

Media Analysis: History Through the Lens

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John Holloran

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Email: 7am- 7pm weekdays.

In this history course we will focus on photographic images as primary sources that can be found, introduced, documented, described, analyzed, and interpreted to help understand and write about the past and the world around us. We will also look to scholarly work, secondary sources that can help connect one to existing discussions and to provide context and perspective for readers.

The class is divided into three main units:

Unit One provides an overview of key topics, terminology, skills, approaches, and techniques, such as image analysis, documentation, and narrative.

Unit Two allows time and space to choose a historical topic to investigate in depth and to demonstrate key scholarly skills and understandings through writing.

Unit Three provides occasion and a framework for applying the skills and understandings to a current area of interest and concern and to demonstrate skills and understanding through multimedia and/or other forms of presentation.

The subject matter is divided up into four main, overlapping quadrants that help introduce, broaden the focus at first, and then to help narrow the focus for detailed study and offer a range for student choice.

Core Element	History & the Art of Photography	History & the Science & Technology of Photography	History, Evidence, & Documenting Reality in Photography	The Historiography of Photography
	<p>What: Where does photography fit into the history of art?</p> <p>How: How does one study photography as an artform and in relation to art history?</p> <p>Why: Why does the history of photography as an art matter to me? What can I learn from studying it? What are the implications for me? How can I apply what I am learning?</p>	<p>What: Where does photography fit into the history of technology? What can one learn from the evolution of photographic technology and technique?</p> <p>How: How does one study photography as a technology?</p> <p>Why: Why does the history of photography as technology matter to me? What can I learn from studying it? What are the implications for me? How can I apply what I am learning?</p>	<p>What: What has photography meant to the unfolding of history in the past two centuries?</p> <p>How: How do photographers influence what happens? How far do they record what happens? How far do photographers construct reality?</p> <p>Why: Why does the history of photography and its role in representing reality to me and the world? What can I learn from studying it? What are the implications for me? How can I apply what I am learning?</p>	<p>What: What has the invention and spread of photography meant for historians? What are some of the opportunities and challenges has it introduced?</p> <p>How: How do historians manage, analyze, document, interpret photographs as evidence? How can a historian use photographs to help explore and interpret and narrate the past?</p> <p>Why: Why does the study of history matter to me? What can I learn from studying it? What are the implications for me? How can I apply what I am learning?</p>
Sample Topics:	Pictorialism Successionists Surrealists Portraiture	Camera Obscura Daguerreotype Stereographs Film Consumer	Investigative War Celebrity/Fashion Social Unrest Propaganda	Source Criticism Posed/Cropped/Retouched Representative Authentication Documentation

Progressive/Social Realism Conservation/Nature Street Photography Abstract Expressionism Gritty Realism Modernism Postmodernism	Fast lens Flash Color Polaroid Digital Optics Shutter Speed, Aperture, Film Speed	Marketing Press Government Corporations Censorship Law/Forensic Scientific - Micro to Astro Satellite Medical - diagnostic Selfie/Snapshot/Family Ethics	Photo Essay Documentary Narrative
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General Skills

- Image/Film/Media Analysis - introducing a primary source - use of detail, description, analysis, interpretation, and tools of critique
- Documentation - proper attribution, citation, and source criticism
- Research - find rich sources (primary and secondary), produce and organize useful and efficient notes
- Historical & Reflective Writing - Demonstrate understanding through writing.
- Communication/Presentation - Use multimedia technology as tools to communicate effectively with an audience.

General Understandings:

- How **history** is relevant to me and how I understand and engage my world
- That **historians** ask questions, search for evidence, engage other works of scholarship, tell stories, present & document sources.
- The ways that **perspective**, lenses, filters, perception, representation all influence the way one understands and presents reality.
- How **photography** is relevant to me and how I understand and engage my world
- How **media** shape the ways that I see, construct, and understand reality; that **media** is constructed and how one can approach and respond to media critically and thoughtfully.
- Key **terms** and **concepts** that historians & photographers use to create meaning.

Assessments and Evidence of Understanding

Unit 1: ~ 4 weeks

Photo Analysis - written depiction, annotation, response, and critique.

Photo Presentation (with Annotations) to class for discussion & critique.

Scrapbook Entries - blog-style writing with images, annotations, research notes, reflections, Think Question responses.

Portfolio - Polish and present Four scrapbook entries, one for each core element -

Assessment criteria: Visual Design, Research, Documentation/Annotation, Reflection

Unit 2: ~ 6 weeks

Major Project—historical narrative/investigation - using photographs

Written Form: Your Voice, introduce, document and present evidence, introduce, document, present secondary scholarship

Unit 3: ~ 6 weeks Major Project—Current Concern Presentation communicating with Photographic images.

Use photography as a resource for communication

Final: Personal Reflection Essay - tie the three units together during an in-class write.

Beginning: Reading instructions. Not sure where to start. Trying to comply. Your work does not yet meet specifications.

Developing: (C range)

Your work Partially meets specifications. You are Actively asking questions and seeking feedback to understand the purpose of the requirements, actively experimenting with techniques and strategies. Beginning to see the possibilities.

Proficient: (B range)

Usually your work meets baseline requirements for work to earn full credit - and be accepted for evaluation:

1. Completion - Presence of three main frames (personal/feature frame, primary/evidence frame, secondary/scholarly frame).
2. Scholarship: proper citations, introduction and integration of primary and secondary sources.
3. Basic Format - header, title, name, date, etc.
4. Presented to an audience - readers, listeners, viewers - for feedback
5. Reflection on process

Ready: (A range)

You Consistently you express yourself with work that is distinctive in one or more ways.

Evidence of distinction:

1. Discipline/Craft: execution, efficacy, technical specs, documentation, notes
2. Quality: look, aesthetic, creativity, design, structure, polish
3. Personal Voice/Perspective: ownership, expression, connection, relevance, engagement, insight,
4. Exploration: depth of research, use of sources, interviews, breadth, depth, scope
5. Subject Matter: topic, area of focus, interest

Course [Indicators](#)

[History Department Policies](#)

(Late work etc.)