

ARTH 350-001: History of Photography Fall 2016

Monday/Wednesday 1:30-2:45pm

Art & Design Building 2026

Professor Kerry Roeder

kroeder@gmu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30pm

Office: Robinson B 373A

Course Description

This class surveys the history of photography beginning with its nineteenth century origins and continuing into the present. We will consider how the photograph has been alternately employed as a scientific document, an aesthetic object, and a mass cultural icon. Due attention will be given to the technical, historical and artistic contexts under which this distinctive medium has evolved over time. Readings will include historical documents and artists' statements as well as critical essays on the art form. Museum visits, slide lectures, and class discussions will provide students with the tools to formally analyze artworks and place them within their socio-historical context. Written assignments, exams, and class presentations will foster the development of research, writing, and critical-thinking skills.



Course Materials

Required Texts:

Mary Warner Marien: *Photography: A Cultural History* (4th Edition), 2014.

Alan Trachtenberg (editor): *Classic Essays on Photography*, 1980.

Course Requirements

Attendance and active participation in class discussion is expected. Assigned readings must be completed before coming to class; they are central to successful participation in this course. All assignments must be turned in during class on the due date.

There will be two exams in the course of the semester. There will be a midterm (15%) and a final exam (20%). Exams will place an emphasis on essay questions, along with a selection of slide identifications and terms. Review sheets will be provided for all exams. The final is not cumulative. No make-up exams. Exceptions may be made in the event of a documented medical or family emergency, at the professor's discretion.

In addition to the exams I require an exhibition review (15%) and a final project (20%). The exhibition review requires that you to visit a local museum and write a three page (double-spaced) review of one of its photography exhibitions. For your final project I will ask you to write a five page (double-spaced) research paper that focuses on a single photograph that captures your interest. Your paper will include a formal analysis of the photo, background information on the circumstances of its production, a discussion of how it relates to other images and the history of photography in general. You will present your findings to the class at the end of the semester. All late work will be docked half a letter grade (5 points) each day past deadline. No paper will be accepted after being five days late.

Participation grades (15%) will be determined by your contributions to class discussions. Students should have assigned readings completed before class meetings so they will be able to ask questions about the readings and participate in class discussions. In order to receive an A, you must contribute regularly and thoughtfully to in class discussion. If you attend regularly and participate fairly often you will receive B. Sporadic contributions to the class will result in a C; if you spend the entire class lost in your cellphone you will receive a D. Poor attendance and/or a serial lack of engagement in class discussion will result in a failing class participation grade.

Reading Responses (15%) are required on a weekly basis. In order to encourage a more in depth engagement with the readings, I will ask you to post a response to the readings to the Discussions area of Blackboard in advance of the day's discussion (on either Monday or Wednesday). Please make at least three original, insightful points in your response- these points can take the form of a question, a criticism or an observation. Reading Responses must be posted to the Week's discussion board by 1pm on the day of class. Late responses will be of no benefit to the day's conversation; therefore they will not be accepted.

Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class.

No cellphones or electronic devices whatsoever. This includes laptops, unless you have need of academic accommodations that require the use of a laptop. Unexcused absences will adversely affect your class participation grade.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the [Office of Disability Services](mailto:ods.gmu.edu) at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Papers must be free of grammatical mistakes and written in clear, standard English. The Writing Center can provide assistance with writing, please contact them well in advance of assignment deadlines: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.

Academic honesty is expected in all tests and writing assignments. Plagiarism

is a serious offense and violation of the George Mason University Honor Code and will be reported to the Honor Committee. Always, always cite your sources.

Syllabus is subject to change. Contact me if you have any questions.

Grading

Participation	15%
Reading Responses	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Exhibition Review	15%
Research paper	20%
Final Exam	20%

Grade Scale

A = 100-93	A- = 92-90	B+ = 89-87	B = 86-83	B- = 82-80	C+ = 79-77
C = 76-73	C- = 72-70	D+ = 69-67	D = 66-63	D- = 62-60	F = 59 & below

Important Dates

First day of class	August 29
Labor Day, no class	September 5
Last day of add/drop with no penalty	September 6
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	September 20
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	September 30
Midterm	October 5
Columbus Day, no class	October 10
Exhibition Review due	October 12
Final Paper Outline due	November 16
Thanksgiving Recess, no class	November 23
Final Presentations	November 30, Dec. 5 & 7
Last Day of Classes, Final Paper due:	December 7
Final Exam:	December 14

Schedule

Week 1	Introductions TOPICS: Course Introduction, syllabus review
Mon 8/29	READ: Syllabus
Wed 8/31	READ: Marien Ch. 1 & 2 (3-37); Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," <i>Classic Essays in Photography</i> , henceforth <i>CEP</i> , pp.37-38

	<p>*Please email me or bring a photo to share with the class. It can be a photo you have taken, or just one that you enjoy. Be prepared to talk a little bit about why it appeals to you.</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Mon. 9/5</p> <p>Wed. 9/7</p>	<p>The Origins of Photography TOPICS: Niepce, Daguerre and Talbot</p> <p>LABOR DAY, no class</p> <p>READ: Marien Ch. 2 (38-72) Talbot, "A Brief Historical Sketch of the Invention of the Art," <i>CEP</i>, pp. 27-36</p> <p>BROWSE: Daguerreotypes at the Library of Congress http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/dag/mirror.html#miportrait.html</p> <p>*Please email me or bring a photo to share with the class. It can be a photo you have taken, or just one that you enjoy. Be prepared to talk a little bit about why it appeals to you. **Begin posting reading responses starting this week*</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Mon. 9/12</p> <p>Wed. 9/14</p>	<p>Social and Instrumental Uses of Photography TOPICS: Daguerre and Talbot, Nadar,, J.T. Zealy</p> <p>READ: Marien Ch. 2 (32-75)</p> <p>READ: Marien Ch. 2 (32-75)</p> <p>BROWSE: Daguerreotypes at Harvard http://preserve.harvard.edu/daguerreotypes/</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Mon. 9/19</p> <p>Wed. 9/21</p>	<p>Records of War TOPICS: Mathew Brady, Alexander Gardner</p> <p>READ: Marien Ch. 3 (77-95); Baudelaire, "The Modern Public and Photography," <i>CEP</i> pp.83-90</p> <p>READ: Marien Ch. 4 (99-113)</p> <p>BROWSE: Photography and the Civil War http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/phcw/hd_phcw.htm</p>
Week 5	<p>Picturing the West; Photography and Science TOPICS: Watkins, O'Sullivan</p>

Mon. 9/26	READ: Marien Ch. 4 (130-141); Rosalind Krauss, "Photography's Discursive Spaces" (Blackboard)
Wed. 9/28	READ: Marien Ch. 5 (143-161)
Week 6	Pictorialism, Alfred Stieglitz and the Photo-Secession TOPICS: Gertrude Kasebier, Julia Margaret Cameron, Stieglitz
Mon. 10/3	READ: Marien Ch. 6 (174-201) DeZayas, "Photography" and "Photography and Artistic Photography," <i>CEP</i> , pp. 125-132
Wed. 10/5	MIDTERM
Week 7	Photography and Art TOPICS: Edward Steichen, Alfred Stieglitz
Mon. 10/10	Columbus Day Holiday, no class
Wed. 10/12	READ: Anonymous, "Is Photography a New Art?" <i>CEP</i> , pp. 133-140; Paul Strand, "Photography," and "Photography and the New God," <i>CEP</i> , pp. 141-151 EXHIBITION REVIEW DUE *No reading response due this week*
Week 8	Chronophotography, Photography and Social Reform TOPICS: Eadweard Muybridge, Jacob Riis, Lewis Hine
Mon. 10/17	READ: Marien Ch. 6 (174-201)
Wed. 10/19	READ: Marien Ch. 7 (203-216); Lewis Hine, "Social Photography," <i>CEP</i> , pp.109-113
Week 9	European Modernism TOPICS: El Lissitzky, Rodchenko, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, August Sander
Mon. 10/24	READ: Marien Ch. 7 (224-234), Ch. 8 (235-241); W. Benjamin, "A Short History of Photography," <i>CEP</i> , pp. 199-216
Wed. 10/26	READ: Marien Ch. 8 (242-277); Siefried Kracauer, "Photography," <i>CEP</i> , pp. 245-268
Week 10	Photography as Document TOPICS: FSA, Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans
Mon. 10/31	READ: Marien Ch. 9 (278-288), Walker Evans, "The Reappearance of Photography," <i>CEP</i> , pp. 185-188

Wed. 11/2	Photography on the Campaign Trail: Photo Ops and Messaging READ: Dan Schill, "The Visual Image and the Political Image: A Review of Visual Communication Research in the Field of Political Communication," <i>Review of Communication</i> , 12:2 (2012), 118-142 (Blackboard)
Week 11	Photojournalism, The Decisive Moment and the Snapshot Aesthetic TOPICS: Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa, Weegee, Diane Arbus
Mon. 11/7	READ: Marien Ch. 8 (257-259); Ch. 9 (288-309)
Wed. 11/9	READ: Marien Ch. 11 (338-357), (364-371) BROWSE:Magnum Photos: Cartier-Bresson http://www.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=CMS3&VF=MAGO3110_VForm&ERID=24KL53ZMYN
Week 12	Art photography, the Color Revolution, Globalization TOPICS: William Eggleston, Felix Gonzalez-Torres
Mon. 11/14	READ: Marien Ch. 11 (372-389); Ch. 12 (393-405)
Wed. 11/16	READ: Marien Ch. 12 (405-435), John Berger, "Understanding a Photograph," <i>CEP</i> , pp. 291—294 Final Paper Outline due
Week 13	Post-modernism, Institutional Critique and beyond TOPICS: Cindy Sherman, Thomas Struth
Mon. 11/21	READ: Marien Ch. 13 (437-491), Sekula, "On the Invention of Photographic Meaning, (Blackboard)
Wed. 11/23	NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING RECESS
Week 14	Globalization TOPICS: Lalla Essaydi, Rineke Dijkstra
Mon. 11/28	READ: Marien Ch. 14 (493-517)
Wed. 11/30	Final Presentations *No reading response due this week*
Week 15	
Mon. 12/5	Final Presentations

Wed. 12/7	Final Presentations FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE
Wed. 12/14	1:30pm FINAL EXAM