

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY

Communications A369-001
Spring 2011

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Office Hours: M 2-4; W 2-4; TTH 2-3:30; and by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An advanced photography course in which students complete an in-depth documentary project. The work of major documentary photographers will be studied.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students will demonstrate the ability to create publishable photographic essays. Students will be able to identify and understand the work of major documentary photographers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course should contribute to your knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- creation of publishable photographs that demonstrate strong composition, appropriate focus, effective use of light and depth of field and excellent exposure control.
- critical analysis of photographs and photographic essays
- creation of publishable photographic essays
- understanding of the ways significant technological innovations have affected the content and style of photographs
- evaluation of the influence of photography on reform movements and public understanding of social conditions
- understanding of the influence photographs have had on our understanding of the past

PREREQUISITE: CMMN 265 or permission of the instructor

TEXTS:

Mark Durden, Dorothea Lange, Phaidon Press (hardcover or paper edition)
Brett Abbott, Engaged Observers: Documentary Photography Since the Sixties, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2010

Other readings will be placed on e-reserve or Loyola library reserve

PHOTO EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT:

Some digital and film cameras, lenses and flashes are available for your use. I will show them to you in class. They can be checked out from the equipment room on the 4th floor during regular office hours, 8:30-4:45 M-F. Cameras with attached lenses may be checked out for a week at a time. Telephoto zoom lenses and flashes may be checked out for two days at a time. You must provide your own film or memory cards. You are responsible for loss of or damage to the equipment. If you break it, damage it or lose it, you must pay for it. Equipment will be inspected for damage upon return.

ETHICS:

Credibility is the mainstay of photojournalism and documentary photography. If people cannot trust the truthfulness of a photograph, it is worthless. As a result, you must not alter an image on the computer beyond industry standards. Also, you must not create or reenact a moment that is represented as spontaneous. A failing grade in the course will result from infractions of these important ethical rules.

In this course, we subscribe to the National Press Photographers Association's ethical guidelines:

http://www.nppa.org/professional_development/business_practices/ethics.html

INTEGRITY OF SCHOLARSHIP:

You must do all of your own photography and writing. Read "Integrity of Scholarship and Grades," in the online Undergraduate Bulletin:

http://2010bulletin.loyno.edu/undergraduate/academic_regs/contents.php - integrity

A violation will result in a failing grade for the course.

ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to attend all classes. Two absences will be excused. After that, one point per absence will be deducted from the final grade for each class missed. If you miss 15% of all classes you will probably fail the course. I expect you to come to class on time. If you are more than 10 minutes late you will be counted absent.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

You need to turn off and put away cell phones and laptops when class begins. Do not bring food to class and please refrain from chewing gum. Please do not leave the room during class.

GRADING:

Midterm: 20%

Quizzes-10%

Oral Presentation: 15%

Exhibit paper: 5%

Photo Essay: 50% (preliminary photos = 20% of this grade)

GRADING SCALE:

A= 90-100 (for exceptional work)
B= 80-87, B+ = 88-89 (for good work)
C= 70-77, C+ = 78-79 (for average work)
D= 60-67, D+ = 68-69 (for less than average work)
F = below 60 (for inadequate work)

MAKE – UPS:

No make-ups will be given and no late photo assignments will be accepted, barring EXCEPTIONAL circumstances. Missed test and photo deadlines will result in a grade of zero.

DARKROOM POLICIES:

Only students registered for a photography class are allowed in the darkroom. Darkroom must be left in clean condition when work is completed.

DISABILITY SERVICES:

If you have a disability that qualifies for accommodations, you should contact Sarah Mead Smith, Director of Disability Services, at 865-2990 (Academic Resource Center, Room 405, Monroe Hall). If you need test accommodations (e.g. extended time), you need to let me know well in advance of a scheduled test and give me an official Accommodation Form from Disability Services.

PHOTO PROJECT:

You will complete one in-depth photo essay. You may choose to use either digital or film cameras. We will critique work prints throughout the semester (generally, 10-15 prints for each session). Film-based work photos will be printed on 5x7 RC paper. Digital images will be printed on 8 x 10 computer photo paper. The final presentation of your essay will consist of 12 matted prints. You will also hand in all work prints, contact sheets, negatives or CDs with your final project.

If you are working in digital, you must already know the basics of Photoshop and you must complete the tutorial on Lynda.com on camera raw files:

<http://www.lynda.com/home/DisplayCourse.aspx?lpk2=61903>

I will be available to go over any questions you might have, and we will have a class session to review toning techniques and printing.

If you are working with film, you must have previous darkroom experience. I will put a chapter on archival printing on reserve in the Communications office, and we will have a lab session in the darkroom.

DOCUMENTARY PHOTO ESSAY:

You should use the following POYI guidelines when choosing your photo essay subject. Choose one of the following categories:

A. An issue-related essay that explores an important social, economic, or political issue.
or

B. An essay that reflects the human experience, celebrates life, or chronicles a cultural trend.

Your subject must be located in the New Orleans region. This course is included in the New Orleans Studies minor.

ORAL PRESENTATION:

You will present a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation on the work of one major documentary photographer. You will have ONLY 15 minutes, so practice ahead of time and make sure you can complete your presentation in this time. The presentation should contain only pictures, titles and dates, not an outline or the written report. On the day of your presentation, you will hand in an outline of your report and a complete bibliography. You cannot read your report. You need to master the material thoroughly and present it in an engaging and informative manner. Additional specifics of this assignment will be discussed in class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

It is essential that you take an active role in this class. You are expected to carefully and thoughtfully critique your classmates' photographs, participate in all class discussions and keep up with the reading.

Photo critiques are central to the learning experience in photography. If you want to improve your own work, you will benefit by contributing to everyone's critiques. Your thoughtful participation in critique sessions will be reflected in your class participation grade.

BLACKBOARD:

The Blackboard system can be accessed online at <http://loyno.blackboard.com>. In the event of an evacuation, you will be required to check the system for announcements and responsible for all assignments posted therein.

SUPPLIES:

film developer, as needed
photo paper, as needed
film, or memory card, CDs
scissors, film reel (if needed)

ASSIGNMENTS:

Jan. 11 -- Introduction

Jan. 13 -- POYI Exhibit, Louisiana ArtWorks, 725 Howard Ave.

Newspaper issue reporting—Picture Story: <http://www.poyi.org/67/17/index.php>,
http://www.poyi.org/67/17/second_01.php, http://www.poyi.org/67/17/ae01_01.php

Issue Reporting-Freelance/Agency: http://www.poyi.org/67/20/first_01.php

POYI, World Understanding Award: <http://www.poyi.org/67/WUA/index.php>

Jan. 18 “Community Service Photojournalism: Lessons From a Contest, Part 1 (2006)
<http://www.newsu.org/>

Jan 20 – Brett Abbott, “Engaged Observers in Context,” in Engaged Observers

Jan 25 –Jacob Riis (reserve),

POYI Exhibit paper due

Jan. 27 – Lewis Hine (reserve)

Feb. 1 – Lighting, Barbara London, Photography: The Essential Way, Ch.11
Essay topics due, 1 page typed descriptions

Feb 3 – Dorothea Lange

Feb. 8 – Lab session for film students only. Students must have completed chapter on archival printing.

Feb 10 – Lab session for digital students only. Digital students must have completed Lynda.com tutorial.

Feb. 15 – W. Eugene and Aileen M. Smith, “Minamata,” in Engaged Observers

Feb 17 -- work prints due, critique

Feb. 24 – Mary Ellen Mark, “Streetwise,” and Lauren Greenfield, “Fast Forward and Girl Culture,” in Engaged Observers

March 1 – Midterm

March 3 – Leonard Freed, “Black in White America,” and Larry Towell, “The Mennonites,” in Engaged Observers

March 15 -- Work prints due, critique

March 17 – Critique

March 22 -- Student presentations

March 24 – Student presentations

March 29 -- Work prints due, critique

March 31 -- Critique

April 5 –Susan Meiselas, “Nicaragua,” and Sebastiao Salgado, “Migrations,” in Engaged Observers

April 7 -- Final print selection

April 12 -- Final print selection

April 14 -- Student presentations. **Essay copy due**

April 26 – Student presentations

April 28 – **Final Essays Due**

May 3 -- Quiz on student presentations

May 5 -- Matted Prints due

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHERS FOR STUDENT REPORTS

Russell Lee	Robert Frank
Berenice Abbott	Marion Post Wolcott
Jill Freedman	Gilles Peress
Laura Gilpin	Danny Lyon
Doris Ulmann	Josef Koudelka
Edward S. Curtis	Roman Vishniac
James Van Der Zee	Donna Ferrato
Paul Strand	Larry Fink
Walker Evans	Jane Atwood
Bruce Davidson	Helen Levitt

Bill Owens	Ruth Orkin
Brassai	Arnold Genthe
Eugene Richards	Eudora Welty
Francis Frith	Willy Ronis
Cornell Capa	Graciela Iturbide
Tina Modotti	Frances Benjamin Johnston
David Burnett	Jodi Cobb
Sam Abell	Annie Griffiths Belt
Susan Meiselas	Gordon Parks

Some Interesting Documentary Photography Web Sites:

FiftyCrows

www.fiftycrows.org Time-Life Pictures

www.timelifepictures.com

Photo District News: pdn online

<http://www.pdn-pix.com/pdn/gallery/index.jsp>

National Geographic

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

MediaStorm

<http://www.mediastorm.com/>

Verve Photo

<http://vervephoto.wordpress.com/>

International Center of Photography

www.icp.org

FocalPoint f/8

www.f.com

Magnum Photos

www.magnumphotos.com

Time Online Edition

www.time.com/time/photoessays

The Washington Post Photo Galleries

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/photo/

The National Press Photographers Association
www.nppa.org

The Digital Journalist
<http://digitaljournalist.org>

Pictures of the Year International
www.poyi.org

Reportage: The Online Magazine of Photojournalism
www.reportage.org

Black Star
www.blackstar.com