

Professor Nika Elder
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Lectures: M – Period 8
W – Periods 8 & 9
Location: FAC 201

ARH4710: Photography: Then and Now Spring 2017



Course Description

“This may be termed an age of pictures.” Although these words resonate with our current cultural moment, they were actually spoken by abolitionist Frederick Douglass in 1862, as he made a case for the intellectual, personal, and political significance of photography. Adopting a thematic approach rather than a chronological one, this course examines the persistent role that photography has played in the construction of knowledge in the United States from the medium’s invention in 1839 to the present day. We will address such topics as celebrity, the landscape, science, activism, and war and explore the ways in which historical and contemporary depictions of these subjects overlap and diverge. As such, the historical examples will put our current cultural moment in perspective, and the contemporary examples will illuminate the urgency of the historical images. In addition to lectures and discussions, the course includes guest speakers and site visits.

Course Requirements:

The course has two requirements: engagement and writing assignments.

1. ENGAGEMENT

The engagement requirement has four components:

1) Attendance

Attendance is required at every class session. Students are expected to arrive on time. Absences and/or continued lateness will adversely affect your engagement grade.

The University attendance policy can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx#absences>

In cases of religious observance, please notify me in advance of your absence and arrange to get notes from someone else in the class.

2) Reading

a. The course textbook is:

Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2014)

It is required and can be purchased at the UF bookstore or online.

The textbook provides critical background information for lecture, which will presume familiarity with names and dates mentioned therein. Readings from the textbook should be completed in advance of the dates for which they are assigned.

b. All other required readings are available in the “Course Reserves” section on Canvas.

Bring hardcopies of all readings to class. I strongly encourage you to print the texts prior to reading them so you can underline, highlight, and jot down notes, thoughts, and questions with abandon.

3) Participation

Participation is an integral component of the course and will be graded. Participating means:

1. **Taking productive notes on lecture.** Lectures go well beyond the textbook, so it is to your benefit to be as thorough in your note-taking as possible. See appendix A for effective note-taking strategies.

2. **Responding to the discussion questions on Canvas.** In order to help guide your reading of “outside sources,” i.e. non-textbook reading, discussion questions will be posted on Canvas. Responses are due by 12 am (midnight) the night before class. Responding Late posts will not be counted.

3. **Presenting and analyzing a popular image to the class.** Over the course of the semester, each student will present and analyze an image she or he has encountered in the media. Further instructions will be provided on the first day of class.

4. **Engaging in class discussions on readings and artworks.** Engaging in class discussion can take several different forms: answering questions, posing questions, agreeing or disagreeing with other students’ comments.

Feel free to draw connections to contemporary events and issues, personal experience, other classes, and material covered at any point in the semester. Offering opinions that differ from those presented in lecture or in comments by classmates is encouraged. Pose questions on the

lectures, statements made by other students, etc. These contributions will enrich the classroom experience for all involved.

4) Policies

Please adhere to all course policies.

Electronics Policy

Cell phones should be placed on silent and, along with other electronic devices, including laptops, put away for the duration of lecture and section. Notes can and should be taken with pen/pencil on paper rather than by laptop.

Research has proven that taking notes by hand benefits comprehension, retention, and the overall classroom experience. See, for example, the following article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* <http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/taking-notes-by-hand-benefits-recall-researchers-find/51411> and the journal article on which that piece was based http://www.academia.edu/6273095/The_Pen_Is_Mightier_Than_The_Keyboard_Advantages_of_Longh_and_Over_Laptop_Note_Taking

With documentation from the Dean of Students Office, a waiver will be made to the laptop policy.

Email Policy

Please check your UF email and Canvas regularly. Important information about assignments, meeting locations, etc. will be disseminated via section listservs. You are automatically subscribed to the listserv with your UF email. In most cases, I respond to emails within 24-48 hours.

Conduct Policy

As a matter of course, students are expected to abide by the University's policies regarding academic honesty, the honor code, and student conduct related to the honor code. Full information regarding these policies is available at the following sites:

Academic Honesty: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html#honesty>

Honor Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Student Conduct: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

2. WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

There are two short writing assignments for this course and a research paper, which is divided into three components.

The first short assignment (1-3 pages) will be a response to the Guerrilla Girls lecture on Thursday, February 9th. The second short assignment (1-3 pages) will be response to the panel discussion "In/visible: Women and Gender in Art" at the Harn Museum of Art. Detailed instructions will be provided in advance of both assignments.

The research paper (7-10 pages) will focus on a single photographic work or project produced in the United States or Europe from 1839 through the present. I strongly encourage you to choose a topic that you can analyze and study in person. Among other forums, it can be selected from the collection of the Harn Museum of Art or Special Collections. The research paper is divided into three components. Detailed instructions will be provided for each one:

- * a paragraph-long proposal of a topic is due on Monday, February 27th
- * the research proposal (approx. 3 pages) is due on Monday, March 13th
- * the paper is due on Monday, April 24th

Accommodations

Every effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities. Students in need of disability accommodations should schedule an appointment with me as soon as possible. All accommodations requests must be accompanied by necessary documentation from the Dean of Students Office.

Course Resources

1) Canvas – slide lists and any other documents distributed in class will be posted on the course page.

2) OFFICE HOURS: I'm happy to meet with you during my office hours Wednesdays, 5pm-6pm in my office, FAC 121, to discuss any questions pertaining to the course content, reading assignments, writing assignments, or exams. Office hours don't require an appointment; feel free to just drop by. If you're unavailable at the designated time, just ask or email me, and we can arrange another time to meet.

3) ACADEMIC SUPPORT

UF Teaching Center
<https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

UF Writing Studio
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

University Counseling & Wellness Center
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>

Grading

The final course grade is calculated as follows:

- 30% Engagement
- 10% Guerrilla Girls Response Paper
- 10% In/visible Response Paper
- 10% Paper Topic Proposal
- 15% Research Paper Proposal
- 25% Research Paper

All exams and assignments will be assigned letter grades and input into Canvas, which will calculate the final course grade. Grading rubrics for each component of the course can be found in the appendices to this syllabus. Following are UF's grade definitions:

A: 94-100

A-: 90-93

B+: 87-89

B: 84-86

B-: 80-83

C+: 77-79

C: 74-76

C-: 70-73

D+: 67-69

D: 64-66

D-: 61-63

F: 0-60

In order to pass this course, all assignments must be completed. No exceptions. To receive full credit, assignments must be turned in on time. Extensions will only be granted under special or extreme circumstances with valid documentation and, unless impossible, must be arranged in advance. Without an approved extension, late assignments will be marked down 1/3 of a grade per day. No make-up exams will be given without documentation demonstrating that the scheduled exam date is impossible.

Projected Course Schedule

All readings should be completed in advance of the lectures for which they are listed.

Week 1 Introduction

W Jan. 4 Introduction

POLITICS

Week 2 War

M Jan. 9 ...Its Fictions

Reading:

Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 40-43, 97-111

Optional:

Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 3-29 (early technical history of photography)

W Jan. 11 ...Its Realities

A Conversation about "Aftermath: The Fallout of War—America & the Middle East" with Carol McCusker, Curator of Photography, Harn Museum of Art

Reading:

Susan Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," *On Photography* (1973), pgs. 3-24

Susan Sontag, excerpts from *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2001), pgs. 95-126

Th Jan 12 Lecture of Interest!

Contemporary Photographer Arthur Wo
Music Building, Room 101 (MUB 101), 6pm

Week 3 Journalism

M Jan. 16 No Class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

For no reason other than your own personal enrichment, I recommend watching Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, which he delivered at the March on Washington in 1963: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0yP4aLyq1g>

W Jan. 18 2016 Election/Inauguration Coverage

Reading:

"In Sight, Yet Elusive," *NYTimes.org*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/us/politics/donald-trump-presidential-campaign.html>

“Life in the Lights,” *NYTimes.org*
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/us/politics/hillary-clinton-presidential-campaign.html?action=click&contentCollection=Politics&module=RelatedCoverage®ion=EndOfArticle&pgtype=article>
 “Why *Time’s* Trump Cover Is a Subversive Work of Art,” *Forward* (Dec. 8, 2016)
<http://forward.com/culture/356537/why-times-trump-cover-is-a-subversive-work-of-political-art/>
 Abigail Rockwell, “Who Moved the Norman Rockwell Painting in the Oval Office?,” *The Huffington Post* (Nov. 22, 2016)
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/who-moved-the-norman-rockwell-painting-in-the-oval_us_58333e46e4b08c963e344310

*** by 11:59pm on Tuesday, Jan. 19, upload to Canvas a popular photo related to the 2016 inauguration and/or domestic politics that you would like to discuss ***

Week 4 Social Change

M Jan. 23 Spectacle

Reading:
 Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 201-207
 Jacob Riis, “Preface” and “Introduction,” *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)

W Jan. 25 Commentary

Reading:
 Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 277-294, 416-421
 James Agee and Walker Evans, “Preface” and “Preamble,” *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Three Tenant Families* (1941)
 Martha Rosler, “In, Around, and Afterthoughts (on Documentary Photography)” in *Decoys and Disruptions: Selected Writings, 1975-2001*

Week 5 Conversations on Culture

M Jan. 30 Shock of the Real

Reading:
 Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 231-251
 Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility,” (1936)
 Steven Johnson, “Want To Know What Virtual Reality Might Become? Look to the Past,” *NYTimes.com*
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/06/magazine/want-to-know-what-virtual-reality-might-become-look-to-the-past.html?_r=1

W Feb. 1 A Conversation with Photographer Anthea Behm, Assistant Professor of Art, UF

Reading:
 TBD

Portraiture

Week 6 Frida Kahlo(es)

M Feb. 6 Class Canceled—Attendance at Lecture on 9th Required

W Feb. 8 “Mirror, Mirror...Portraits of Frida Kahlo”
Meet at the Harn Museum of Art

Reading:
TBD

Th Feb. 9 A Lecture by “Frida Kahlo” of the Guerrilla Girls
Harn Museum of Art, [exact time tbd; evening]

Writing:
Write a response paper based on the lecture

Week 7 The Populace

M Feb. 13 ...Identity Construction

Reading:
Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 56-69, 81
Andrea Volpe, “Cartes de Visite Portrait Photographs and the Culture of Class Formation,” in *The Middling Sorts: Explorations in the History of the American Middle Class* (2001)

Writing:

Response Paper 1 due on Canvas at noon

W Feb. 15 ...Identity Deconstruction

Reading:
Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 423-425, 423-432
Douglas Crimp, “On the Photographic Activity of Postmodernism,” *October* Vol. 15 (Winter, 1980), pp. 91-101

Week 8 Public Figures

M Feb. 20 Activists

Reading:
Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. [review earlier readings on 19th-century portraiture]
Frederick Douglass, “Age of Pictures” (1862), in *Picturing Frederick Douglass* (2015)

Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman" (1851)

W Feb. 22 Celebrities

Reading:

Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1973)

Kim Kardashian West, "Happy International Women's Day," KKW.com (2016)

+ responses (TBD)

Week 9 Gender

Sun Feb 26 In preparation for class on Wednesday, attend:
In/visible: Women and Gender in Art" at the Harn Museum of Art, time tbd (afternoon)

Reading:

Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," *ARTNews* (1971)

M Feb. 27 Writing Art History

Reading:

Jennifer Roberts, "Copley's Cargo: Boy with a Squirrel and the Dilemma of Transit,"
American Art Vol. 21, No. 2 (Summer 2007), pp. 20-41

Writing:

*** Paper Topic Due on Canvas by 5pm ***

W Mar. 1 "Intra-Action: Women Artists from the Harn Collection"

* Meet at the Harn Museum of Art *

Writing:

Response Paper 2 due on Canvas at noon

Week 10 SPRING BREAK

Week 11 Specimens

M Mar. 13 Past

Reading:

Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 149-154

Brian Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science: Louis Agassiz's Slave Daguerreotypes,"

American Art, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer, 1995), pp. 38-61

Writing:

*** Research Proposal Due on Canvas by 5pm ***

W Mar. 15 Present

A conversation with Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig, College of Medicine, UF

Class meets at the Medical School!

Reading:
TBD

Th Mar 16 Lecture of Interest!
Publically Engaged Artist Paul Ramirez-Jonas
Music Building, Room 101 (MUB 101), 6pm

Week 12 Children

M Mar. 20 At the Millennium

Reading:
Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 462-476
"Sally Mann: Place," Art21.org
<http://www.art21.org/videos/segment-sally-mann-in-place> (approx. 15 min.)
Anne Higonnet, "Knowing Childhood," *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood*

W Mar. 22 Researching Art History

Reading:
Wayne Booth, et al. "From Problems to Sources" in *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), pgs. 68-82

Gordon Harvey, "Integrating Sources into a Paper," *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1998), pgs. 3-13

Diana Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual* [skim]

Optional Reading:
Joseph Harris, "Forwarding," *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts* (Logan: Utah State University, 2006), pgs. 34-53

Week 13 "Deviance"

M Mar 27 Past

Reading:
Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 141-149
Allan Sekula, "The Body & The Archive," *October* vol. 39 (Winter, 1986), pgs. 3-64

W Mar. 29 Present

Reading:
Teju Cole, "Death in the Browser Tab," *NYTimes.org* (May 21, 2015)

Teju Cole, "The Superhero Photographs of the Black Lives Matter Movement,"
NYTimes.org (July 26, 2016)
Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (1980), pgs. 23-28, 63-72

Week 14 Presentations on Work in Progress

M Apr. 3 Student Research

W Apr. 5 Student Research

LANDSCAPE

Week 15 The City

M Apr. 10 ...as Landscape

Reading:

Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 179-184, 194-199

James Weldon Johnson, excerpt from *Black Manhattan in Harlem Renaissance Reader*

Walt Whitman, "Mannahatta," *Leaves of Grass* (1900)

W Apr. 12 ...as Anthropology

Reading:

Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 309-315, 337, 342-357

Jack Kerouac, "Introduction," *The Americans* (1959)

Th Apr 13 Lecture of Interest!
Curator Gene Moreno
Music Building, Room 101 (MUB 101), 6pm

Week 16 The Uncharted

M Apr. 17 The West

Reading:

Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, pgs. 125-139

Robin E. Kelsey, "Viewing the Archive: Timothy O'Sullivan's Photographs for the Wheeler Survey, 1871-74," *The Art Bulletin* Vol. 85, No. 4 (Dec., 2003), pp. 702-723

Martin Berger, "Landscape Photography and the White Gaze," *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture* (2005)

W Apr. 19 TBD

F Apr. 21 Final Paper Due on Canvas by 5pm

Appendix A

Note-Taking Strategies

In listening to lectures and class discussions, keep track of the following things, which will help you to formulate and develop your research paper:

1. the meaning of individual works of art

Lectures will offer historically situated interpretations of individual works of art. That is to say, they will explain what a given work of art says about its subject and why. Things to listen for include:

- * the subject of a work of art
 - * reasons why an artist took up a given subject
- * how the artist depicted that subject
 - * what decisions did she or he make?
- * the pictorial or cultural circumstances that informed those decisions
- * finally, what those decisions mean for the work of art: what the work says about its subject and why

2. overlooked aspects of works or artists addressed in class, which you may then want to take up in your research paper; questions you have about the medium of photography and/or specific case studies, themes, or issues raised in class—again, it is helpful to keep track of these things so you can locate a paper topic that enables you to address them

3. the ways in which photographic approaches to course themes have remained similar and/or shifted over time and *why*—what accounts for the persistence of those approaches and/or the changes made to them

4. theoretical conceptualizations of photography—how artists have consciously or unconsciously defined the function, possibilities, and limitations of the medium

Appendix B

Engagement: Grading Rubric

A: student has gone above and beyond in achieving the course goals—has really tried to learn and understand the meaning and significance of photography in Western art. The student read and processed the readings, was prepared for class, consistently offered thoughtful and insightful responses to discussion posts on Canvas, and truly advanced class conversation by posing probing questions, making deep insights into the readings, offering alternative viewpoints, or noting complicating factors. It goes without saying that this student has attended all classes, always arrived on time, and adhered to other course policies.

A-: great, but falls just short of the above.

B+: a very good effort. Usually did and processed the readings; offered some insightful discussion posts on Canvas; regularly contributed to conversations by answering questions, but also introducing new points, questions, etc.

B: a good effort. Student did the reading, posted responses to discussion questions on Canvas, and regularly answered questions in class. This student has attended almost all class sessions, generally arrived on time, and adhered to other course policies.

B-: an okay effort. Student usually did the reading, responded to discussion posts on Canvas, and answered questions on occasion.

C+: almost there. Student usually shows up for class, mostly on time, but has yet to really make her or his presence known by participating in the conversation; unclear whether or not the readings have been done; intermittently posts responses to discussion questions on Canvas.

C: falls short of the above in some way.

C-: falls short of a C+ in more than one way.

D: something that makes the grade not an F.

F: student is disengaged from the class—does not attend class regularly and, therefore, has not put herself or himself in a position to fulfill the engagement requirement.

Appendix C

Papers: Grading Rubric

A = meets and exceeds assignment goals. There's something about the paper that's truly exciting and fresh and revelatory—it really captures your attention. The argument is insightful and well supported by the evidence provided (i.e. the student's descriptions and analysis of the work of art and, when relevant, published sources); the structure serves the argument, and the paper is, as a whole, convincing and a pleasure to read.

A- = the paper falls just short of the above. It's great, but misses some key aspect of the work or offers an insightful thesis, but not necessarily a surprising or unexpected one.

B+ = a very good effort, but the argument could be better executed; some aspects of the work or context might go unaddressed, the analysis could be deeper, the research (when required) more thorough or original, the interpretation/thesis could be clearer.

B = a solid effort. There's a sense of a thesis/interpretation, but it's a bit vague or general. The structural logic behind these papers tends to be a bit unclear. The paper may address some key aspects of the work and offer analyses of some descriptions, but not others.

B- = meets the basic criteria for the assignment in some way shape or form. It moves beyond description, but not by very much.

C+ = on the way to getting the basics of art history: lots of description of the work and its context, but little analysis and no clear point/thesis, though there are glimmers of hope and promise.

C = all description all the time

C- = the paper puts forward some effort, but it's unclear to what end; the student doesn't seem to understand the assignment, formal analysis, etc.

D = something that makes the paper not an F

F = the paper lacks an awareness of the assignment, art history, etc. These papers are often significantly shorter than the stipulated length.

Appendix D

Potential Paper Topics

Below is a list of themes and artists you might consider in choosing a topic for the final paper. The list is by no means exhaustive or comprehensive; it includes several artists and topics that—due to time constraints—could not be addressed in class. Additional artists can be found in the course textbook and the textbook *Art since 1900* (available in the Art Library).

Family of Man (MoMA exhibition)
Documentation of performance art
Street Photography
Color Photography
Adolescence, such as Rineke Dijkstra (in the Harn collection)
The Family
Berenice Abbott (the city)
Helen Levitt (the city)
Tina Modotti
Edward Weston
W.E.B DuBois
Ethnographic Photography
Deathbed Photography
Spiritualist Photography
Travel Photography
Art Reproduction (photographs of architecture or sculpture)