

GNSS1960K: GENDER AND THE MODERNIST SELF

Fall 2010, T/Th 1-2:20pm

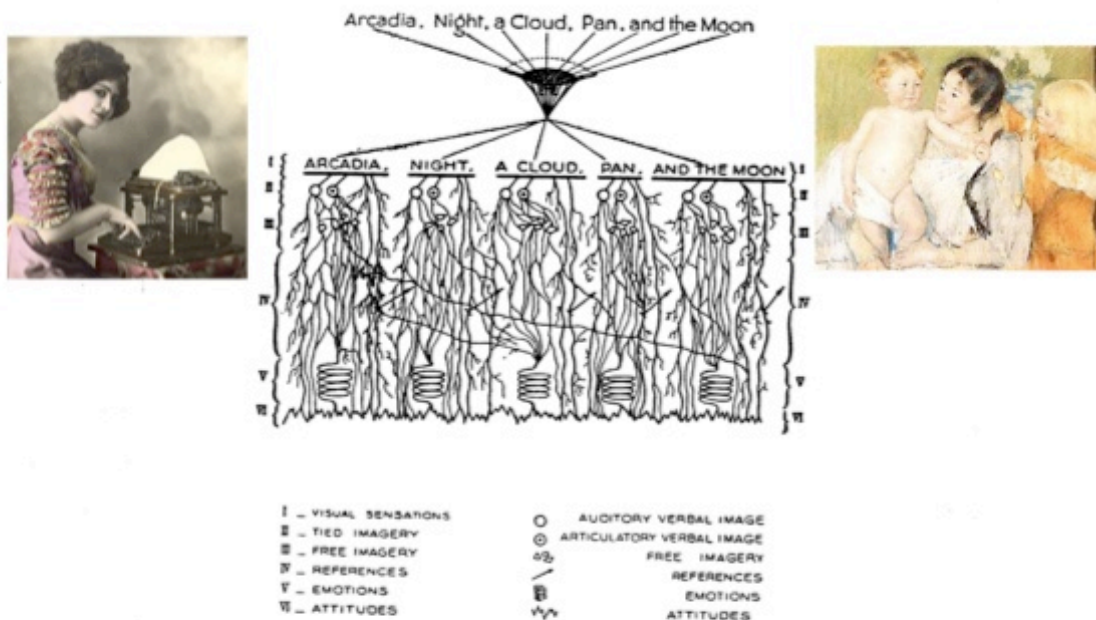


Figure 4. Richards' fanciful, often misinterpreted, "diagram, or hieroglyph," representing "the events which take place when we read a poem."
 Source: I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co.; New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1925), 116.

Are women more modern than men? In the early decades of the twentieth century it may have seemed so, for in these years the figures of a new womanhood (the "New Woman," the Militant Suffragette, the Typist, the Flapper) came to stand as emblematic of modernity itself. For some, these female figures represented the threat that an irrational and materialistic modernity posed to autonomous, rational models of the self. But others saw in such exaggerated portraits the outlines of a new twentieth-century model of selfhood.

In this course we will read the literature of the turn-of-the-century (including Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Grant Allen's *The Typewriter Girl*, Freud's *Dora*, Woolf's *A To the Lighthouse* and Gertrude Stein's *A Novel of Thank You*) alongside the work of sociologists, psychologists, and philosophers (William James, Gabriel Tarde, Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, John Dewey) from the same period to track the emergence of the modernist self. The course will be run as a discussion-based seminar. Our discussions will focus on the course readings and your circulated, weekly reading responses to those readings. In addition, each student will complete one brief oral presentation, two shorter papers, and a longer final paper.