



Pigeon photography is a technique invented in 1907 by Julius Neubronner. A pigeon is fitted with an aluminum breast harness to which a lightweight time-delayed miniature camera can be attached.

The Reproducible Image II  
Heather M. O'Brien

Spring 2017: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1pm – 3:20pm, Nicely 401  
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*The camera, on the one hand extends our comprehension of the necessities that rule our lives; on the other, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action.*

- Walter Benjamin

This class is designed to collectively learn how to see and process the world through the lens of a camera. Content and context will drive our technical investigations. Where do we stand? When do we press the shutter? From there, we can address larger questions: What role do we want photography to play in our lives? What is at stake in our images? What is visual literacy? What are the intersections between photography and the political?

We will also work towards knowledge, skills and experience in digital photography, along with basic computer methods and applications using Adobe Photoshop. This course will cover the basic fundamentals of still photography, with an emphasis on planning a photograph, choice of camera, aperture, shutter speed, white balance, ISO, the use of natural and artificial light, and the function of lenses. We will also cover basic darkroom and computer skills as they relate to imagery, and basic photographic printing techniques. We will also try to schedule visiting artist talks as well as a field trip to a museums/exhibition.

Note: this syllabus may be altered throughout the course of the semester.

#### COURSE OUTLINE

Lectures and assignments will be given weekly

Readings will be given throughout the semester; we will also look at the work of different photographers every week

### READING RESPONSES

We will have weekly readings and reading responses to be done outside of class and turned in on Moodle (minimum one page, typed, 12 point font, double spaced).

What is your opinion about the piece and how does it relate to photography? Please do not simply recap exactly what the writer is saying; I'm more interested in your personal take on the writing style, content etc. Consider the political context of the writing, in other words, *what is at stake?* This might include the timeframe and location in which the writer was/is writing, the writer's background, identity, etc. Finally, what about this work is inspiring to you? What (if anything) do you disagree with in this work/approach, and why? Is there a critical element to the work? If so, what is it critiquing? Also please bring up any issues about the reading that may relate to photographic themes that may have come up in the classroom.

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

#### Week 1: Review Syllabus; Introduction to Photography

Assignment: Inspiration (in class); Scavenger Hunt (in groups)

Photographers: Zoe Leonard, Allan Sekula, Joshua Lutz, Stephen Shore

Reading: Excerpt from Photography Changes Everything, Martin Heifermann

#### Week 2: Content/Context: A Short History of Photography & Semiotics

Assignment: Report #1 on a photographer of choice (work in pairs); index/icon/symbol

Photographers: Larry Sultan, Cathie Opie, Ilana Panich-Linsman, Muybridge, Nadar, Trevor Paglen

Reading: Signs and Meaning (Semiotics) PDF

#### Week 3: Content/Context: Composition and Color

Assignment: Leading lines, Perspective, Space, Balance, Color, Shapes, Contrast, and Rule of thirds

Photographers: Rinko Kawauchi, Stephen Shore

Reading: Excerpt The Photograph as Contemporary Art, Charlotte Cotton

#### Week 4: Light and shadow I

Assignment: ISO and exposure / Recreate a memory

Photographers: Paul Graham, Moyra Davey, Felix Gonzalez – Torres, Irina Werning

Reading: Excerpts from Long Life, Cool White, Moyra Davey

#### Week 5: Light and shadow II

Assignment: White balance / Photography and the political

Photographers: Nan Goldin, Ken Gonzales-Day, Corinne May Botz

Reading: Excerpt from Photography Changes Everything, Martin Heifermann

#### Week 6: Movement

Assignment: Shutter Speed / Street photography, Ethics

Photographers: Martha Rosler, Garry Winnogrand, Helen Levitt, Robert Frank, Gordon Parks

Reading: In, Around, and Afterthoughts on Documentary Photography, Martha Rosler

#### Week 7: Depth of Field

Assignment: Aperture / Abstraction & Sharpness

Photographers: Uta Barth, Zoe Leonard, Ellen Birrell, Penelope Umbrico, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Allan Sekula

Reading: Excerpt from Dismal Science, Allan Sekula

#### Week 8: Portraiture I

Assignment: Portrait / Unmistakable emotion, Deadpan, Collaboration, Reciprocity (also study for Midterm Quiz)

Photographers: Joshua Lutz, Roni Horn, Sharon Lockhart, Rineke Dijkstra, Hank Willis Thomas, Zoe Strauss, Harry Gamboa Jr., Johanna Breiding, Vidisha Saini, Richard Avedon

Reading: Excerpt from The Photograph as Contemporary Art, Charlotte Cotton and [Notes on Photography, Power, and Insurgent Looks](#), Stefanie Fock

#### Week 9: Mid-term quiz & Portraiture II

Assignment: Self-portrait / identity, performing for the camera

Photographers: Cindy Sherman, Emily Jacir, Sharon Hayes, Francesca Woodman, Tseng Kwong Chi, Yung Jake, Dynasty Handbag

Reading: Excerpt from Essays on Believing is Seeing, Errol Morris

#### Week 10: Night photography

Assignment: Photograph using a tripod and external flash / mood

Photographers: Todd Hido, John Divola, Larry Fink, An My Li

Reading: Excerpt from Buy Smaller Images, David Levi Strauss

#### Week 11: Final Project Ideas

Assignment: Propose a final photo project alongside inspiration and paragraph written description

#### Week 12: Photoshop skills I

Importing images, working with contrast, color balance, dodging and burning; Work on final photo project

Reading: Printing techniques and working with curves and color in Photoshop PDF

#### Week 13: Photoshop skills II

Basic printing techniques; Continue working on final photo project

Reading: Excerpt from Photography Changes Everything, Martin Heifermann

#### Week 14: The archive

Continue working on final photo project

Photographers: Hans-Peter Feldmann, Zoe Leonard, Walid Raad & The Atlas Group, Tacita Dean

Reading: A Continuous Signal, Zoe Leonard

#### Week 15: Lab Time

Continue working on final photo project

#### Week 16: Critiques of Final Projects

Assignment: Bring in ten printed photographs (8x10" or larger) for your final project

READING LIST: .pdf excerpts from these titles will be made available to you

- Photography Changes Everything by Martin Heiferman
- The Photograph as Contemporary Art by Charlotte Cotton (to be used ½ way through semester)
- Believing Is Seeing (Observations On The Mysteries of Photography) by Errol Morris
- Photography by Barbara London

- Camera Lucida by Roland Barthes
- Regarding the Pain of Others by Susan Sontag
- On the invention of Photographic Meaning by Allan Sekula
- In, Around, and Afterthoughts on Documentary Photography by Martha Rosler
- Long Life, Cool White by Moyra Davey
- The Nature of Photographs by Stephen Shore
- A Continuous Signal by Zoe Leonard

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- A digital SLR camera with manual settings (most digital SLR's that cannot change lenses will not operate in complete manual mode and will not connect to an external flash). If you are not sure what to have, please wait until you talk to me before you make any purchase.
- Storage device (hard drive) no smaller than 250GB (note you can not save work to the computers in the digital lab)
- Memory card / CF Card, no smaller than 8GB
- Memory card reader
- Money for photographic prints (working and final prints)

### ATTENDANCE

- Three unexcused absences = No credit for the course.
- Two unexcused lates = 1 absence.
- Students will not be penalized for excused absences, but missing more than three classes will be disruptive and affect your final grade.

Class attendance is required. I take this seriously and I will fail you if you flake. Art theory, criticism and production amounts to a large conversation, where different people voice their respective ideas and their reasons for holding them. As a class, we will aim to recreate that kind of exchange, but we can't do it unless everyone shows up and shares their thoughts. An excused absence would include being seriously (and / or contagiously) ill, a death in the family, or an unexpected emergency with a dependent.

To be excused for an absence you must email me at [ho17@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ho17@aub.edu.lb) *prior* to being absent.

### PARTICIPATION

Each student is expected to be focused on the material being covered while present. Working on other assignments, browsing the Internet, etc., is not permitted, and violations will result in a significant reduction in a student's grade. Assistance to fellow students is permitted and encouraged during class as needed. Please try to keep such assistance brief and quiet so as to minimize distraction to other students.

### LATE WORK

Late work will not be accepted. Projects deadline are specified when the projects are assigned. If you are unable to attend class on a due date it is your responsibility to hand the work in or have a classmate submit the work prior to the critique.

### PRESENTATION DAY

Projects must be completed and ready for critique at the start of class or a lower grade will result. This includes technical issues which should be dealt with prior to

presentation.

### SPECIAL NEEDS

AUB is committed to improving the accessibility of its campus to people with disabilities and to complying with the requirements of the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Design Guidelines. If possible, please notify the instructor in advance of the need for accommodation of a university verified disability.

### TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Phones, ipods, etc. can be disruptive and should not be brought to class or should be turned off or in airplane mode. If you need to make an urgent call or text, please step out during the break. You will be asked to leave if you cannot respect this curtsy.

### WITHDRAWAL POLICY

It is the student's responsibility to officially drop the class. Please refer to the AUB website for the withdraw date.

### GRADING POLICY

Grades for each project will be determined across three parameters:

- Technique: How well did you resolve the technical objectives of the assignment?
- Concept: How well did you resolve the conceptual objectives of the assignment?
- Effort: How well did you demonstrate your effort? This can be through quantity, scale, showing me failed efforts, discussions with instructor, scope of project, etc.

Note: Participation is a grade component for your overall grade separate from assignments. It includes positive participation in class discussions, activities, and critiques. This means speaking up and completing in-class exercises.

11 Weekly Assignments	50
Reading responses	10
In-class Participation	10
Attendance	15
Final Project	15

Final Grade: 100 points

The following definitions apply to grades assigned:

- 70 - 74: Passing
- 75 - 79: Good
- 80 - 84: Very good
- 85 - 89: Excellent
- 90+: Outstanding

### CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

The tenants for cheating and plagiarism have been written in the AUB student handbook. These guidelines are set forth for both students and faculty to follow. Any student suspected and/or caught cheating or plagiarizing will fail the course.

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