



## **J 347G (08230) / J387 P (08335)**

### **A Cultural History of Photography**

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

**Professor Donna DeCesare**

**Lecture/Seminar: Tuesday 9:00am-12: 00pm HRC 2.20F**

**Office hours:** BMC: 3.366 Wed 12 noon to 3:00 pm

Students must sign up for a slot on my electronic sheet

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090A4FA4AA22AA8-professor3>

**If you have a class conflict with my office hours please email to request another time or see me after class. I will try to accommodate you.**

**Email: [donna.decesare@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:donna.decesare@austin.utexas.edu)**

**Phone: 512 471-1980**

#### **Course Description**

Although photography developed from evolving technological and technical processes, the “nature” of the medium has been subject to debate ever since its inception in 1839. Is photography document, art, or science? This course will follow developments from photography’s earliest forms up to the present digital age. We will explore photography’s physical and conceptual characteristics as a medium, paying particular attention to epistemological questions about its uniquely intimate and frequently contested relationship to “the real.”

The course will begin with a consideration of debates central to 19<sup>th</sup>-century photography. Next we will examine the role of photography as a document. One focus will be on issues of who is “doing the looking” and who is being “looked at” during the formative period when photography became central to visual reporting of news, conflict, and social issues during the 20<sup>th</sup>

century. The course also examines the concurrent development of photography as a fully accepted art form in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>-centuries. Although the course follows a roughly chronological foundation, we will move backward and forward in time to consider historical parallels, which provide context for some of the ethical issues we confront in the digital age. A goal is to help students become more critical consumers of images in a time when image production through digital devices and image proliferation through social networking has resurrected epistemological debates from photography's past as well as adding new dimensions to ethical concerns.

We have the benefit of a specific traditional history as exemplified by the Gernsheim collection at the Harry Ransom Center and a wealth of photoreportage materials in the Magnum Collection. We will in addition consider critiques arising in response to questions about the nature of visual representation and cultural production with implications for photography's many roles in how "others" are seen and understood and how we see and understand ourselves in an increasingly digitized and globalized world.

### **Course Learning goals:**

- Recognition of key photographic processes from inception of the medium to the current digital revolution. Students will be able to identify significant discoveries, developments and inventions.
- Students will master an understanding of the chronology of the development and popularization of photography
- Students will be able to identify historically important figures, sponsoring individuals and agencies as well as specific iconic exemplary photographs.
- Students should be able to recognize and discuss the contributions of specific influential photographers upon the medium's development and the development of theoretical frameworks for understanding photography's nature and role.
- This course will promote critical thinking about photography and its "histories." Questions about the gaze and about culture will be important--who is looking or being looked at? Who writes history? What are the issues surrounding subject agency?
- Students will be encouraged to explore photographic traditions beyond the dominant US/European traditions.
- Students will learn to exercise critical thinking while looking, reading, writing and speaking about photographers and photographic images.

- This course will enhance student mastery of visual concepts and ability to communicate ideas and questions about photography and its history clearly and succinctly.
- Particular emphasis will be placed upon the role of photographic witness or documentary photojournalism and its social, political and scientific impact as well challenges which the digital revolution pose for this tradition of photographic representation.

### **Course design to achieve learning goals:**

- Since an objective of the course is to promote critical thinking about photography all assignments will require careful looking at and writing about photographs. We have the privilege to have original works from the HRC collections to use as part of our practice in careful looking.
- Students will be assigned weekly readings –keyed to the lectures as indicated in the Class Schedule, which follows—from the required textbook. Students must purchase this book as the class follows it closely. Blackboard will have additional readings and materials posted. We will also have works on reserve at the HRC reading room and the PCL library.
- These additional materials are an aid to thinking further about the ideas presented in the class lectures. These other materials will generally be more challenging than the textbook. While all students must do the readings, each week one or more students will be assigned to write a 3-4-page expository paper detailing the central argument so as to lead the discussion of that work in class.
- I expect all students to read the blackboard assigned materials and textbook assigned materials for the date of the class indicated in the course schedule. You should take notes on these readings based upon key works and concepts emphasized in the lectures and in your study guides and be prepared to discuss the issues connected to these images in class as well as in the quizzes, exams and papers required for evaluation.

### **Required Textbooks**

Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, **3rd edition** (Upper Saddle, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010).

Fred Ritchin, *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary and the Citizen*, Aperture, 2013.

The textbooks are available at the University Coop. I ordered copies for this course. If the Coop has run out of books you may also obtain them from Amazon. You may also check UT libraries but be sure to have the same edition of the book.

**Student evaluation:**

Your grade will consist of the following components:

- 20% of your grade will consist of a research project with multiple components. You will research two images from the HRC collections--- one conceptual and constructed—for example, composite photography, portraiture, conceptual photography etc. and the other a spontaneous or intuitive found situation—for example street photography or reportage. You will write a 5-6 page research paper with footnotes summarizing the history, context and critical importance of the images you selected. You will also write an additional 4-5 pages about what attracted you to these images and describe your own process of image making using each of these images as a point of departure for your own process of image making. Every student will do a short talk and visual presentation of their project in class.
- Three exams will make up 50% of your grade. Exams will combine multiple choices, true/false and fill in blanks and essay questions. The first exam will be given in class. Later exams will be divided into multiple choice in class and essays to be completed during the exam week. For the in class exam that includes essays--You may bring blue books with notes but these must be turned in with the exam. Writing counts strongly—this is a writing component class in the undergraduate program. Be sure to review materials on my writing expectations before submitting papers and to aid your preparation for exam essays.
- 15% of your grade will consist of a 3-4-page paper (double-spaced) critically responding to an assigned reading and an in class presentation. Undergraduate students will respond to one of the weekly short readings. Graduate students will be assigned books to report on.
- 5 % based upon pop quizzes given in class unannounced.

• Since being a journalist (this is a journalism sponsored course) requires one to be present and meet deadlines—the consequences of failure to do so in the real world are unemployment-- and because it is not possible to duplicate the experience of class lectures and discussions simply by reading assigned texts, the remaining 10% of your grade will be based on **class attendance and participation in discussion**. Three unexcused absences are grounds to fail the class. Excused absences are medical emergencies with documentation or bereavement leave with documentation—see UT policy in Appendix 1

**There will be no make-up exams and papers will not be accepted late nor will absences be excused without written verification of a medical excuse, a death in the family etc.** You should notify me in advance or as soon as practicably possible if you are under emergency medical care.

**The grading Matrix is as follows:**

**20% Research Paper and class presentation describing your experiences making two different kinds of images inspired by works in HRC collection.** (100 points)

**5% Pop quizzes** (25 points –each quiz 5 points)

**50% Exams** (250 total points)

Exam 1 (75 points)

Exam 2 (75 points)

Exam 3 (100 points)

**15% Critical Response Paper/ Book report (Everyone has different due date. You lead class discussion on the day of your report.** (75 points)

**10% Attendance** (50 points for perfect attendance and participation)

This class meets once a week for 3 hours so one day missed counts heavily: You will lose more than 50 points on 3<sup>rd</sup> absence and/or tardy penalties.

Deductions for unexcused absences and tardiness as follows-- the points are minus points. In other words you lose 20 points for every absence or every 2 late appearances or early departure.

1 unexcused absence – 20 points

2 tardy entrances or early departures=1 unexcused absence

2 unexcused absences – 40 points      4 tardy entrances or early  
departures=2unexcused absences  
3 unexcused absences – 60 points      6 tardy entrances or early departures=  
3 unexcused absence  
4 unexcused absences are equivalent to missing a full month of classes and  
therefore will result in an automatic F

**100% 500 total points**

A      460-500 points  
A-     450-459  
B+     440-449  
B      410-439  
B-     400-409  
C+     390-399  
C      360-389  
C-     350-359  
D      325-349  
F      0-324      or 4 or more unexcused absences

**Class Policies, Courtesy and Attendance:**

We will be using Blackboard for this course. Please check the sections marked Syllabus, Course Documents, Assignments and External links to stay on top of course deadlines and readings. The full syllabus will have Due dates listed.

I expect that you will take notes with pencil and yellow notepaper provided by the HRC. Please see the HRC rules and notes about orientation in the Course Documents section of the Blackboard. Cell phones, backpacks, cameras and books will not be permitted in the Zarrow room. You can leave most items in unlocked cubbyholes outside the classroom in a supervised hallway but staff is not responsible for items that go missing. We have only one locker for the class so it would be wise to avoid bringing items of value like camera equipment to the HRC.

Please turn off cell phones before class begins. They will need to be left in lockers. In addition, electronic devices (laptop computers, pdas, ipods, recording devices) may not be used in class unless the device is necessitated by a registered disability. If you are a student with a disability who requires an accommodation(s) to participate in this course, please contact me within

the first two weeks of the semester. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Student Disability Office. Failure to contact me in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

If tardiness becomes a problem, the classroom door will be locked at 5 minutes after the beginning of class. If you are late, you will not be allowed into class and given an unexcused absence.

This syllabus and all lectures related to this course are protected by copyright law, registered in the year 2011, as the original expression of the professor. This and related materials may not be reproduced without her express written consent. Students are prohibited from selling (or being paid for taking) notes during this course to (or by) any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor. Notes from this class may not be posted on the Internet or worldwide web. You are encouraged to share hard copies of your notes with your classmates, provided you do not charge for this service.

The professor reserves the right to deviate from the schedule and change the syllabus. You will be informed of any changes in advance. Blackboard readings will appear a week the week before the class in which they will be discussed. Some of these readings are subject to change

### **Class Schedule:**

**Pre-class Blackboard reading:** See overview of Photographic history on Blackboard.

01/14 **Discussion:** Overview of the work ahead. Rules of the HRC, Assignments discussed—Lecture--an overview timeline of photographic history and intro to some of the issues we will be considering.

Evolving Technologies and Aesthetics – 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 38-45, 79-97 and 395-423, 433-435. **Also see Blackboard readings:**

Walter Benjamin, "Art in the Age of Mechanical  
Reproduction," 1931; W.J.T. Mitchell "Benjamin and the  
Political Economy of the Photograph"  
Charles Baudelaire, "The Modern Public and Photography,"  
1862, Susan Sontag, "Photography within the Humanities,"  
1975.

01/21

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Emerging Technologies and Aesthetics – 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
Theories and Debates/Photographic Crises: Then and Now

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1-23 and 25-32 and 58-74

**Blackboard readings:**

William Henry Fox Talbot, "Some Account of the Art of  
Photogenic Drawing," 1839; Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre,  
"Daguerreotype"

01/28

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Origins and "Founding Fathers" / The Daguerreotype Portrait  
Goes Global

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 46-58, 99-126. 219-230

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:** Dominique François  
Arago, "Report;" Susan Sontag, "Looking at War:  
Photography's View of Devastation and Death," *The New  
Yorker*, Dec 9, 2002

**[PCL Reserves you may view for 2 hours at a time]**

Alexander Gardner, *Gardner's Photographic  
Sketchbook of the Civil War* (1866; reprint, New York: Dover,  
1959). **[PCL Reserves you may check out for 24 hours only]**  
*Photography's Other Histories* edited by Christopher Pinney  
and Nicholas Peterson, Duke University Press, 2003.

02/04

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Monuments and Colonial Expeditions and Photographing War



**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 127-141,

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

“Photography from the High Rockies,” 1869; reprinted in Beaumont Newhall, ed., *Photography: Essays and Images, Illustrated Readings in the History of Photography*, 1980 and Robert Adams, “In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century West,” in *Why People Photograph*; Lucy Lippard, “Doubletake: The Diary of a relationship with an image”

02/11

**Lecture and discussion of readings:** Survey Photography and the American West and its Peoples.

**Hand in your proposal ideas for your Photographic Writing assignment at the beginning of class.**

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 143-163

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Hugh W. Diamond, “On the Application of Photography to the Physiognomic and Mental Phenomena of Insanity” Eugene Richards, *A Procession of Them*. Catherine Lutz, Jane Collins, “The Photograph as an Intersection of Gazes: The Example of National Geographic”

02/18

**Exam One: Aesthetics and Technologies**

**II: Documentary: The Surveyors and the Surveyed**

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Photography, Medicine, and Anthropology

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 203-210, 279-308

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Roy E. Stryker, “Documentary Photography,” in *The Complete Photographer*, Russell Lee, *Photographs* [**HRC Reserve**]

02/25

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

FSA and the Limitations of Documentary Photography

**Final Writing Assignment proposal reflecting research work you have done documenting how you will do the**

**project and reflecting feedback and input you have received in previous communications with me must be handed in at start of class.**

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 309-337

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Henri Cartier-Bresson, Introduction to *The Decisive Moment*,  
John Berger, "Uses of Photography," in *About Looking* ;  
Karen Becker, "Photojournalism and the Tabloid Press"

03/04

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

The Rise of the Picture Magazine, Photojournalism and the Decisive Moment / Debates about the Public Uses of Photography

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 339-371

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Garry Winogrand, "Understanding Still Photographs," 1974,  
Susan Meiselas, "Central America and Human Rights," 2000,  
Robert Adams, "Susan Meiselas" *In Why People Photograph*;  
Bell Hooks, "In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life."

03/11

**Spring Break**

03/18

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Whose reality?: Street Photography / Photographic Witness  
**Paper assignments: Due**

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 165-201

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Henry Peach Robinson, "Idealism, Realism Expressionism," in *The Elements of Pictorial Photography*;

03/25

**Exam 2: Surveyors and Surveyed**

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Pictorialism and its Critics--

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 235-277

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Edward Weston, "Seeing Photographically; Alexander Rodchenko, "The Paths of Modern Photography;" Andre Breton, Surrealist Manifesto; Moholy-Nagy, A New Instrument of Vision; De Carava, Roy and Hughes, Langston, *The Sweetflypaper of Life*, **HRC Reserves**

04/01

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

American Modernism/The European Avant-Garde

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 372-389

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

John Szarkowski, Introduction to *The Photographer's Eye*

04/08

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Photography and the Museum

Guest speaker Curator Roy Flukinger.

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 423-491

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Art Photography and Postmodernism," Andy Grunberg, "The Crisis of the Real"

04/15

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Conceptualism and Post-Modernism

We will begin class presentations in the second half

Students presenting must arrange 1 week in advance to have the original HRC prints in the room when they present their work.

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 423-491

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Jeff Wall, "The Luminist," New York Times

04/22

**Lecture and discussion of readings:**

Staged Photography and the Cinematic/ Photographic Intimacy  
and the Gaze of Fashion

We will continue class presentations in the second half  
Students presenting must arrange 1 week in advance to have the  
original HRC prints in the room when they present their work.

For next class read: Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 493-519

Blackboard readings/reserve materials:

**For next class read:** Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 493-519

**Blackboard readings/reserve materials:**

Fred Ritchin, *After Photography* **HRC Reserves**

04/29

**Third Exam given in the first half of class.**

Second half of class will conclude WITH student  
presentations and a discussion of Fred Ritchin's book  
**AFTER PHOTOGRAPHY**

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS FOR BOTH UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SECTIONS OF THIS COURSE:**

Marien, Mary Warner. *Photography: A Cultural History*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Upper Saddle, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2011.

Ritchin, Fred, *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary and the Citizen*, Aperture, 2013

**Both books are available at the CO-OP, and at Amazon etc. MUST use the third edition of Marien book. There are pagination and other differences among editions.**

**REQUIRED TEXTS GRADUATE SECTION OF THIS COURSE:**

Morris, Errol, *Believing is Seeing*, (check UT libraries. I can put my personal copy on reserve if not available)...**HRC Reserves**

Ritchin, Fred, *After Photography*, (my personal copy) **HRC Reserves—do not remove from Library. Read in library or purchase the book.**

Sontag, Susan, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, (check UT libraries. I can put my personal copy on reserve if not available)...**HRC Reserves**

**PRELIMINARY CLASS RESERVE LIST AT UT LIBRARIES –  
Research projects both graduate and undergraduate**

(I will be adding more books. Not all are required reading, but all are related to course topics and will be valuable primary source materials to consult for writing assignments and book reports for class. You must use in the libraries.)

Barthes, Roland, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* **HRC Reserves**

**Reserves**

De Carava, Roy and Hughes, Langston, *The Sweetflypaper of Life*, **HRC Reserves**

Duncan, David Douglas, *David Douglas Duncan Portfolio*, **HRC Reserves**

Flukinger, Roy, *The Gernsheim Collection*, **HRC Reserves**

Gardner, Alexander. *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the Civil War*. 1866. Reprint, New York: Dover, 1959 **PCL Library Reserves**

Harker, Margaret, *Henry Peach Robinson: Master of Photographic Art: 1830-1901* **HRC Reserves**

Newhall, Beaumont, *The History of Photography: from 1839 to the Present* **HRC Reserves**

Peterson, Linda, Colson, JB, *Russell Lee Photographs* **HRC Reserves**

Pinney, Christopher, editor, *Photography's Other Histories*, Duke University Press, 2003 **PCL Library Reserves**

Richards, Eugene, *A Procession of Them*, **HRC Reserves**

Ritchin, Fred, *In Our Own Image*, **HRC Reserves**

Ritchin, Fred, *After Photography*, (my personal copy) **HRC Reserves**

Sontag, Susan, *On Photography* **HRC Reserves**

Szarkowski, John. *The Photographer's Eye*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966. **HRC Reserves**

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Required University Notices and Policies**

#### **University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

#### **Documented Disability Statement**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone),  
<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

#### **Plagiarism and the Consequences of Plagiarizing**

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/faculty/plagiarism/preventing.html>  
<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

#### **Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin**

The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning.

The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

#### **Use of Blackboard in Class**

This course will use Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give you online quizzes and surveys. You can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

### **Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

### **Religious Holy Days**

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the instructor of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the instructor will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

### **Emergency Evacuation Policy**

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office



**Q drop Policy**

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”