

CP 415 001 Photographic Criticism and Practice T TH 12:35-1:50 COMM 1122  
 Dr. R. Malcolm-Woods  
 618 453 6281 [MALCOLM@SIU.EDU](mailto:MALCOLM@SIU.EDU) Office Hours: M-W 1-2 or by appointment  
 Teaching Assistant: John Corson [jcorson@siu.edu](mailto:jcorson@siu.edu)

## SYLLABUS

### Unit I: PHOTOGRAPHY DEBATES AND SOCIAL HISTORY

- 1-17 Class Overview
- 1-19 Lecture: Aesthetics and Technology and Contemporary Debates PACI pg 9-35  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Susan Sontag, "Plato's Cave", "The Image World"  
On Photography pg 3-24, 153-180.-handout and lib res
- 1-24 Lecture: Histories of Photography PACI pg 45-52.  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida lib res
- 1-26 Lecture: Photography and Social Theory PACI pg 53-60.  
 Discussion: Do these theories work for you as a photographer, why and how? Do they influence your practice? Bring in an example and a supporting argument for your position.

### Unit 2: SURVEYORS AND SURVEYED

- 1-31 Lecture: Social Facts and Documentary Photography PACI pg 68-88.  
 Class Discussion and Reading: John Tagg, "God's Sanitary Law" in The Burden of Representation, pg 117-153. lib res
- 2-2 Lecture: The Construction of Documentary an FSA PACI pg 89-98  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Allan Sekula, "Dismantling Modernism, Reinventing Documentary" in Photography: Current Perspectives J. Leibling ed. lib res
- 2-7 Lecture: Documentary Since the Second World War pg 99-115.  
 Discussion: What is the status of documentary photography today, right now? How is American culture using this form and at what level has it saturated society? How does documentary photography function within your work? Bring in examples and a supporting argument for your position.

### Unit 3: PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY

- 2-9 Lecture: Domestic and Beyond PACI pg 119-135  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Susan Sontag, "America, Seen Through Photographs Darkly", On Photography pg 27-48. lib res
- 2-14 Lecture: The Working Class Pictures Themselves PACI pg 136-159.  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Chp 2 and 3 Barrett CP 15-52.
- 2-21 Discussion: Is there still such a thing as a snapshot, in lieu of digital imagery? How does technology affect the term "snap shot"?

### Unit 4: PHOTOGRAPHY AND COMMODITY CULTURE

- 2-23 Lecture: Photography as Commodity PACI pg 166-184.  
 Class Discussion and Reading: John Berger, Ways of Seeing Ch 1 & 7 lib res.
- 2-28 Lecture: Fashion Photography PACI pg 185-201.

- Class Discussion and Reading: Roland Barthes, “The Rhetoric of the Image” in Image, Music, Text, S. Heath ed., London: Fontana. lib res
- 3-2 Lecture: Image and Context PACI pg 202-216.  
Class Discussion and Reading: L. Back and V. Quaade, 1993. “Dream Utopias, Nightmare Realities: Imagining Race and Culture with the World of Benetton”, Third Text 22. lib res
- 3-7 Essay Question Review
- 3-9 MID TERM ESSAY EXAM**
- 3-11 TO 3-18 SPRING BREAK

#### UNIT 5: THE SUBJECT AS OBJECT AND THE HUMAN BODY

- 3-21 Lecture: Objects of Desire: Women, Fetishism, Homoerotic etc. PACI pg 219-230  
Class Discussion and Reading: Abigail Solomon-Godeau, “Reconsidering Erotic Photography: Notes for a Project of Historical Salvage”, in Photography in the Dock, On line
- 3-23 Lecture: The Body in Crisis PACI pgs 231-247  
Class Discussion and Reading: Carole S. Vance, 1990. “The Pleasures of Looking: the Attorney General’s Commission on Pornography versus Visual Images” in Carol Squires, ed. The Critical Image: Essays on Contemporary Photography. On line
- 3-28 Reading and Discussion: Michel Foucault, “Incitement to Discontent”, in The History of Sexuality, pg 17-35. lib res  
What part does the artist’s intentions play in the decision as to an image being labeled pornography or art? Can this question be answered on a public level of is it a personal issue? How do you think the National Endowment for the Arts should respond to photographs that seem to walk the line between pornography and not? Have a position and bring examples to class to bolster your argument.

#### UNIT 6: PHOTOGRAPHY AS ART

- 3-30 Lecture: Early Debates and Practices PACI pg 253-264.  
Class Discussion and Reading: Roger Seamon, “From the World is Beautiful to the Family of Man: The Plight of Photography as a Modern Art”, The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol. 55, No. 3 (Summer, 1997), 245-252. On line
- 4-4 Lecture: The Modern Era PACI pgs 265-276.  
Class Discussion and Reading: Carol Armstrong, 1989, “The Reflexive and the Possessive View: Thoughts on Kertesz, Brandt, and the Photographic Nude”, Representations, No 25 (Winter, 1989), 57-70. On line
- 4-6 Lecture: Late 20thc Perspectives PACI pg 277-289.  
Class Discussion and Reading: Andy Grundberg, 1990, “Crisis of the Real”, Crisis of the Real, pg 1-17. lib res.
- 4-11 Photography within the Institution PACI pgs 290-299.  
Class Discussion and Reading: Andy Grundberg, 1990, “The Machine and the Garden: Technology, and the End of Innocent Space”, The Crisis of the Real, New York, Aperture. pg 50-65. lib res.

## UNIT 7: PHOTOGRAPHY AND DIGITAL SPACE

- 4-11 Lecture: A Post-Photographic Era  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Barbara Savedoff, "Escaping Reality: Digital Imagery and the Resources of Photography", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 55, No. 2, Perspectives on the Arts and Technology (Spring, 1997), 201-214. On line
- 4-13 Lecture: Technological Change and Cultural Continuity  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Timothy Binkley, "The Vitality of Digital Creation", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 55, No. 2, Perspectives on the arts and Technology (Spring 1997), 107-116. On line
- 4-18 Lecture: Digitization, Photojournalism and the Postmodern Connection  
 Class Discussion and Reading: Steinar Kvale, "Themes of Postmodernity"; Charles Jencks, "What is Post-Modernism?"; Umberto Eco, "I love you madly," He said Self-consciously", all in The Truth about the Truth: De-confusing and Re-constructing the Postmodern World, ed. Walter Truett Anderson, 1995. All lib res
- 4-20 Class Discussion: Has photography ended as we know it? How does the issue of image mobility and comodification affect the truth in an image? Does the pedagogy of digitization fit with the pedagogy of postmodernity?

### STUDENT PRESENTATIONS- FINAL PAPERS DUE AT BEGINNING OF PRESENTATION 4-25, 4-27, 5-2, 5-4

Journals: Students will complete computer generated written responses to each reading, due at the beginning of each class period. 50 points

Midterm essay exam: A midterm will be given over the theories and topics covered the first half of the semester. 25 points (Don't panic we will discuss the essay questions one week before the exam.)

Presentation: Students will present the argument discussed in their term papers in a 10 min class presentation. 10 points

Term paper: Students will write a tight 5-7 page compare and contrast paper using a minimum of two theorists to clarify why they position themselves and their work within a certain theory. This would include why they do not fit within other theories, along with visual examples. Visuals should be on the last page and not included in the 5-7 page count. Paper should include a title page with instructor's name, CP 415, and student's name. 15 points

(Professor will be happy to pre-read papers one week ahead)

Absences: Three unexcused absences will result in the lowering of the final grade by one letter.

Textbooks: Liz Wells, ed. 1998. Photography: A Critical Introduction. Bell & Bain Ltd., Glasgow.

Barrett, Terry. 2000. Criticizing Photographs. McGraw-Hill Company, New York, New York.

Readings: Readings are either in the library reserve folder or on line. The syllabus notes where the reading is located.