

COMS 717-02
Photography, Film, Memory, History
Block Week Session:
January 3rd - 7th 2011
9:00- 16:00
SB 148

Instructor: Dr. Lee Carruthers
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Web Page: Blackboard course page
Office Hours: TBA

Additional Information

This course does not require a background in film studies, but it does ask you to develop a film-specific vocabulary to express your ideas. This terminology is not difficult to master and will facilitate your engagement with the course materials. For your reference, a 6-page *Glossary of Formal Terms* will be provided on Blackboard: these terms will also be detailed on the first day of class. If you have any questions about film terminology (large or small), please ask. Your contributions to the course, both written and in discussion, should demonstrate your facility with this scholarly vocabulary.

Course Description

This course assembles a diverse range of reading and viewing materials that challenge students to interrogate complex relationships between photography, film and history. In other words, we will engage such conceptual dilemmas as follows: given its basis in photographic technology, to what extent can film be called a 'historical' medium? What is the relationship between memory, history and the photographic image? How is memory complexly imbricated via filmic time and filmic history? How should we conceive the temporality of television with regard to its immediacy or 'live-ness'? To what extent does the moving image produce historical knowledge, and what are its limits? How might film facilitate a critique of historical issues and/or modes of historical explanation? What is the ethical dimension of filmic history? What are its attractions, responsibilities and dangers? And finally, how might we extend these questions more widely to contemplate new media technologies?

Viewing Requirements

As an intensive screening and reading course, you are required to view all films in class without exception. For repeat viewings after the course is concluded, the films can be screened on-site at the Media Library. Some titles may also be available at local video stores, such as *Bird Dog Video* and/or *Casablanca Video*. Please note that these resources are not a substitute for the scheduled Block Week screenings.

Course Objectives

This course asks students to engage significant historiographical issues while making informed contributions to ongoing class discussion. As a course about visual media, students are compelled to discern relationships between the course readings and the daily screenings, speaking to the ways that each text illuminates the other. Finally, in both the daily writing assignments and the major paper, students are asked to write clearly and authoritatively about the course's central issues, drawing on the available literature and developing unique perspectives.

Participation Requirements

Because of the intensive format, focused preparation and participation is essential and will determine much of the course grade. Students should complete all of the required pre-session readings before the course begins. Please note: if it is not clear on the basis of in-class writing assignments and discussion that the student has adequately engaged the required reading and film materials, it is extremely unlikely that they will receive credit for the course.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are for note-taking only. Anyone found using their laptop for email, unauthorized browsing, etc. will not be permitted to bring a laptop to subsequent lectures and will jeopardize their participation grade. Likewise, texting and cell phone use is not permitted during class time: turn off these devices when you arrive at the classroom to avoid embarrassment, annoyance, and irreversible grade penalties.

Textbooks and Readings

The **required pre-session reading** is listed below. These materials must be read in advance of the course so as to complete the daily course tasks.

Soon to be available for purchase at the **University Bookstore**:

- Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill & Wang, 1981.
- Sobchack, Vivian (ed.) *The Persistence of History: Cinema, Television and the Modern Event*, edited by (New York: Routledge, 1996).

Soon to be available via **Blackboard**:

- A selection of short readings, also **required**, will be posted under 'Course Documents.'

Assignments and Evaluation

- Reflection papers (daily; based on pre-reading + films) **40%**
- One in-class presentation (based on pre-readings and films)
+ Consistent contributions to discussion **10%**
- Final Paper (due after the course session) **50%**

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. Please hand

in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Policy for Late Assignments

Papers received after the specified Due Date will be assessed as late, and graded accordingly.

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4	Outstanding
A	4	Excellent – superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.7	Very good performance
B+	3.3	Good performance
B	3	Satisfactory performance
<p>Note: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program.</p>		
B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
<p>Note: A student who receives a B- or lower in two or more courses will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average unless the program recommends otherwise. Individual programs may require a higher minimum passing grade.</p>		
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	
F	0.0	

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources. Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended. For more information see also

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Graduate Students' Association

For details on the Graduate Students' Association, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (ie. surveys, interviews, observation) as a part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see: Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB)

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A detailed course schedule, listing the screenings and additional readings, will be available via Blackboard December 2010.