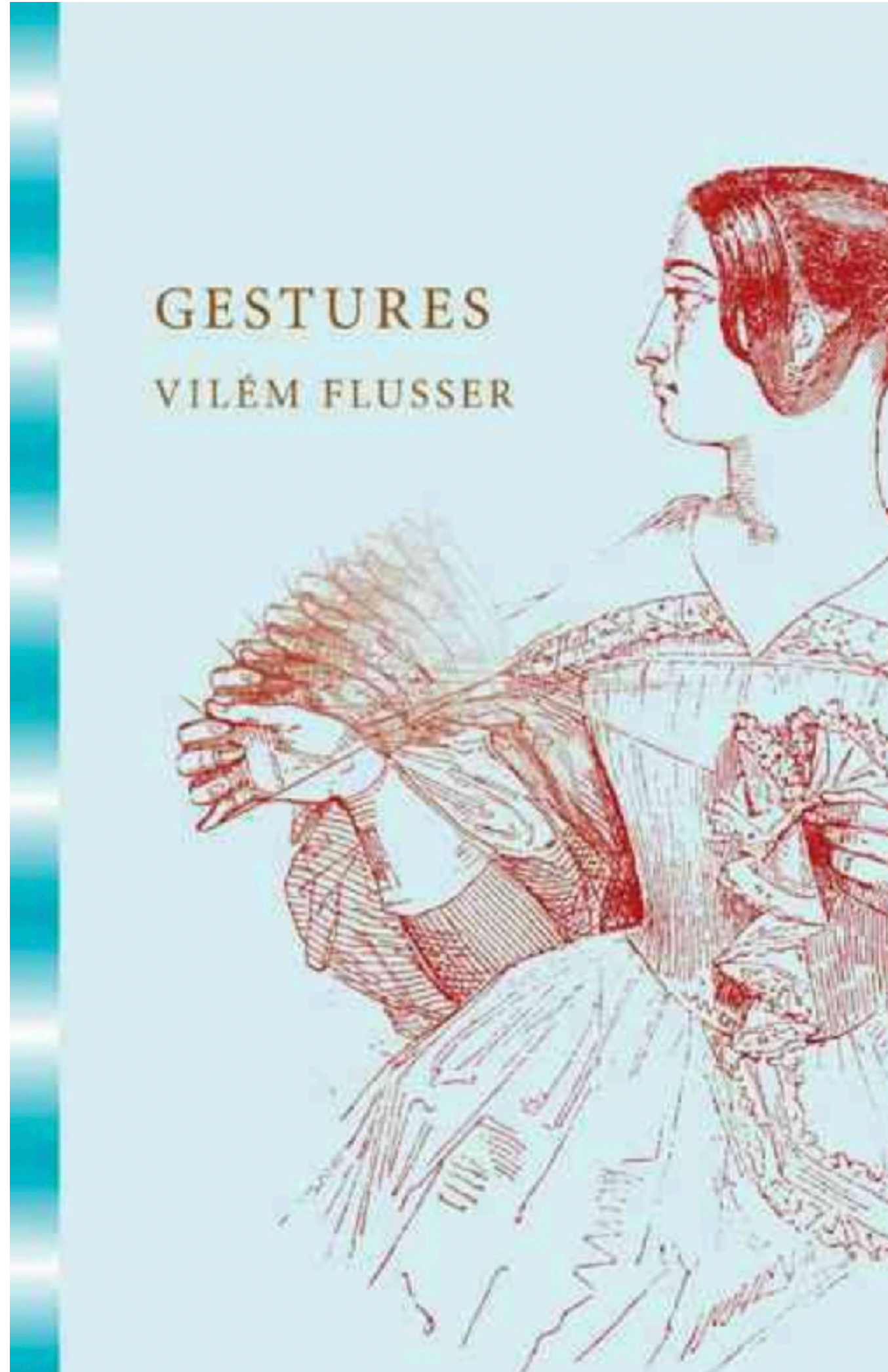


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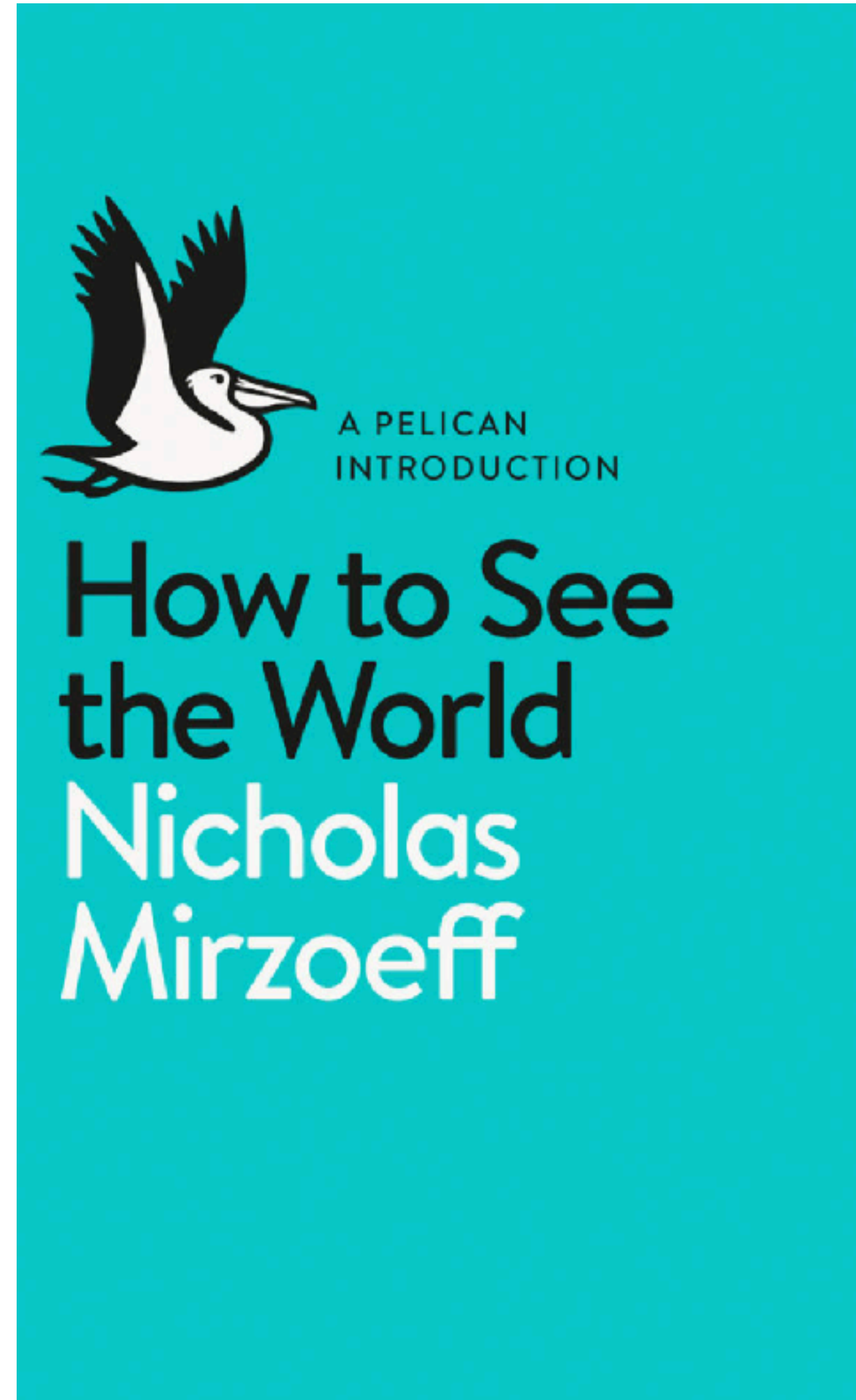


First published in 1983.

THEORIES AND BOOKS DISCUSSED



First published in 2014.

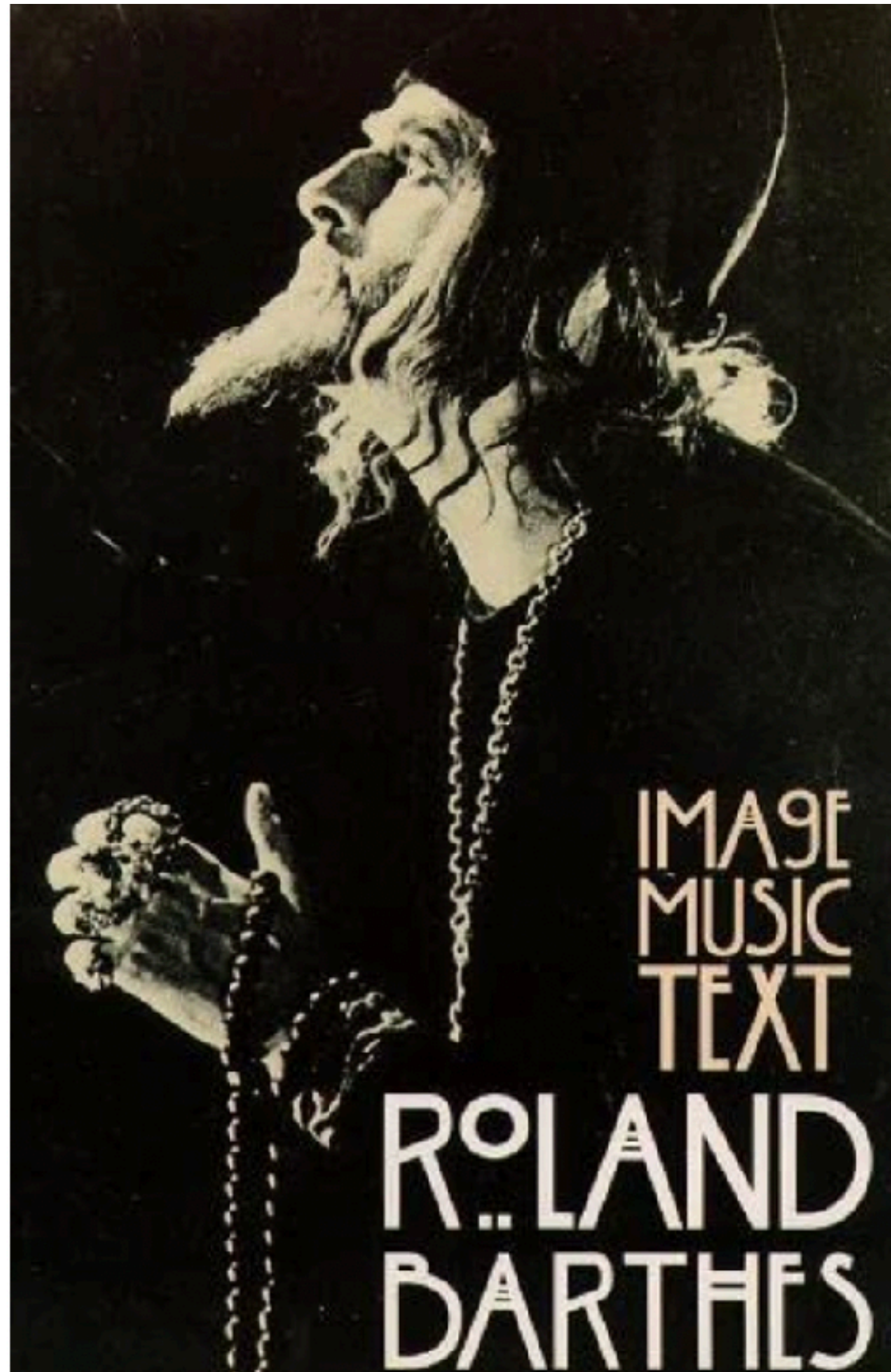


First published in 2015.

THEORIES AND BOOKS DISCUSSED

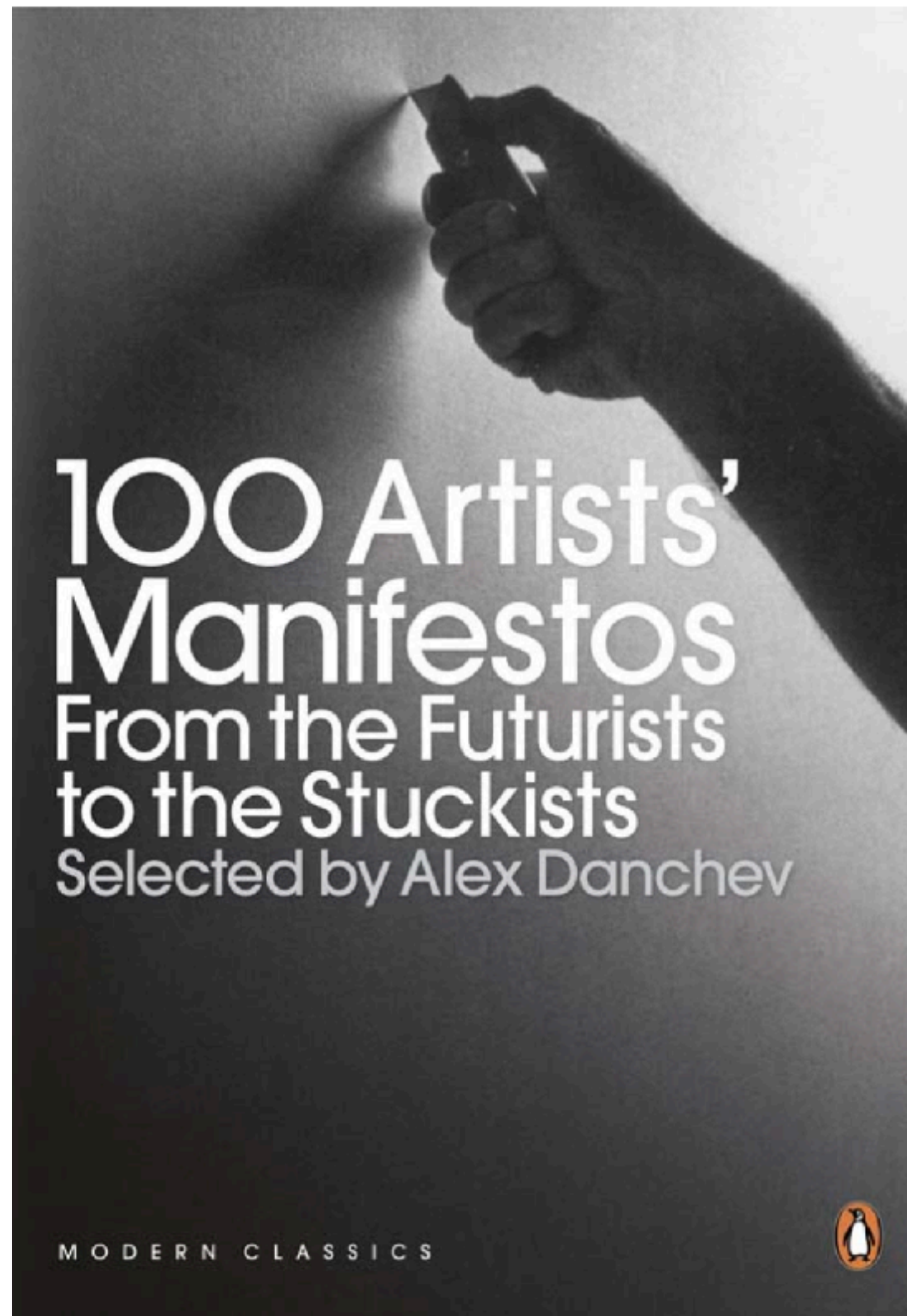


First published in 1972.

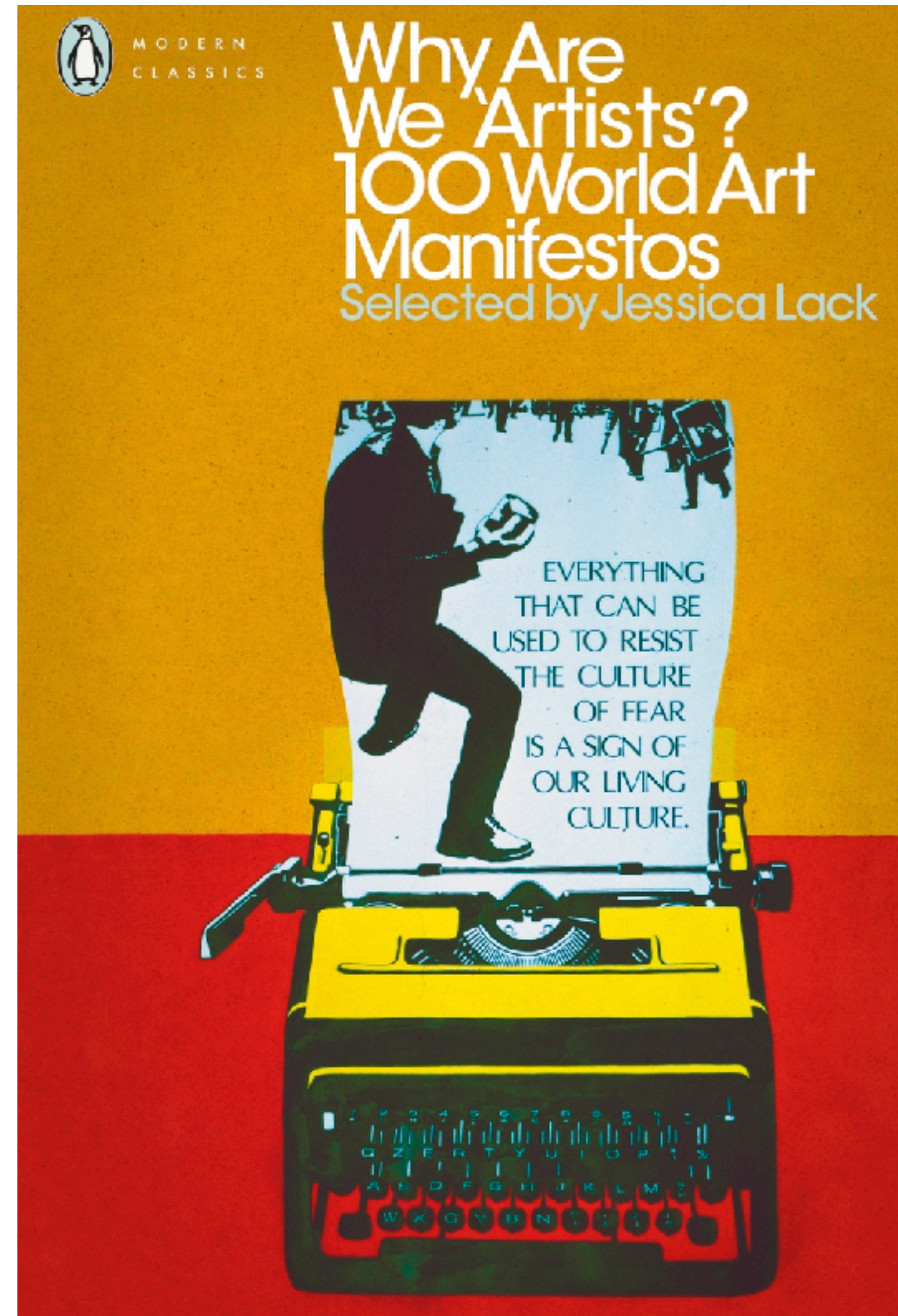


First published in 1977.

THEORIES AND BOOKS DISCUSSED

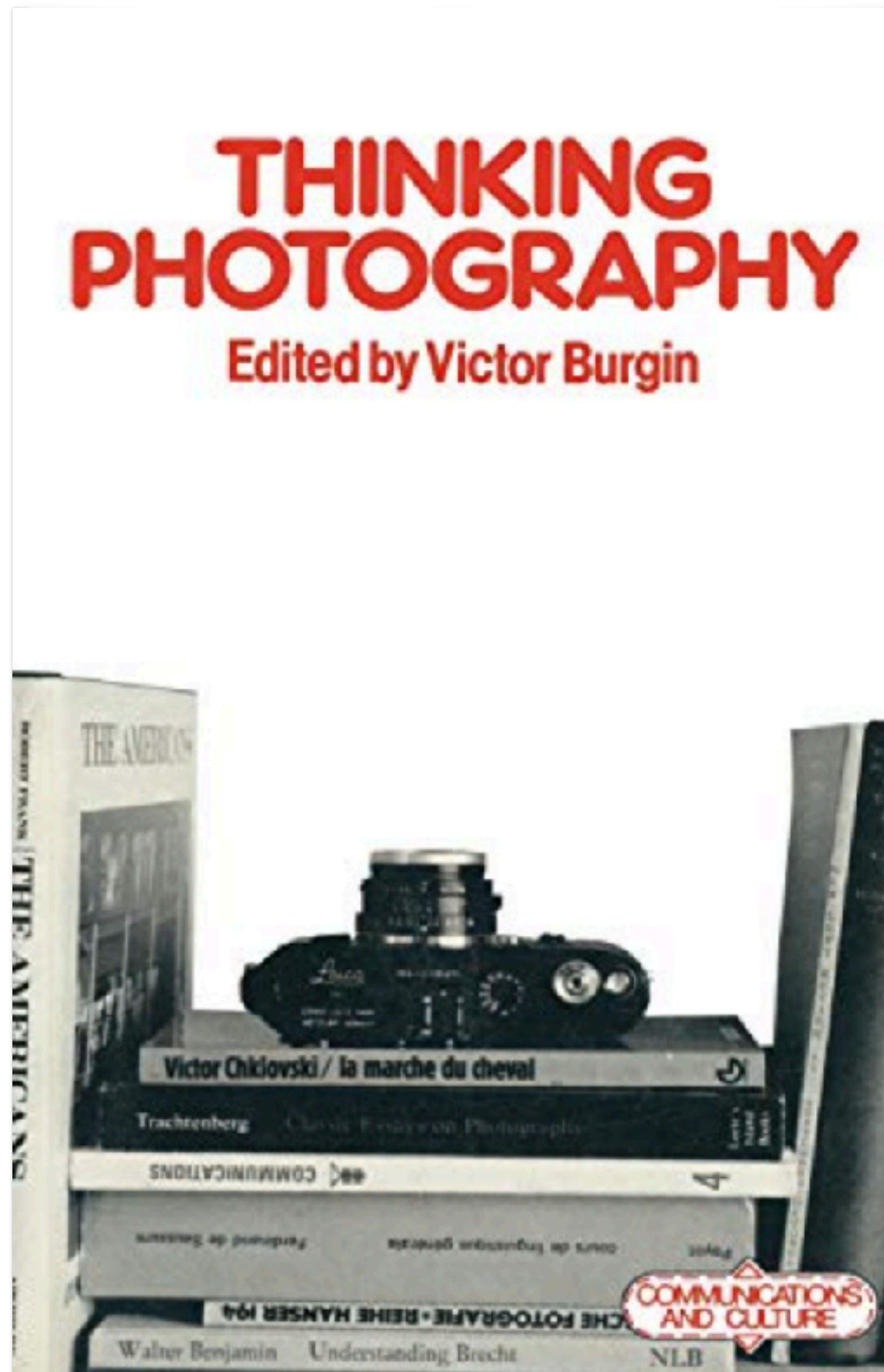


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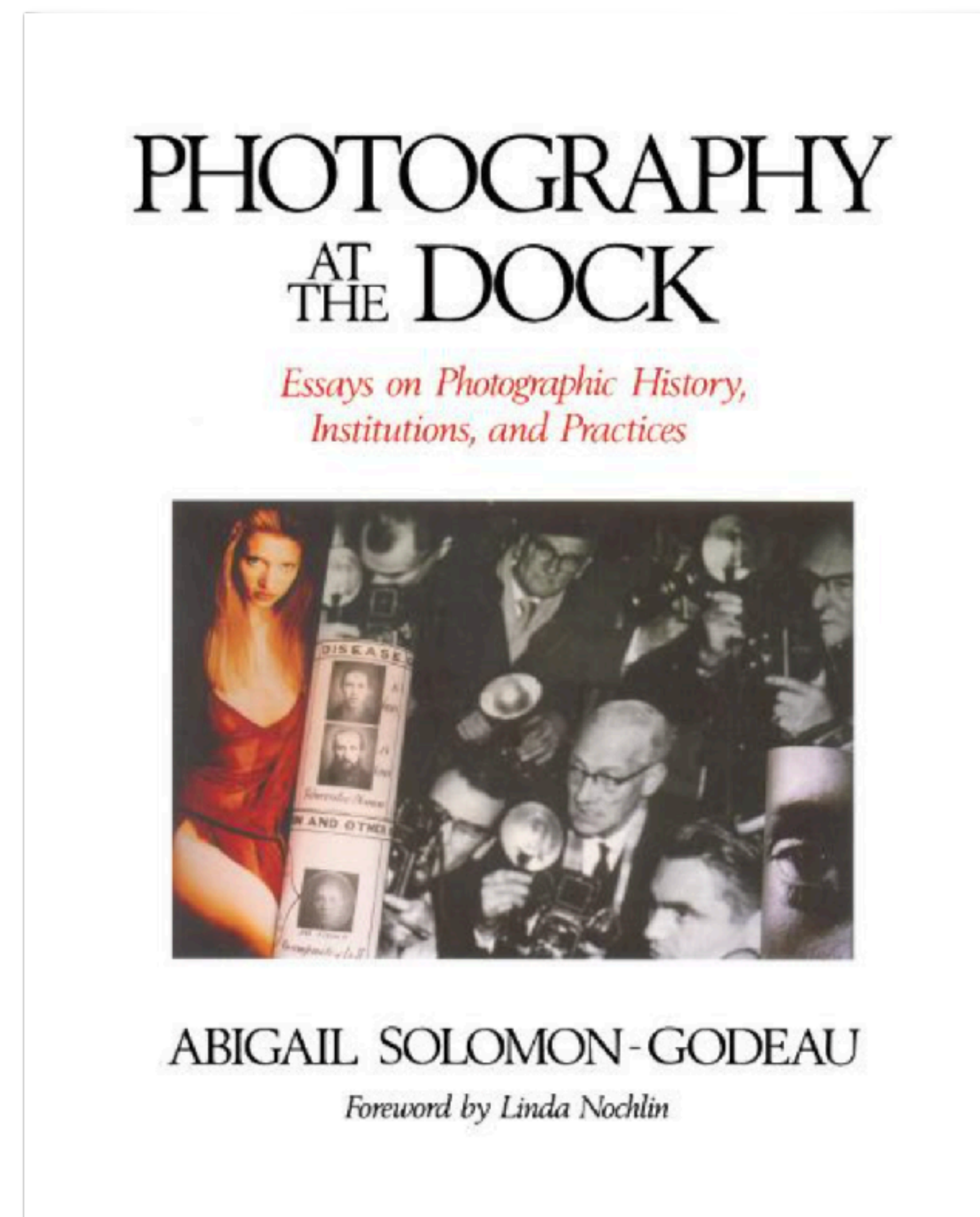


First published in 2017.

KEY AUTHORS - PHOTOGRAPHY



First published in 1982.



First published in 1991.

9. REFERENCE LIST

List of references, books, articles that you used in your research. Use **Harvard Referencing** for your bibliography.

Referencing including bibliography and in-text citation.

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- Consider language in different contexts and the styles that you use. It is not the same when you speak to your friends, or if you are writing your application for the University. Newspapers, novels.
- Academic language should be **concise**, **formal** and '**objective**'.
- The purpose of academic language is to communicate ideas and arguments in a clear, convincing and professional manner.
- Avoid language like : I am horrified. I find this awful - emotive writing and subjective writing .

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- Avoid slang.
- Avoid contraction (won't, don't).
- Use and mixture of passive and active tense.
- Be clear and concise.
- Choose words with precise meaning.
- Avoid redundancy for that you should avoid repetition. Include one main idea per sentence. Check that you have not written overly long sentences.

ESSAY PRESENTATION

What an essay should look like?

- Essays shall normally be in A4 format, saved as a PDF document.
- The essay shall be saved in a legible form, recommended typefaces Geneva, Helvetica and Arial, with the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, normally in 12 point font size.
- Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
- Double spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
- The margins shall be 2.5 cm at each side.

TIPS

- Be specific avoid generalisations.
- Do not assume that your reader knows what you are writing about. Therefore provide definition to terms and all the relevant information within your essay.
- Avoid words such as 'some' or 'many'. They are vague and it gives the impression that you do not know what you are writing about. Instead provide one or two examples of what you are referring to. Then the reader would know exactly what you mean.
- Clarity: have you expressed your ideas clearly?
- Avoid unnecessary jargon.
- It is basically about communicating the rationale behind what you are doing and supporting it in relation to theories and the work of other practitioners.

TIPS

-Writing drafts are important. Because as you try to write you would realise of 'issues' and then you are able to try and find solutions for them. However if you leave the writing for the day before the deadline then you will not have time to find any solutions. You might manage to pass but you will not have learned how to write, or critical thinking skills that would be key for the whole BA and beyond in the real world. This is learning for life.

ONLINE RESOURCE

writingcenter.unc.edu

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Tips & Tools



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- > [History](#)
- > [Literature \(Fiction\)](#)
- > [Music](#)
- > [Philosophy](#)

NEXT SESSION

IMPORTANT

Make a decision on which essay question you are going to write about.
Send me a 500 word draft by Tuesday 12th November at 5pm.

NEXT SESSION

Session 3 - Tue 15 Oct 2024

Blind Spots and the Fiction of Constructing Knowledge. Semiotics.

THANK YOU

Estéfani Bouza: e.bouza-arnoso@uwtsd.ac.uk/ October 2024