

The Camera and The Body

Summer 2017

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Conceived as the perfect instrument of scientific inquiry and realist art, photography has long taken part in the production of authoritative knowledge about the human body--by informing medical and scientific diagnoses, charting gender and sexual norms, defining racial and ethnic stereotypes and delimiting aesthetic ideals. Through an examination of historical, theoretical and visual texts in combination with group discussion, we will see how photographic images of the body, while often masquerading as "natural," "self-evident," or "scientific," are always highly coded and invested with social meanings as well as institutional power.

This course has three primary goals: 1) to examine photographic representations of the human body in historical context and by thematic topic, 2) to familiarize students with critical writing about photography, and 3) to offer students the opportunity to develop their own critical writing and oral presentations skills. To achieve these goals, the course will be organized around student presentations and writing assignments. We are very lucky to also have access to the University's Special Collections Library, where students will select original images to write about for their final papers. We will begin by asking general questions concerning visual representation: Who looks at whom? How, when and why? How is a body constituted by the image? These questions set the methodological tone of the course and serve to introduce the role of photography in portraiture, in the mapping of cultural identities, in the production of desire and in the institutional measurement and control of human bodies. We will also learn how to write about images, how to research their histories as cultural artifacts, and how to address their aesthetic forms.

For each class meeting students will produce a short analytic paper of three pages (double spaced, Times 12pt font) that will develop their skills in preparation for a final research paper of 8 pages. Each week a select number of students will be asked to orally present the substance of their papers as a way to focus class discussion. Student peer review will be an important component of the course. Students who are uncomfortable reading and editing student work, or having their written work read and corrected by other students should not take the course.

Please feel free to contact me via email anytime. I enjoy answering questions from students and I am happy to meet for any reason, even just to get to know you better, during office hours.

Student requirements:

1. Active, intellectually prepared, participation in class discussions.
2. Complete the daily reading by the date for which it is assigned.
3. Short (500 word) analytic papers due August 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23.
4. Oral presentations of papers and discussion of images—random rotation.
5. One eight-page research paper due August 30.

The **required course reader** is available from the Literary Guillotine, 204 Locust Street, in downtown Santa Cruz. (Why make you go so far away? I like to support local bookstores, and this is a great one. Do you really have to buy one? Yes, you do. I expect EVERYONE to bring their reader to class for EVERY class meeting so we can delve into the articles as a group.)

Other required reading will be online.

Academic Integrity

Informational resources on the definition of plagiarism and proper citations can be found here: (e.g., <http://library.ucsc.edu/help/howto/citations-and-style-guides> and <http://nettrail.ucsc.edu/>) as well as a link to the principles and procedures for dealing with undergraduate academic dishonesty: http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acd_integrity/.

Students with Disabilities

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of the quarter. Contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu for more information.

July 31

Victor Burgin, “Looking at Photographs” in *Thinking Photography* (142-153)

August 2

John Tagg, “A Democracy of the Image: Photographic Portraiture and Commodity Production Portraits” in *The Burden of Representation* (34-59)

August 7

Christopher Pinney, “The Parallel Histories of Anthropology and Photography” in *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920* (74-95)

August 9

Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive” in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (343-389)

August 14

Maud Lavin, “Portraits, Dancers, and coquettes: The Modern Woman in Höch’s Photomontages, 1923-35” in *Cut with the Kitchen Knife* (123-155)

Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism" in *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* (15-43)

August 16

John Pultz, "1900-1940: Heterosexuality and Modernism" and "Photography Since 1975: Gender, Politics and the Postmodern Body" in *The Body and the Lens* (65-80 and 143-168)

August 21

Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, "Laying it Bare: The Queer/Colored Body in Photography by Laura Aguilar," in *Living Chicana Theory* (277-305)

Maurice Berger, "Invisible Man: An Introduction to Whiteness," in *White! Whiteness and Race in Contemporary Art* (23-61 excerpts)

bell hooks, "In our Glory: Photography and Black Life" and "Facing Difference: The Black Female Body" from *Art On My Mind: Visual Politics* (54-64, 94-100)

August 23

Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence* Chapter 6 and 7 (109-158)

August 28

Marian Hirsch, "Introduction," in *Family Frames: Photography Narrative and Postmemory* (1-15)

Jo Spence "The Family Album 1939-1979" in *Putting Myself in the Picture* (84-95)

August 30

TBA