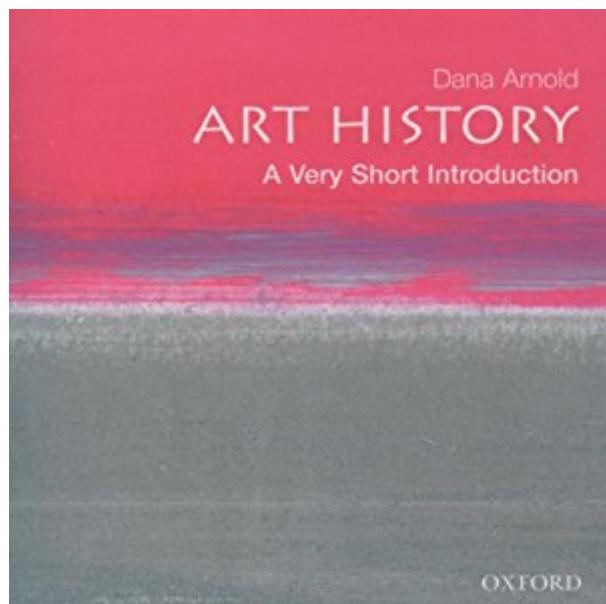


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# Art History: A Very Short Introduction



## **Synopsis**

This clear and concise new introduction examines all the major debates and issues using a wide range of well-known examples. It discusses the challenge of using verbal and written language to analyze a visual form. Dana Arnold also examines the many different ways of writing about art, and the changing boundaries of the subject of art history. Topics covered include the canon of Art History, the role of the gallery, 'blockbuster' exhibitions, the emergence of social histories of art (Feminist Art History or Queer Art History, for example), the impact of photography, and the development of Art History using artifacts such as the altarpiece, the portrait, or pornography, to explore social and cultural issues such as consumption, taste, religion, and politics. Importantly, this audiobook explains how the traditional emphasis on periods and styles originates in western art production and can obscure other critical approaches, as well as art from non-western cultures.

## **Book Information**

Audible Audio Edition

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## **Customer Reviews**

A very disappointing read for me. The cover clearly states - a very short Introduction, so I was expecting some sort of clear and concise text covering the panorama of Art History, fair enough? What I got instead was a bunch of leftist ideas, feminist propaganda and admiration for the new wave of British artists, Tracy Emin and the like, alongside with a couple passages on Vasari and Winckelmann thrown in just in case. It may be your cup of tea, it ain't mine, but the title is clearly misleading.

Art history is not an easy subject. Overall, this is a high-brow, reasonable introduction to the subject,

but it suffers from the author's didactic style. Unfortunately Arnold, in her determination not to let the history of art become "a list of white men", presents a distorted picture of what readers should expect. It is perhaps unfortunate that the history of Western art is, for various reasons, dominated by affluent white men, but this should not affect the aim of sufficiently introducing readers to art history more generally. If you're looking for a book that will actually teach you about artists in history (as one would hope), look elsewhere; Bosanquet's "A History of Aesthetic" is an excellent choice.

If anything, it is a meta-history of art; a short history of various writings about the history of art. Written in first person and filled with parentheticals and references to earlier and later chapters, the book is more a series of dogmatic lecturers than an engaging look at the world of art. Underpinning these lectures is the author's obvious disapproval of the cannon of Western Art and the status achieved by white male artists. Oddly enough, in later chapters when explaining the ways to read and look at works of art, the author selects examples of art from the very cannon and male artists she seems to disparage in the earlier portions of the book.

This essay, sprinkled with expressions of feminist ideas, is trying to convince readers that some approaches to art history are invalid. It is hard to be certain what art history is in the book author's opinion; I think it boils down to the following: art history is how artworks make us feel. This is historically legitimate, since artist contemporaries view artworks in different ways from generations that supersede them. The author also pays attention to how the ways art is exhibited and written about influence our perceptions. At the end of the book you will find a little bit of information on progression of fine art techniques. If you like to read critical articles, I think you will enjoy reading this book.

These books are incredible! My husband and I love all of the Very Short Introduction books. They are so informative with great diagrams and pictures. If you are interested in a subject, THIS is the place to start.

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