

History 223: Picturing History: Visual Culture, Photography, and Memory in Modern Europe

Instructor: Abby Lewis

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MWF, 12:05-12:55, Van Vleck B223

Office: Mosse Humanities Building, 5269

Office Hours: MW 1:30-3:00 or by appointment

Course Description:

This course examines the role of visual culture, especially photography, on our understandings of modern European History. Visual culture has functioned as a potent form of communication in part because it speaks to audiences outside of language, relying instead on familiar symbolism and tropes or on emotional cues. We will question how propaganda posters, war photography, advertising, and other forms of visual media impacted Europe socially, politically, and culturally. This course's focus on visual culture is two-fold; students will examine the power of images on historical developments and experiences as well as their continued influence on our interpretations of the past. Images are also material objects; therefore, their meanings are also tied to their production, consumption, distribution, display, or their sacred place in an archive or family album. For example, we will explore the ways that the circulation of postcards and pornography have helped produce ideas of race, class, and gender in Europe. Furthermore, following WWI and the production of portable lightweight cameras, the photograph took on a new task of documenting war for the home-front, enabling societies to see the and understand war in ways that were not neutral. These examples are just a few ways that the course will examine the image's role in history.

Course Objectives:

- In-depth understanding of topics in 19th and 20th century European History
- Craft engaging historical questions and contribute to discussion
- Understand and critique historical arguments
- Conduct creative research and make an original argument using visual sources
- Communicate ideas clearly in written and oral form

Credit Hours: The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities. This class meets for three 50-minute class period each week over the fall/spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, etc), for about 2 hours out of classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

Required Books:

Daeninckx, Didier. *Murder in Memoriam*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1984.

Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador, 2003.

Assignments:

Your grade will be based on attendance, participation, 2 short papers, and a final paper. There will be no exams in the class. Here's the grade breakdown:

- Attendance and Active Participation: **20%**
- Weekly Discussion posts: **10%**
- 2 Short papers: **30%**
- Final paper **30%**
 - Acceptance of Research Question+ Short Bibliography: **5%**
 - Draft of Introduction and 1 page analysis of primary source: **5%**
 - Completed Final Paper: **20%**
- Presentation of Final Project: **10%**

Discussion Posts: You are required to post one discussion question based on the readings each week by 9pm on Thursday. I will use your questions in our Friday discussion section.

Policies:

Attendance in class is mandatory. A majority of your course grade is based on your attendance and participation in class. You are allowed two absences from class. Considerations will be made for excused absences, but you must talk to me about missing class ahead of time.

Late Work:

No late work is accepted. All papers must be turned in in hard copy to me during class. Your grade will be marked down 10% with each day the assignment is late. Again, things happen, so don't be afraid to talk to me ahead of time if you have any issues turning in the assignment.

Email:

Please give me 24 hours to respond to your emails and 48 hours over the weekend. While I'm always willing to look over rough drafts of papers in person, please do not email me your papers, especially within 24 hours of the due date.

Writing Resources:

History Lab: The History Lab is a writing center run by History PhD students designed to help you at any stage of the writing process: drafting a research question, outlining your paper, thesis statements, and editing. Book an appointment online for a one on one appointment:

<http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>.

Writing Center:

At the writing center, you can book one-on-one appointments with writing tutors, on a weekly basis or as needed. These appointments are for students of any level who want help with crafting an argument, writing style, language, or structure. They also have writing retreats and workshops to help you tackle big writing assignments.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: (January 24, 26):

W: Introduction to Course

F: The Early History of Photography:

PART I: Photography and The Evolution of 19th Century Culture:

Week 2: (January 29, 31, February 1): Witnessing Modernity

M: City Photographs from the Second Empire to the Paris Commune

W: Modernity and Visual Spectacle:

F: Discussion: Reading Photographs:

READ:

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. 1-23.

Barthes, Roland. "Extracts from Camera Lucida." *The Photography Reader*. Edited by Liz Wells. London: Routledge, 2003. 19-30.

Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. Edited by Hannah Arendt. New York: Schocken, 1968. 217-252.

Week 3: (February 5, 7, 9): Scientific Evidence and Authenticity

M: Scientific Evidence and Victorian Science

W: Photographic Authenticity on Trial

F: Discussion: Photography and Authenticity:

READ:

Jennifer Tucker, *Nature Exposed: Photography as eyewitness in Victorian Science*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. 17-125.

Week 4: (February 12, 14, 16): Empire and Race:

M: Advertising and Race:

W: Photography and Colonial Power:

F: Discussion: Postcards, Power, and Resistance:

READ:

Malek Alloua, *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minnesota Press, 1986. 3-5, 7-15, 27-35, 49-66, 105-124.

News Articles on Marc Garanger.

Week 5: February 19, 21, 22: Gender and Consumption of Images:

M: The Cult of Domesticity:

W: Crisis and the Public Sphere:

F: Pornography: **Paper 1 Due in Class:**

READ:

Sigel, Lisa Z. "Filth in the Wrong People's Hands: Postcards and the Expansion of Pornography

in Britain and the Atlantic.” *Journal of Social History* Vol. 33 No. 4 (Summer 2000), 859-885.

Fogarty, Richard. “Race and Sex: Fear and Loathing in France during the Great War.” *Brutality and Desire: War and Sexuality in Europe’s Twentieth Century*. Edited by Dagmar Herzog. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. 59-90.

Part II: War and Conflict:

Week 6: February 26, 28, March 2: World War I

M: World War I

W: Germany’s Antiwar Response:

F: Discussion: Sontag and War Photography:

READ:

Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Picador, 2003.

Week 7: March 5, 7, 9: Documenting Society in the Interwar Period

M: The FSA and the Great Depression:

W: The Spanish Civil War:

F: Discussion: Intention and Documentary Photography:

READ:

Brothers, Caroline. *War Photography: A Cultural History*. London: Routledge, 2011. 121-138, 161-185.

Morris, Errol. “The Case of the Inappropriate Alarm Clock.” *Believing is Seeing: Observations on the Mysteries of Photography*. New York: Penguin Press, 2011. 123-185

Week 8: March 12, 14, 16: World War II and the Holocaust

M: Hitler and the Propaganda Kompanien

W: The Holocaust

F: Discussion: Documentation and Memory:

READ:

Zelizer, Barbie, *Remembering to Forget: The Holocaust Through the Camera’s Eye*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. 1-48, 86-140.

Week 9: (March 19, 21, 23): Photography, Film, and the Postwar:

M: Photographing Perpetrators

W: The Liberation and Postwar

F: Discussion: Seeing Guilt:

READ:

Barnouw, Dagmar. *Germany 1945: Views of War and Violence*. Bloomington: Indian University Press, 1996. 1-41, 88-135.

Bourke-White, Margaret. *Dear Fatherland Rest Quietly: A Report on the Collapse of Hitler’s Thousand Years*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946. 3-10, 32-60, 73-87, 163-174.

Week 10: SPRING BREAK:

Week 11 (April 2, 4, 6): Visual Culture and National Memories:

M: German National Memory
W: France and the Vichy Syndrome
F: Discussion: **Paper 2 due in class:**

READ:

Heinemann, Elizabeth. "The Hour of Women: Memories of Germany's 'Crisis Years' and West German National Identity," *American Historical Review*, 101, 1996, 354-95.
Roberts, Mary Louise. "Wartime Flânerie: The Zucca Controversy" *French Politics, Culture & Society*, Vol. 27 No. 1 (Spring 2009), 102-110.
Clark, Catherine. "Capturing the Moment, Picturing History: Photographs of the Liberation of Paris." *American Historical Review*. Vol. 121, Issue 3. (June 2016), 824-860.

Part III: Memory and Revolution:

Week 12: Decolonization (April 9, 11, 13)

M: Decolonization in Pictures
W: Forgetting the Algerian War
F: National Amnesia:

READ:

Didier Daeninckx, *Murder in Memoriam*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1984.

Week 13: (April 16, 18, 19): The USSR

M: Art and Iconography in the Russian Revolution:
W: The Airbrushing of History:
F: Discussion: Manipulating Photos, Erasing History

ASSIGNMENT: Please turn in a draft of your introduction and a two-page analysis of one of your two primary sources:

READ:

Kundera, Milan. "Lost Letters." *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. New York: Perennial Classics, 1999.
King, David. *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's Russia*, 9-13.

Week 14: (April 23, 25, 27): Cultural Revolution

M: 1968 in Western Europe:
W: Revolutions after the Thaw in Eastern Europe, 1956 and 1968
F: Discussion: Visual Cultural in a Divided Germany:

READ:

Poiger, Ute. *Jazz Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. 31-105.
McLellan, Josie. "Even under Socialism we don't want to do without love: East German Erotica" *East German Material Culture and the Power of Memory*, German Historical Institute, 2011. 51-67.

Week 15: (April 30, May 2, May 4): Media + Revolution:

M: The Fall of Communism on Tape, 1989.

W: Visual Culture and Memory Today:

F: Discussion:

WATCH: Goodbye Lenin!

Final Paper Due + Final Presentation: May 10th, 7:45-9:45 am.