

ROMS 1109-101

Intersubjective Bodies and Photography

An Object-Based Writing Seminar with the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:10 – 11:25AM

Rockefeller 183 or onsite at the Johnson Museum

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Office Hours: TBD or by appointment

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Course Description:

In the examination of digital images and prints archived at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, this course will develop the concept of “intersubjectivity” as a set of negotiated relationships between photographer, photographic sitter/subject, and viewer. What configuration of visible elements and invisible circumstances position the viewer as a voyeur as opposed to a witness? When is the photographer considered a provocateur instead of a documentarian? Moreover, how can the individual represented as the object of photography imbue agency as a subject?

In addition to exhibit reviews and interviews with photographers, critical readings will include selections from Hannah Arendt, Ariella Azoulay, John Berger, Andy Grundberg, and Susan Sontag, as well as the photography of Robert Frank, Katy Grannan, Dorothea Lange, Nikki Lee, Danny Lyon, Sally Mann, Martha Rosler, and Cindy Sherman. In reading these texts and examining these photographic works, we will elaborate “intersubjectivity” by bearing in mind the following concepts: appropriation, exhibition, fetish, the gaze, invitation, power relationships and subjectivity, voyeurism, witnessing.

Lastly, this course will culminate with a two-week long curated photographic exhibition at the Johnson Museum’s Student Gallery. Writing assignments will be analytical and practical in nature to prepare for the student show at the end of the semester.

Learning Outcomes:

In addition to gaining a greater awareness of photographic genres and theoretical approaches, by the end of this course you will develop and demonstrate your own visual literacy when engaging with photographic material culture. Over the semester, this literacy will be evidenced in your writing and contributions to in class discussions as you master vocabulary and concepts associated with visual analysis. Above all, you will think, read and write more critically and cultivate your own voice and point of view informed by photography theory. Lastly as a collaborative unit, you will produce all texts necessary for organizing and promoting a photographic exhibition within the museum.

Required Texts:

Wells, Liz. *Photography: a Critical Introduction*. 5th ed. New York: Routledge, 2015.
ISBN: 0415854296

Wells, Liz. *The Photography Reader*. London: Routledge, 2003.
ISBN: 041524661X

Recommended Text:

*Bate, David. *Photography: the Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg, 2009. ISBN 9781845206673

*(Also available electronically online at the Cornell library via Ebrary Humanities)

The required texts are available at the Cornell Store as well as through online vendors. Please be sure to purchase the appropriate edition and bring a copy of the text to each class session.

Blackboard:

Other weekly-required assignments and readings will be made available in PDF format on the course Blackboard site: <http://blackboard.cornell.edu>. As a registered student, you are automatically enrolled in Blackboard for this course: *ROMS 1109 FWS: Image and Imagination Curran, E (18358_2015FA)*

Course Blog:

During the semester you will post anonymous entries under a pseudonym to the online course blog to reflect on our progress and comment on the exhibition. The title of the Word Press page is *Intersubjective Bodies and Photography* (<https://intersubjectivephotography.wordpress.com>).

Course Requirements

Participation:

This course is designated and organized as a discussion seminar requiring active participation from each student. Active participation involves: arriving to class on time, demonstrating that you have read the assigned texts, completing the reading guides, taking notes, sharing ideas, posing questions, listening and contributing constructively to the ongoing dialog with your peers. Moreover, some of the writing assignments and presentations will count as a completion grade towards your overall participation score in the course. The individual instructions will designate each assignment as for credit or completion.

Attendance and Absences:

Given the seminar format of this course, your regular attendance is imperative, obligatory, and required by Cornell University policy. You are permitted to incur two absences without penalty

to your final grade. **Please be advised: four absences will result in the forfeiture of your participation grade and six absences will result in failure of the course.**

Absences for religious holidays as specified by Cornell United Religious Work Calendar (<http://dos.cornell.edu/cornellhttp://dos.cornell.edu/cornell-united-religious-work-united-religious-work>, see Religious Holidays 2015-2016 under News and Announcements) do not count towards your two absences. In the case of religious observance, please let me know as soon as possible in writing of your absence and for which holidays.

Likewise, if you participate in athletics or other recognized extracurricular activities at Cornell that require occasional absences, you may also be excused from class. Prior to the anticipated absence, you must provide an appropriate letter with the signature of the responsible official attesting that the absence is in connection with a recognized activity.

If you anticipate a prolong absence from class for emergency or personal issues, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

In the case of any absence, it is your responsibility to consult with a classmate to find out the assignments and/or revisions to the course schedule. Likewise, you are still responsible for turning in all writing assignments on time by the date specified on the course calendar.

As a rule, tardiness is unacceptable and disruptive. Arriving late will impact your participation grade. If you anticipate arriving to class late on a particular day, please notify me beforehand. Arriving to class late counts as a partial absence (.25) and at the end of the semester points will be deducted from your final grade.

Course Assessment

Participation		25%
Blog Entry and Responses	(1 / 2 total)	5%
Creative Essay	(1 total)	10%
Case Studies	(3 total)	35%
Final Exhibition Portfolio	(1 total)	25%

Writing Assignments

In this course you will practice writing different types of essays ranging in page length from shorter assignments (2-3 pages) at the beginning of the semester to a more comprehensive project at the end of the semester with the final exhibition portfolio.

The page numbers listed on each assignment are a suggested minimum. Each paper that you submit should demonstrate a complete argument or analysis that shows development between the opening introduction and the conclusion at the end. Papers should not terminate abruptly once the page minimum or maximum has been met.

Do not write your papers on the due date or the night before. Allow yourself time to develop a

coherent argument. Writing can create anxiety and we will discuss some strategies to reduce this stress as well as writing in stages. Use this course to develop healthy writing habits that will assist you in your academic endeavors here at Cornell.

Since writing is a process, some of these assignments will occur in stages requiring drafts and revisions before you receive a grade for a polished piece of writing. Sometimes we will discuss drafts and papers in class; sometimes we will discuss your writing in individual conferences. Moreover, given the highly collaborative nature of this course you will be sharing your visual and written work frequently with peers, either in class or anonymously via online platforms. By matriculating, you agree to these terms and conditions.

Be sure to keep electronic copies of your papers as well as hard copies of the drafts and revised versions of papers that include feedback from your peers or me. Over the course of the semester we will refer back to these assignments, which demonstrate your writing progress, in individual meetings.

Guidelines for Submission of Written Work:

For document format, all of your work must be typed using standard Times New Roman 12 point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins. You must number each page; staple, proofread and spell check your assignment before emailing the document or bringing the draft to class.

If you have questions related to formatting, there are a number of resources online. For example, Purdue University Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

I require **one electronic copy** to be e-mailed to me or posted to the Blackboard file exchange (depending on the assignment) by the deadline specified on the course calendar. You are also required to bring **one hard copy** to class. Late work will not be accepted. Please manage your time accordingly in order to fulfill each deadline and also allow you to contact me with questions.

I will not accept papers that do not meet these requirements, and you will not receive credit for the assignment.

Academic Code of Integrity and Plagiarism:

All the work that you submit from this course must be written in your own words, with proper citation of primary and secondary sources. If you incorporate ideas, concepts, terminology or facts from other individuals, you must attribute credit to the source. You may not submit any papers written for previous courses.

Please familiarize yourself with Cornell University's Code of Academic Integrity:
<http://www.theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/AcadInteg/code.html>

As part of the course requirements, within the first two weeks of class you must successfully complete the Indiana University Bloomington, School of Education module for undergraduate

students on recognizing plagiarism and email me a copy of the certificate. Over the course of the semester please feel free to meet with me if you have questions concerning issues of possible unintentional plagiarism in your work.

Please see the following link for tutorials, practice tests and the certificate from Indiana University: <https://www.indiana.edu/~plag/test.html>.

Policy on Technology in the Classroom:

Prior to each class session, please silence your cellphones and keep them stored in your backpack, off the seminar table and out of sight. Given the visual nature of the course, there will be in-class activities requiring the use of a laptop or tablet. However, I will indicate which activities are technology approved. As a word of caution, please use your laptop and tablet responsibly. If during a technology approved activity I suspect that you are distracted by email, Internet browsing, and social media status updates or busy sending instant messages, you will not be permitted to use your tablet or laptop in class for the remainder of the semester and your attendance will be forfeited that day.

Special Accommodations:

Students, who have learning disabilities and therefore special adjustments in the classroom or to their course requirements, must first register with Student Disability Services (SDS). Following registration, and within the first few days of class, SDS contacts instructors to discuss appropriate accommodations. If you have registered with SDS, please provide me a copy of the letter. I will make every effort to ensure equal access and evaluation in this course.

Please consult the following website for more information: <http://sds.cornell.edu>

The Knight Institute Writing Walk-In Service:

The Writing Walk-In Service (WWIS) provides support for individuals at any stage of the writing process. It is a free resource available to everyone on campus - faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students - for nearly any kind of writing project: applications, presentations, lab reports, essays, papers, and more. Tutors (trained undergraduate and graduate students) serve as responsive listeners and readers who can address questions about the writing process or about particular pieces of writing. They can also consider questions of confidence, critical reading, analytic thought, and imagination. Many writing tutors also have experience working with non-native speakers of English.

The WWIS operates out of several campus locations. During the academic year, the WWIS is open Sunday through Thursday from 3:30 – 5:30pm and from 7:00 – 10:00pm. Writers can schedule appointments or drop in at a convenient time. For more information or to schedule an appointment: <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/writing>.