

## Graded Essay Contrast — Humanities 130

Here we contrast three test essays, which discuss symbolism found in a few of Manet's paintings. You're writing fast, under pressure. Spelling won't count. Display your mastery of our class discussions and all the technical terms, dates, names. Notice that the A paper has all that. The B paper was written by someone who plainly understands the work, but who hasn't bothered to learn any specifics. It'll be hard for her to keep educating herself after the course. The C student seems to have missed the lecture and tried to study from a book at the last moment. He knows some terms and dates, but it's filled with wild guesses (look at the guess about the cat—this is from a real student paper!) and flat-out misinformation.

### Model of an A Paper

This slide is called *DeJeuner sur l'herbe*. and was painted in 1863 by Manet during his La Vie Moderne phase, when he was inspired by his friend Baudelaire, who thought the most fascinating part of the Industrial Revolution was the new women.

In this picture a young woman, a *grizette* or shop girl, is sitting with two "Bohemian" men. It almost appears to be a dream, since the woman is sitting naked with the two men in an open park. The scene is of a *fete gallante* or amorous picnic. The model is his favorite Victorine.

This painting is of a *grizette's* first stage in life where she has just arrived to the city and is experimenting with her sexuality. Manet always paints girls making direct eye contact. She appears poised and confident.

Olympia is the third stage of a *grizette's* life in La Vie Modeme, the new modern industrial Paris. Manet painted this in 1865 and caused a *success d'scandale*. Olympia is of strong character and directly makes eye contact. Although she is a prostitute, she exerts power over others. She is hardened.

### Model of a B Paper

This work of Manet we called in class "The Picnic."

Here, that model he always uses poses nude with a smirk on her face. Along with her are two students. The students are labeled as bohemians, while she is labeled as quizez (?) I think.

A Q. plays the role of being a mistress of the school boys. She is a shop girl having a picnic with the students. Her face is full of pride.

Manet's work Olympia, was soon created. The same favorite model is in this picture, probably older now, around the age of 20. She is a prostitute. She is laying on a bed nude, wearing nothing but a velvet string on her neck, and bracelet on her arm. This bracelet is significant due to the fact that it belonged to Manet's mother.

Along me side other is a black servant who is presenting her with flowers. At the edge of her feet, is a black cat. Olympia portrayed as a scandalous idol in this painting. It brought much criticism to Manet's work.

Manet's work titled "A Bar," was his final work before his death. This was done in the year he died. In this painting is a serving girl behind a bar.

### Model of a C Paper

Edouard Manet was born into a Spanish family. He is most easily recognized by his familiar "woman" triptychs. The first in the series was the *piensee*.

It was originally named some French phrase but renamed to not contest with a Monet painting of the same name. But its importance lies in its paint not its label.

The painting was originally colorized for portraying two women between two clothed gentlemen. Nudity was expected but this was vulgar. Manet claimed he was only relaying what he saw.

Another importance of the stark nakedness of the woman is the contrast it creates. The pale glow of the woman's flesh between the darkness of the two men's suits.

The second painting is 1865's Olympia. It was a remake of a common theme. The contrast between a white and black female. Its predecessor was called The Titius of Venus. The model, a favorite of Manet, was Victorine.

Another object of significance is the cat. Manet was very fond of puns. In French, cat means pussy, the very thing which the model is trying to hide.

For example, her maid is hovering over her to show her the flowers that a customer has brought her in request of her services.

Although Olympia is a prostitute, she hasn't lost her dignity. Manet deliberately paints the contrasting white sheets and the black cat and maid to show the prostitutes pureness. The bow on her neck signifies that no one can touch her intellect.

*Follies Bergere*, painted in 1882, is the missing second sequence of a grizette's life, the missing link which connects her youthful joy as a shop girl/mistress in *Dejeuner*, with the hardened later life as a prostitute Olympia. Manet painted it before his death in 1883. She is in a bar and a man with a beard is propositioning her.

Mallarme once again influenced Manet, because the position that we see the man at the mirror is impossible in real life, which suggests that it is a dream.

At this point in her life, the girl realizes that life has taken her nowhere, despite her not being a prostitute. Her look shows a great deal of discouragement and disillusionment with her life. It's the moment just after the man has whispered to her how much more she can make.

All of his pictures have an *istoria*, where they tell a story like a film director. He paints the ideal by showing beautiful, perfect women.

Oddly, behind her is a reflection of herself, but with a customer who is a man. He seems to be conversing with her. The reflection does not make sense. The image is therefore portrayed as a memory of what had happened during the nighttime.

The image of her in the front is supposed to have taken place during the daytime where she comes to realize that she is just exhausted with her job. Her face shows regret and discontent.

The last of the paintings is the *Follies Bergere*. Unlike the other paintings, the woman has lost some zest. Manet wasn't well-received with many of his paintings.