



## MEMORANDUM

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FROM: Carl M. Barnes

TO: Department of Art and Art History

RE: Questions for Candidates for the Modernist Position  
College Art Association Interviews, 12–14 February  
1997

### GENERAL

1. How far do you think Oakland University is from San Francisco? (Note: If the candidate answers anything less than 100 miles, the interview is *terminated*).
2. Michigan has four seasons: early winter, mid-winter, late winter, and next winter. Which one do you think you will prefer? Why?

The following two questions are for candidates from New York City only.

3. Which of the following is closest to New York City? Michigan? Missouri? Montana? Mongolia?
4. Does the last Native American uprising in Michigan date before or after the end of the Vietnam War?

## PERSONAL

We cannot ask you personal questions that have to do with age, marital status, etc. but we can legitimately quiz you on your knowledge of history and approaches to art.

1. Which of the following events do you remember personally, as distinct from hearing about them? Death of Elvis? Resignation of Richard Nixon? Assassination of John Kennedy? VE and/or VJ Day? Sinking of the *Maine*? George Washington's farewell address?
2. Whom do you most admire for their lifestyle? Jack the Ripper? Vlad the Impaler? Casanova? Marquis de Sade? Bill Clinton? Richard Speck? Henry VIII? Heidi Fleiss?
3. What is your favorite animal? Check I ONLY: Female Sheep; Male Sheep?
4. Oakland University prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, religion, etc. Do you have to *be* gender neutral in order to practice gender neutrality?
5. Your clothes suggest acquisition at Good Will and Salvation Army. Are you prepared to upgrade so as not to compete with Professor Cameron?
6. Which of the following stories do you find the most erotic? Leda and the Swan? Zeus and Ganymede? Apollo and Daphne? Narcissus and Narcissus? Lot and his Daughters? *The Story of O*? The Story of Onan?
7. (Female Candidates Only) Explain in detail the iconography of Gustave Courbet's "The Sleepers."
8. (Male Candidates Only) Which of the following is your favorite work? Why? Donatello's David? Michelangelo's David? Maplethorpe's Ken and Steve?

9. If you collect art, where do you find the items you collect? Galleries? Private Dealers? Museum reproduction shops? Poster shops in malls? Buy direct from the back of vans at gas stations?
10. Will body-piercing be a major art form in the first quarter of the 21st century?
11. Name your three favorite paintings on black velvet and briefly justify your choices.
12. The treatment of the human figure by painters such as El Greco has been attributed to ocular problems, for example, nearsightedness or astigmatism. What explains Picasso?

#### SCHOLARSHIP

1. Your dissertation topic is one of the least interesting and significant we've ever encountered. What *real* subject do you plan to investigate after you have mined your dissertation?
2. Do you believe that talking at AA meetings, KKK rallies, Losers without Partners, etc. count as "presentations at professional meetings"?
3. What is your stand on the following?: "Stealing from one writer is plagiarism; stealing from many is scholarship."
4. A problem frequently encountered at the OU library is that the art book is either checked out or mis-shelved. How would you cope with this the night before an article is due?

#### INSTRUCTION

1. We need someone to teach, first, 20th-century art and, second, 19th-century art. Most of us now in the depart-

ment teach outside of the field in which we received our specialized training. Which of the following areas are you prepared to cover? Designs of dyed porkskin trailers for double-bladed spinner baits? The evolution of labels on Gab and Cribari jugs, 1945–1950? Rust patterns on Ford Fairlanes and Falcons, 1962–1967?

2. Oakland students demand ever easier and shorter tests. What is the *one* true/false question you would use on a comprehensive final exam in AH 101?
3. Once the lights are turned off in the lecture room, most students sleep. Some become romantically involved. At what point do you make a distinction between flirting and foreplay?
4. When a student announces, “I don’t know anything about art, but *I* know what I like,” what is your response? What is your response if you don’t have a pointer in your hand?
5. This question is related to question 4. What is your response when a student asks, “Why do we have to study this crap, anyway?”

#### ARTS POLICY

The National Endowment for the Arts has funded homoerotic photographs, self-mutilation performance art, and a project of putting a photograph of the crucified Christ in a jar of urine. In no more than 25 words, how would you justify the latter before a meeting of the university board of trustees? (You may use slides if you wish.)