

San José State University
Department of Art and Art History
ARTH / PHOT 126, History of Photography, Section 01
Spring 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Jordan Reznick
Email:	Jordan.Reznick@sjsu.edu Please message instructor through Canvas direct messaging
Office Hours:	Mondays, 3-4pm Sign up at Doodle Office hours Zoom
Class Days/Time:	Monday/Wednesday, 1:30-2:45pm
Classroom:	Classroom Zoom
Course Webpage	Course Canvas Page
Prerequisites:	ARTH 70B or instructor consent

Course Format

This is a synchronous online course. To complete the requirements for this course you will need:

- A computer
- A working webcam and microphone
- Internet connectivity
- Zoom application
- Web browser application
- Canvas account

The most up-to-date course materials such as syllabus, handouts, quizzes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the Canvas course website and messaging system to learn of any updates.

Course Description

Invented during the rise of modernity and Industrialized capitalism in Europe and the United States, photography was conceived as both a perfect instrument of scientific inquiry and realist art. Looking together at photography's myriad of uses during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we will see how photography has not only pictured the modern world, but in fact been a central agent in producing that world. Beyond looking at movements in art photography, we will also consider photography's role in informing medical and scientific diagnoses, charting gender

and sexual norms, defining racial and ethnic stereotypes, delimiting aesthetic ideals for the body, and colonizing the Native North American landscape. We will see how photographic images—while often masquerading as natural, self-evident, or scientific—are always highly coded and invested with social meanings as well as institutional power. We will see how photographic surveillance invented new forms of capitalist forms of exploitation. We will trace art photography's path from an “underdog” art practiced by amateurs to the hallowed halls of modern museums. Along the way, we will also come to understand how marginalized communities have expertly used the camera as a tool of resistance and liberation, frequently advancing the aesthetic possibilities of the medium ahead of the canon of “avant-garde” artists. We will also look at photographic practices in Asia, Africa, Central America, and Native North America. By situating the aesthetic and rhetorical explorations of artists within photography's broader social and global history, we will develop an understanding of the ways in which fine art photography has also participated in the repressive and emancipatory languages of the medium.

Course Goals

1. Knowledge and understanding of significant artistic, technological, political, and social developments in photography from the nineteenth century to the present.
2. Examination of the historical and cultural contexts in which photographs were created and interpreted.
3. Critical interrogation of the concept that photographs are factual visual records.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Learning Objective 1: Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge (visual recognition and identification) of significant photographs, both artworks and otherwise, from the nineteenth century to the present.

Learning Objective 2: Students will be able to demonstrate skills of visual analysis to describe and explain the historical context of artworks and photographs from the nineteenth century to the present.

Learning Objective 3: Students will demonstrate the writing and research skills necessary for the accurate and complete investigation and communication of photo historical information, including critical thinking, visual analysis, integration of theoretical perspectives, and clear communication.

Course Geography

Each week is represented by a module in Canvas that appears when you are on the Home page for the course. If you only click on assignments that are due from your Dashboard, you will miss important components of the module or accidentally do them out of order and find yourself confused. **Always navigate to course materials from the course Home page.** All zoom links, recorded lectures, assignments, readings, exams, quizzes, and other materials can be found there.

Each week you are required to:

- attend 2 online lectures on Zoom (lectures will be recorded to review later)
- complete 2 open-book quizzes with 5 questions each (one for each lecture)
- write a 250-400 word essay OR make a 3-minute video discussion post responding to one photograph covered in the lectures (alternates weeks)
- check your Canvas inbox and announcements for updates and changes

Online learning—and teaching—is new to most of us and this class is designed to help you achieve your learning goals for the class while you also gain fluency in a new way of learning. I have attempted to make everything as clear as possible. If anything feels confusing, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Course Website and Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas at <https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1417320>. You are responsible for regularly checking the messaging and announcements on Canvas to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources) (http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources)

Students are expected to communicate with Prof. Reznick through Canvas direct messaging (not email), office hours, the course chatroom, and the course discussion board. Students should check their Canvas inbox and course announcements daily. I will respond to all messages within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. **I check my messages between 9am and 5pm on Monday-Friday. I do not respond to messages on evenings and weekends.**

Meeting with the Professor

You can meet with me to ask questions about course content, your grade, or just to say hi. One-on-one meetings during my office hours occur over Zoom on Mondays, 3-4pm. Office hours appointments must be scheduled 24 hours in advance on Doodle at: <https://doodle.com/mm/jordanreznick/student-signup>.

Required Readings

PDFs of all readings will be provided on Canvas.

Statement of Time Commitment

Students should allocate the same amount of time that they would typically spend attending class, reading, studying, and completing course work for an in-person 3-unit course, which SJSU estimates as approximately 9 hours per week.

Technical and Software Requirements

1. Regular access to high-speed internet that allows for streaming video and video conferencing.
2. Watch all lectures on a laptop or tablet that allows for detailed analysis of artworks. Students are strongly discouraged from watching lectures on their phones.
3. A working video camera on a phone or other device.

Proctoring Software and Exams

Exams will be proctored in this course through Respondus Monitor and LockDown Browser. These features lock your browser and access to applications and use your webcam and microphone to monitor your attention on the screen during the exam. Please note it is the instructor's discretion to determine the method of proctoring. If cheating is suspected the proctored videos may be used for further inspection and may become part of the student's disciplinary record. Note that the proctoring software does not determine whether academic misconduct occurred, but does determine whether something irregular occurred that may require further investigation. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor if unexpected interruptions (from a parent or roommate, for example) occur during an exam.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Biweekly Analysis Papers - 25% (5 points each, lowest score dropped)

Due every other Friday (See Course Schedule or Canvas for specific dates)

The purpose of this assignment is to give students the opportunity to select an image they find particularly compelling from each week's lecture, and to write about it using the related reading assignments.

Rather than merely a subjective "response paper," your analysis should use vocabulary from the lecture and reading correctly, demonstrate a grasp of the key critical ideas. Each lecture will include essay questions intended to guide your analysis. Though you are not required to use those questions, it is recommended that you do, as these questions may also appear as essay questions on the exams. If you quote authors, please use proper citations. Please ensure that you clearly indicate the title of the artwork that you are discussing. **Every essay should include at minimum 3 sentences which closely describe the visual details of the selected photograph.**

Papers must be 250-400 words, double-spaced Times New Roman, 12pt font with one-inch margins, saved as a PDF, and submitted electronically via Canvas before class on Monday. Papers not meeting these guidelines will be returned for revisions and marked as late.

Biweekly Discussion Videos - 15% (3 points each, 2 lowest scores dropped)

Due every other Friday (See Course Schedule or Canvas for specific dates)

Like the analysis paper, the purpose of this assignment is to give students the opportunity to select an image they find particularly compelling from each week's lecture. However, the discussion videos offer you an opportunity to discuss the image more subjectively and informally while entering into dialogue with your peers. In the video, you should describe for other students why you selected the image and what you personally find compelling about it. What did this photograph teach you about the nature of photography that you found particularly important or surprising?

To earn full credit for this assignment you must also comment on each of your peers in your discussion group, noting two things that you appreciate about what they discussed in their video. Responses should be posted by the Monday following the video posting.

Lecture Quizzes - 24% (1 point each, 3 lowest scores dropped)

One quiz per lecture, due every Friday, untimed

A short quiz will be posted on Canvas shortly after each lecture on Mondays and Wednesdays. Quizzes are designed to assess your retention of key concepts covered during the lectures. They count towards your attendance and also help you retain information in preparation for the exams. You may retake each quiz twice.

Exams - 36% (120 points each)

Exam 1: Monday, March 9, 1:1:30pm - 2:45pm

Exam 2: Monday, April 19, 1:30pm - 2:45pm

Exam 3: Wednesday, May 19, 12:15 - 2:30pm

Each exam will have the following components:

10 slide identifications - 50 points

Multiple choice

For each image you will need to be asked to identify the following:

1. Photographer's name
2. Title
3. Date
4. The significance of the work, such as how it articulates a particular artistic movement, historical era, cultural context, or conceptual framework

10 key concepts - 50 points

Multiple choice

Each question will ask you about the key words and ideas covered in lectures and reading material

2 short essay questions - 40 points

Choose two of three possible essay questions. Please answer all components of the questions, using clear prose. The essay questions will ask you to take a stance. Please state a clear argument and use at least two artworks as example. Include titles of artworks you use as examples and names of authors we have read that support your argument.

There will not be a study guide posted for exams. To study for exams students should:

- focus on images from lectures that have the photographer's name, title, and date included on the lecture slide
- review key words and ideas from the lectures
- review quiz questions
- review required readings

Proctoring Software and Exams

Exams will be proctored in this course through Respondus Monitor and LockDown Browser. These features lock your browser and access to applications and use your webcam and microphone to monitor your attention on the screen during the exam. Please note it is the instructor's discretion to determine the method of proctoring. If cheating is suspected the proctored videos may be used for further inspection and may become part of the student's disciplinary record. Note that the proctoring software does not determine whether academic misconduct occurred, but does determine whether something irregular occurred that may require further investigation. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor if unexpected interruptions (from a parent or roommate, for example) occur during an exam.

Grading Information

Determination of Grades

A detailed grading rubric is listed in each assignment's description on Canvas. Students can use the grading rubric on graded papers to determine areas for improvement. Specific written feedback will not be provided on papers. However, if you have any concerns about a grade, please send the instructor a message or attend office hours to discuss your questions.

Grading Turnaround Time

You can expect to receive graded papers back 7-14 days after you turn them in. Use the grading rubric to identify your areas of success and needs for improvement. Use this feedback as a guide to improve your next paper.

Exam grades will be returned in 7-10 days after every student completes the exam.

Grade	Percentage	Points
A plus	96 to 100%	960-1000
A	93 to 95%	930-959
A minus	90 to 92%	900-929
B plus	86 to 89 %	860-889
B	83 to 85%	830-859
B minus	80 to 82%	800-829
C plus	76 to 79%	760-799
C	73 to 75%	730-759
C minus	70 to 72%	700-729
D plus	66 to 69%	660-699
D	63 to 65%	630-659
D minus	60 to 62%	600-629

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Accessibility

I aim to make our learning community as accessible as possible. This means that I aim to provide accessible materials and to create opportunities for different kinds of engagement in our classroom space. If you come across materials that are not accessible to you, or experience a barrier to your participation, please bring this to my attention and I will gladly work with you to ensure accessibility. If you are a student with a disability (disabilities can include mental health and attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts) who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) and discuss your accommodations with me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the semester. At that time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about accommodations to contact the AEC at <https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/index.php> or aec-info@sjsu.edu or (408) 924-6000.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Inclusivity

It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and with all perspectives feel included and are able to learn and achieve their goals in this course. The diversity that all students bring to this class is a resource, strength, and benefit to us all. It is my intent to bring to class materials and activities that embrace a diversity of perspectives, experiences, and positions. Your suggestions for making this learning community as inclusive as possible are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know if you identify ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. If any of our class meetings conflict with your religious or cultural events, please let me know so that we can work together to make alternative arrangements.

In our online discussions and dialogues, we will have the opportunity to explore challenging, high-stakes issues and increase our understandings of different perspectives. Our conversations may not always be easy. We sometimes will make mistakes in our speaking and our listening. Sometimes we will need patience or courage or imagination or any number of qualities in combination to engage our texts, our classmates, and our own ideas and experiences. Always we will need respect for others. Thus, an important aim of our classroom interactions will be for us to increase our facility with the sometimes difficult conversations that arise inside issues of social justice as we deepen our understandings of multiple perspectives – and make the most of being in a room with people of many backgrounds, experiences, and positions.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

ARTH / PHOT 126, Section 1/History of Photography Spring 2021

Course Schedule

Course schedule is subject to change. Please consult the Course Home page at <https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1417320> for the most up-to-date information

Week 1 // Introduction to the Online Course

January 27

No required readings

Week 2 // The Pencil of Nature: The Conception and Invention of Photography

February 1-3

Required Reading:

Geoffrey Batchen, (selections from) *Burning with Desire: The Conception of Photography*

Suggested Reading:

Jonathan Crary, "Modernity and the Problem of the Observer" in *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, 1-24.

Yi Gu, "What's in a Name? Photography and the Reinvention of Visual Truth in China, 1840-1911," in *Art Bulletin* 95 (2013)

Due Friday:

Discussion Video

Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 3 // Performing Modernity: Early Photography and Portraiture

February 8-10

Required Reading:

Alan Trachtenberg, "Illustrious Americans," in *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (1989), 21-43 (optional to read to page 70) (*content warning)

Lily Cho, "Anticipating Citizenship: Chinese Head Tax Photographs," from *Feeling Photography* (2014), 158-176.

Ginger Hill, "Rightly Viewed': Theorizations of Self in Frederick Douglass's Lectures on Pictures," in *Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity* (2012), 41-65.

Due Friday:

Week 4 // The Colonizer's Eye: Photography, Anthropology and Colonialism

February 15-17

Required Reading:

Christopher Pinney, "The Parallel Histories of Anthropology and Photography," from *Anthropology and Photography: 1860-1920* (1992) 74-90. (*content warning)

Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, "When is a Photograph Worth a Thousand Words?" in *Photography's Other Histories* (2003), 40-52. (*content warning)

Shamoon Zamir, "Native Agency and the Making of 'The North American Indian': Alexander B. Upshaw and Edward S. Curtis," in *American Indian Quarterly* 31 (2007)

Martin Berger, "Landscape Photography and the White Gaze," in *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture*

Due Friday:

Discussion Video

Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 5 // The Panoptic Camera: Early Photography, Surveillance, and the Rise of Industrial Capitalism

February 22-24

Required Reading:

Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive" in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (1989), 343-389 (*content warning)

Elsbeth Brown, "Industrial Choreography: Photography and the Standardization of Motion," *The Corporate Eye: Photography and the Rationalization of American Commercial Culture* (2005), 65-84 (optional to read to page 119)

Due Friday:

Analysis Paper

Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 6 // Manufacturing Ableism: Disability and Photography

March 1-3

Required Reading:

Robert Bogdan, "Freak Portraits: Sideshow Souvenirs," in *Picturing Disability: Beggar, Freak, Citizen, and Other Photographic Rhetoric* (2012), 7-21. (*content warning)

Robert Bogdan, "Clinical Photographs: 'Feeble-mindedness' in Eugenics Texts" in *Picturing Disability: Beggar, Freak, Citizen, and Other Photographic Rhetoric* (2012), 76-98. (*content warning)

Andrea Zittlau, "Pathologizing Bodies: Medical Portrait Photography in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Studies* 58 (2013)

Due Friday:
Discussion Video
Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 7 // Visionary Freedom: Early Black American Photography

March 8-10

Required Reading:

Augusta Rohrbach, "Shadow and Substance: Sojourner truth in Black and White," in *Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity* (2012), 83-97.

Shawn Michelle Smith, "Photography on the Color Line" in *Photography on the Color Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture*, 1-24.

Dora Apel, "Lynching Photographs and the Politics of Public Shaming," in *Lynching Photographs* (2007), 43-64.
(*content warning)

Leigh Raiford, "Ida B. Wells and the Shadow Archive," in *Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity* (2012), 300-318.

Due Friday:
Analysis Paper
Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 8 // Kodak Invents the Snapshot: Whiteness and Vernacular Photography

March 15-17

EXAM 1 - MONDAY, MARCH 8

Required Reading:

Shawn Michelle Smith, "'Baby's Picture Is Always Treasured': Eugenics and the Reproduction of Whiteness in the Family Photograph Album" in *American Archives: Gender Race, and Class in Visual Culture*, 113-135.

Catherine Zuromskis, "Intimate Exposures," in *Snapshot Photography: The Lives of Images* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2013), 19-63.

bell hooks, "In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life," in *Art on My Mind* (1995), 55-64.

Due Friday:
Lecture quiz (1)

Week 9 // The Photograph as Art: From Pictorialism to Straight Photography

March 22-24

Required Reading:

Sarah Greenough, "Alfred Stieglitz, Rebellious Midwife to a Thousand Ideas," in *Modern Art and America: Alfred Stieglitz and His New York Galleries*, 23-53

Due Friday:
Discussion Video
Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 10 // The Photograph and "Truth": Documentary Photography, Surrealist Photography

April 5-7

Required Reading:
Alan Trachtenberg, (selections from) "Camera Work/Social Work" and "A Book Nearly Anonymous," in *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (1989).
Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," in *L'amour fou: photography and surrealism*, 15-42.

Due Friday:
Analysis Paper
Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 11 // Institutionalizing Straight Photography: The Photography Department at the Museum of Modern Art and *New Documents*

April 12-14

Required Reading:
John Szarkowski, Introduction to *The Photographer's Eye*, (1966), 6-11
Christopher Phillips, "The Judgment Seat of Photography," *October*, 27-63

Due Friday:
Discussion Video
Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 12 // Indigenous Modernisms: Native North American Photographers Image their Tribes

April 19-21

EXAM 2 - MONDAY, APRIL 19

Required Reading:
Laura E. Smith, "Homeland," in *Horace Poolaw, Photographer of American Indian Modernity*, 1-16
Amy Adams, "Arctic and Inuit Photography" in *Inuit Art Quarterly*, 4-19

Due Friday:
Lecture quiz (1)

Week 13 // Postcolonial Vernacular Modernism: African and South Asian Photography

April 26-28

Required Reading:

Christopher Pinney, "Notes from the Surface of the Image: Photography, Postcolonialism, and Vernacular Modernism," in *Photography's Other Histories* (2003), 202-220

Heike Behrend, "Imagined Journeys: The Likoni Ferry Photographers of Mombasa, Kenya," in *Photography's Other Histories* (2003), 221-239

Due Friday:

Analysis Paper

Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 14 // What is a Photograph?: Postmodernism and Photography

May 3-5

Required Reading:

Liz Wells, "Reading the Image," in *Photography: A Critical Introduction* (2014), 27-30

Liz Wells, "Photography as Art," in *Photography: A Critical Introduction* (2014), 280-288, 305-326

Minor White, "Equivalence: The Perennial Trend," (1963), 168-175

Goeffrey Batchen, "'Photography': An Art of the Real," in *What is a Photograph?* (2014), 47-62

Due Friday:

Discussion Video

Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 15 // Photography and Liberation: The Marginalized Take the Spot Light from the Media Spectacle to the Collective to the Museum

May 10-12

Required Reading:

Mark Godrey and Zoé Whitley, "Roy DeCarava and the Kamoinge Workshop" and "The Black Photographers Annual," in *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, 40, 136

Martin A. Berger, "Race, Visuality, and History," (2010) 94-98

Susan Stryker, "To Appear as We Please," (2016), 32-35

Yxta Maya Murray, "Laura Aguilar Was a Proud Latina Lesbian, and She Flaunted It," *Aperture*

Suggested Reading:

Antigoni Memou, "The Zapatistas and the Media Spectacle," in *Photography and Social Movements: From the Globalisation of the Movement (1968) to the Movement Against Globalisation* (2001)

Tina Campt, "The Lyric of the Archive," in *Image Matters: Archive, Photography, and the African Diaspora in Europe* (2012)

W. Ian Bourland, "Rage and Desire," from *Bloodflowers: Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Photography, and the 1980s* (2019), 58-90

Jennifer Blessing, "Rose is a Rose Revisited," (2016), 98-102

Due Friday:

Analysis Paper

Lecture quizzes (2)

Week 16 // The Power of No Photographs: Image Bans and Erased Photographs

May 17

Required Reading:

Georges Didi-Huberman, "Four Images Snatched from Hell," from *Images in Spite of All* (2003), 3-17 (*content warning)

Barbara Marcoń, "Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the Eye of the Camera," *Third Text* (2011), 787-797 (*content warning)

Suggested Reading:

Holly Edwards, "Unruly Images: Photography in and of Afghanistan," in *Artibus Asiae* (2006)

Zoe Strother, "A Photograph Steals the Soul': The History of an Idea," in *Portrait Photography in Africa* (2013)

David Levi Strauss, "A Sea of Grief is Not a Proscenium," in *Between the Eyes: Essays on Photography and Politics*, 79-105

Due Friday:

Discussion Video

Lecture quiz (1)

Finals Week

EXAM 3 - WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 12:15-2:30 PM