



### Ways of Seeing: Visual Archives and Visual History

Tuesday & Thursday 4:00 pm- 5:15 pm

Many documents used by historians come in visual form. Today, graphic incidents and strategies increasingly contribute to shaping history (think, for instance, about the Abu Ghraib prison pictures released in 2004). Yet many of us have been undertrained in analyzing images critically. This course will help you to engage with various visual forms over time (paintings, maps, caricature, advertising, photographs, documentaries, objects and architectures) and to utilize them to compose historical narratives. During the first part of the semester, we will discuss the production, diffusion and reception of images from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, approaching them as sources and as “actors” with a historical agency of their own. The second part of the semester will concentrate on the visual dimension of power struggles in the modern era (18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> century).

This course has a sizable historical methods component and offers an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing original historical research and conveying the results of that work to others. An essential part of the lectures will be devoted to the development and honing of skills essential to the historian's craft. These skills include critical reasoning, research, source evaluation, and analytical writing. Students will gain hands-on experience doing archival research and will share their research findings with the class in oral presentations. Attendance and participation are mandatory. At the end of the semester each student will submit a 10-page research paper on a topic relating to the course theme. (A number of the shorter course papers are designed to help students develop a research proposal, a research plan, and ultimately the paper itself.)



## Course's Goals

Students conduct original historical research and convey the results to others. Through engagement with archival materials, undergraduates become historical detectives; they practice defining important historical questions, collecting and analyzing evidence, presenting original conclusions, and contributing to ongoing discussions. Students will confer individually with and receive feedback from the instructors to improve their skills of historical analysis and communication in both written and spoken formats. Upon successful completion of this course, which satisfies the Comm-B requirement, students will be prepared to undertake historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST 600 capstone seminar.

We will focus on developing the following skills:

- Asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research. Developing historical questions through engagement with different kinds of sources. Asking historical questions to guide individual research. Posing questions to prompt productive group discussion.
- Finding and citing sources. Learning the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consulting them to identify and locate source materials. Identifying the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines. Taking advantage of the range of library resources including interlibrary loan.
- Evaluating sources. Determining the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials. Distinguishing between primary and secondary material for a particular topic. Identifying the perspective or authorial stance of a source. Summarizing an argument presented in a text. Distinguishing between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.
- Developing and presenting an argument. Using sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions. Writing a strong, clear thesis statement. Revising a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis. Identifying the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly. Citing evidence to support each part of an argument. Identifying the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.
- Planning further research. Drawing upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation. Writing a research proposal, annotated bibliography, and outline.
- Communicating ideas and research findings effectively through formal and informal written and oral presentations.

**Grades:** Course grades will be determined as follows: short writing assignments (including the research proposal, annotated bibliography, and outline) 40%; participation in weekly discussions in class 25%; formal oral presentation 10%; final research paper 25%.



**Readings:**

The following books are available at the University Book Store, and available on reserve at the College Library. The first is required, the second is recommended.

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. New York, Penguin Book, [1972] 1990

Mary Ann Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012

The rest of the readings are gathered in a reading packet available for purchase at the L&S Copy Centers, 6120 Social Science (262-0761). Two hard copies will also be on reserve at the College Library (Helen C. White). When some of the readings are long and/or challenging, we'll design groups (**Reading group 1, Reading group 2**) that will focus on different readings. Each student should be prepared to discuss their assigned readings in class.

**Consultations:** Students are expected to come to office hours throughout the semester to discuss the progress that are making on their papers. I will schedule extra office hours during week 5 and 11 and ask everyone to sign up for one-on-one consultations.

**\*\*\* SCHEDULE \*\*\***

**PART I – IMAGES AS SOURCES AND AS HISTORICAL AGENTS**

**Week 1- Historians and Images**

**Tu. 09/02 and Th. 09/04:** Introduction. Meet your classmates.

**Readings:**

1. J. Berger, chapter 1, *Ways of Seeing*, pp. 7-34.
2. Start reading for next week.

**Theme:**

This week we'll be talking in general terms about the historian's craft and about how historians, journalists, and politicians put together narratives about current and past events. We will also look at how historians use images to understand the past.

**Assignment for 09/04 Lecture:**

Read *The New York Times* this week and find an article with a picture or a cartoon. Bring a copy of the article to class on Thursday **09/04**. Be ready to explain why you chose this article and to describe the relation between the picture and the written text.

**Week 2- A Singular Portrait**

**Tu. 09/09 & Th. 09/11: Studying Jan Van Eyck's *Arnolfini* Painting (1434)**

**Readings:**

1. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/you/article-2036955/The-Arnolfini-portrait-Jan-van-Eyck-The-mystery-National-Gallery-masterpiece.html>
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnolfini\\_Portrait](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnolfini_Portrait)
3. E. Panofski, "Jan Van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait," in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, Vol. 64, No. 372 (1934), pp. 117-127.

4. E. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* ([1950]1995), pp. 176-181 [you may browse pp. 176-177].
5. L. Seidel, "Jan Van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait: Business as Usual?" *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Autumn 1989): 54-86.

**Theme:**

This week, we'll learn to analyze an image by looking at its content, and the historical context in which it was made, including its author(s) and intended audience. We will also reflect on historical sources more generally. What is a primary source? How to use secondary sources? How can we find books and academic articles to help us with our research?

**Assignment for 09/09:**

Read #1 and #2 to familiarize yourself with Jan Van Eyck's painting. Read chapter 5 in John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, pp. 83-112. Try to apply some of Berger's ideas to the *Arnolfini Portrait*, and be prepared to discuss this in class.

**Assignment for 09/11:**

Compare the information provided by 1/ the encyclopedia and journal article (#1 and #2) and by 2/ the academic articles (#3, #4 and #5). Take notes on your findings. Then choose one article from each group (one encyclopedia or journal article, and one academic article) and write a one-page paper comparing how the two chosen readings focus on different aspects in the painting. Make sure you provide precise references to the readings.

**Week 3- A Singular Portrait (continued)**

**Tu. 09/16: Understanding what is a thesis**

**Th. 09/18: Memorial Library and Art (Kohler) Library**

**Readings: Same as week 2**

**Theme:**

What is a thesis? How can we design a research question?

**Assignment for 09/16:**

Read again articles #3 (Panofski), #4 (Gombrich) and #5 (Seidel) on the *Arnolfini Portrait* (1434). For each article, write a short paragraph explaining the author's main thesis in your own words (three paragraphs total). Briefly indicate what evidence the author relies on to support his or her thesis. The total paper should be no longer than one page.

**Week 4- Print Capitalism and Mass-Produced Images**

**Tu. 09/23 & Th. 09/25: The Diffusion of Texts and Images.**

**Readings:**

1. F. Braudel, *Structures of Everyday Life* ([1979] 1981), pp. 397-402.
2. B. Anderson: "The Origins of National Consciousness," in *Imagined Communities* (1991), pp. 37-46.
3. Maps: <http://www.oldmapsonline.org/#bbox=-89.900986,42.87375,-88.90123,43.273006&q=&datefrom=1000&dateto=2010>

**Theme:**

This week, we'll discuss how to determine which topic or historical question you want to research about.

**Assignments:**

1/ Choose a primary source that belongs to you or your family and bring it to class on **09/23**. Be prepared to talk about it. You can get ideas on the following website: [www.library.illinois.edu/village/primarysource/mod1/index.htm](http://www.library.illinois.edu/village/primarysource/mod1/index.htm).

2/ Explore the website listed above (#3) and select one map of Madison or the surrounding region. For **09/25**, write a one-page paper explaining how you could use this map for exploring a particular historical thesis of your choice. Explain what other sources you would need to find to support your research (discuss at least three different sorts of sources). Attach a printed copy of the map to your paper and make sure you provide the reference for it.

## **Week 5- Images of Race in Victorian England and Germany**

**Tu. 09/30: Caricature: Victorians Cartoons**

**Th. 10/02: Germany's Commercial Empire**

### **Readings:**

1. L. Perry Curtis, "Victorian Comic Art," & "Simianizing the Irish Celt," in *Apes and Angels* (1997), pp. 29-57. **[All]**
2. Cartoons from *The Punch* magazine (1841-2002): <http://www.punch.co.uk/gallery-list> [look only at "Victorian Era Cartoons" and "WWI Cartoons"]. **[All]**
3. D. Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire* (2011), pp. 1-21. **[Reading Group 1]**
4. J. Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Chapter 7, pp. 129-155. **[Reading Group 2]**

### **Theme:**

This week we'll talk about contextualizing ideas and cross-reading sources. You also need to start working on your research proposal.

### **Assignment for 09/30:**

Be prepared to talk about the readings assigned to your reading group.

### **Assignment for 10/02:**

Choose a political cartoon or poster from the *Punch* magazine website (listed above). Print out a copy of this source and bring it to lecture on Thursday **10/02**. Be prepared to tell your classmates why you chose the source, and how you interpret it.

## **Week 6- Photography I**

**Tu. 10/07: Photography and Colonialism**

**Th. 10/09: Photography as a Domestic Art (Munby and Cullwick, family albums)**

### **Readings:**

1. W. Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," (1936) part I to VI, pp. 1-6. **[Reading group 1]**
2. S. Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," *On Photography* (1977), pp. 3-24. **[Reading group 2]**
3. A. McClintock, "Race, Cross Dressing and the Cult of Domesticity," *Imperial Leather* (1995), pp. 132-142. **[All]**

### **Theme:**

This week we'll start talking about photographs as sources and reflect on their use by historians.

### **Assignment:**

Write a one-page research proposal and bring it to class on **10/07**. (This is a

draft. You will have the opportunity to revise it in a couple of weeks.) Be sure to clearly state your research question(s) and to attach a short list of primary and secondary sources. On **10/09**, you will read and discuss one another's proposals. You will also talk about the process of revising.

### **Week 7- Photography II: Portraying mid-20<sup>th</sup> century America**

**Tu. 10/14: Dorothea Lange and the Great Depression**

**Th. 10/16: Diane Arbus and Robert Frank**

#### **Readings:**

##### **Reading group 1:**

1. L. Gordon, *Dorothea Lange: A Life beyond Limits* (2009), pp. 235-243 & 259-274.
2. Browse through Robert Frank, *The Americans* (1958) [book on reserve; most pictures can also be found online]

##### **Reading group 2:**

1. Browse through *Diane Arbus. An Aperture Monograph* (1972) [book on reserve; most pictures can also be found online]
2. Quotes from Diane Arbus, in *Diane Arbus. An Aperture Monograph* (1972), pp. 1-15.
3. Susan Sontag on Diane Arbus, *On Photography* (1977), pp. 32-47.

#### **Theme:**

This week, we'll continue to talk about the research process and how to organize an outline and a research proposal.

#### **Assignments:**

1/ On **10/14** bring in one of the primary sources that you have identified for your research paper. Be prepared to tell your classmates about this source and to explain how you might use it in your research paper.

2/ On **10/16** choose one of the one-page papers that you wrote during weeks 2, 3, and 4 and revise it based on the comments that you received. Bring your original paper and your revised paper. For the discussion in class, students in **Reading group 1** should be prepared to discuss Dorothea Lange's and Robert Frank's pictures. Students in **Reading group 2** should be prepared to discuss Diane Arbus, and to compare some of her pictures to Robert Frank's.

## **PART II- VISUALITY AND POWER STRUGGLES IN THE MODERN ERA**

### **Week 8- Working on Proposals**

**Tu. 10/21: Reading and Discussing Proposals**

**Th. 10/23: No class. Work on your annotated bibliography**

#### **Theme:**

This week we will work on revising proposals. We'll also spend some time talking about footnotes and bibliographies.

#### **Assignment for 10/21:**

Submit a revised one-page research proposal and a short list of primary and secondary sources.

## Week 9- Vernacular Images

Tu. 10/28: Folk Art (including graffiti and murals) Guest speaker: Nevine El Nossery

Th. 10/30: Photography III- Vernacular Portraits

### Readings:

1. Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photography on the Color Line* (2004), pp. 1-22 and illus. [Reading group 1]
2. L. Thomas, "The Modern Girl and Racial Respectability in 1930s South Africa," in *The Modern Girl Around the World*, ed. By A. E. Weinbaum et al (2008), pp. 96-119. [Reading group 1]

### Theme:

This week we'll continue to talk about sources and how to construct an archive. We will also work on bibliographies.

### Assignments:

Submit two copies of a four-page annotated bibliography for your research paper on **10/28**. It should include at least four primary sources and four secondary sources. On **10/30** you will discuss your writing partner's bibliography.

## Week 10- Architectures & Spectacle

Tu. 11/04 & Th. 11/06: Plantation Architecture, Slave Markets and Panopticism

### Readings:

1. J. M. Vlach, *Back of the Big House. The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (1993), pp. 228-236, & 204-209 [illus.]. [All]
2. W. Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (1999), pp. 1-3 & 135-161. [Reading group 1]
3. M. Foucault: "Panopticism," in *Discipline & Punish* (1995 [1977]) pp. 195-228. [Reading group 2]

### Theme:

This week we'll talk about writing. How do you tell an engaging story and make an historical intervention at the same time?

### Assignment for 11/04:

Write a two-page paper introducing the reader to the most interesting idea, image, character or event in your research paper. This paper might ultimately serve as part of the introduction to your research paper. You will spend time in class reading and discussing one another's papers.

## Week 11- Material Culture and Virtual Images

Tu. 11/11: How to Use Objects for Historical Research?

Th. 11/13: Museums, Collections and Virtual Images

### Readings:

1. R. Barthes, "Toys," *Mythologies* [1957] in *The Object Reader*, edited by F. Candlin and R. Guins (2009), pp. 39-40. [Reading group 1]
2. S. Price, "Power Plays," in *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* (2002), pp. 68-81. [Reading group 2]

### Theme:

This week we'll continue to talk about writing. How do you quote sources? When is it best to paraphrase? How do you write a compelling introduction and organize your ideas?

**Assignment for 11/13:**

Choose a short TV News, or a newspaper of your choice. Select an interesting quote from the source. Write it down verbatim and explain in one paragraph why it is compelling. Then paraphrase the quote—taking it out of the quotation marks and restating it (capturing its essence) in your own words. Bring both the verbatim quotation and your paraphrase to class on **11/13**.

**Week 12- Film and Documentaries**

**Tu. 11/18 & Th. 11/20: Historical Movie and/or Documentary TBA**

**Readings: TBA**

**Theme:**

This week we'll continue to talk about writing.

**Assignment for 11/20:**

Submit a revised two-page outline of your research paper and a four-page draft of part of your research paper. Be sure to indicate where the draft fits into your outline. Bring two copies to class, one for the instructor and one for your writing partner. You will get these drafts back on week 14.

**Week 13- Communicating Your Research**

**Tu. 11/25: Public Speaking**

**Th. 11/27: THANKSGIVING**

**Theme:**

This week we'll spend some time talking about public speaking and communicating our research findings through formal oral presentations.

**No Assignment**

**Week 14- Research and Results**

**Tu. 12/02: Writing partner's marked draft due back.** Be prepared to talk about the draft you've marked.

**Th. 12/04: Student Presentations**

**Theme:**

Memorial and Kohler Library: Wrap-up loose ends in your research

**Week 15 Research and Results**

**Tu. 12/09 and Th. 12/11: Student Presentations**

**Assignment:**

Final Essay Due in class on Thursday 12/11.