

SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE OF CLASSES
FOR
PHOTOGRAPHY IN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE
FROMM INSTITUTE SPRING 2017
PROFESSOR RODGER BIRT

- Week 1 -
4/12
- Masters of American Photography, the U.S. "Government Approved List"
1. Southworth and Hawes – Daguerreotypes. 1850s
 2. Timothy O'Sullivan – Matthew Brady, Producer; Prints on Paper and Photographic Books. 1860s
 3. Carleton Watkins, Yosemite Valley before Ansel Adams: Westward the Course of Empire. 1860s-70s
 4. Gertrude Kasebier, A.L. Coburn, and Lewis Hine – Beauty and the Beast (Art and Document). 1890s
 5. Edward Steichen and Alfred Stieglitz, New Ideas and "modern" images. 1910s
 6. Man Ray, Americans in Paris; Edward Weston, f.64 and the "rediscovery" of America. 1920s-1930s

Suggested reading; Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, Prologue and 21-70. See also, *A History of Photography* (G. E. House), 5-89.

- Week 2 – 4/19
1. James VanDerZee and Dorothea Lange, Beauty and the Beast, Pt. 2
 2. Walker Evans, W. Eugene Smith, Paul Strand, From Depression to War
 3. Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, and the "second flowering" of Bay Area Photography.
 4. Minor White, the six shades of gray and the eightfold path.
 5. Andre Kertez, Gary Winograd, (Robert Frank, Lee Friedlander, Gordon Parks, et al.)

Suggested reading; A.T., 71-163 and G.E., 89-225.

- Week 3 – 4/26
- Recent Projects in the history of photography: George Fardon, Arnold Genthe, James VanDerZee, Charles Wong.

Suggested reading; A.T., 119-163, and G.E., 226-473. R. Birt, "George R. Fardon," – online reading.

- Week 4 – 5/3
- Vivian Meier and the possibilities of Photography. Cityscape and photography: George Fardon's San Francisco. Guest presenters.

Week 5 - 5/10

City in Ruins; Arnold Genthe's San Francisco. Earthquake photographs (private collection). Guest curator.

Suggested reading; R. Birt, "History's Anteroom," online reading.

Week 6 - 5/17

James VanDerZee's Harlem was on his mind. Guest speaker.

Week 7 - 5/24

Gallery tour and "Waking Up in Naptown."

Week 8 - 5/31

A democratic medium: "Every constituent will see the world with the eyes of an artist."

Bibliography

1. Agee, James and Walker Evans. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. 1939.
2. Barrow, Thomas, ed. *Reading into Photography: Selected Essays, 1959-1980s*. 1982.
3. Berger, John. *About Looking*. 1980.
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5. Birt, Rodger, et. al. *George R. Fardon*.
6. Birt, Rodger and Marvin Nathan. *History's Anteroom: Photography in San Francisco, 1906-1909*. 2009.
7. DeCarava, Roy and Langston Hughes. *The Sweet Flypaper of Life*. 1955.
8. Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Unknown Conan Doyle: Essays on Photography*. 1982.
9. Featherstone, David, ed. *Observations: Essays on Documentary Photography*. 1984.
10. George Eastman House. *A History of Photography From 1839 to the Present*. N.D.
11. Green, Jonathan. *American Photography, A Critical History*. 1984.
12. Greenough, Sara et. al. *On the Art of Fixing a Shadow*. 1989.
13. Guimond, James. *American Photography and the American Dream*. 1991.
14. Hill, Paul. *Dialogue with Photographers*. 1979.
15. Jeffery, Ian. *How to Read a Photograph: Lessons from Master Photographers*. 2008.
16. Kozloff, Max. *The Privileged Eye: Essays on Photography*. 1987.
17. Maloof, John, ed. *Vivian Maier: Street Photographer*. N.D.
18. *Massachusetts Review* (Winter 1978).
19. Morris, Wright. *Plains Song*. 1980.

20. Poon, Irene and Charles Wong. *Read the Photograph*. N.D.
21. Smith, Shawn Michelle. *American Archives: Gender, Race, and Class*. 1999.
22. Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. 1973.
23. Szarkowski, John. *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1960*. 1978.
24. Taft, Robert. *Photography and the American Scene, A Social History*. 1938.
25. Trachtenberg, Alan. *Reading American Photographs, Images as History: Matthew Brady to Walker Evans*. 1989.
26. Welling, William. *Collector's Guide to Nineteenth Century Photographs*. 1976.
27. Younger, Daniel P. *Multiple Views: Logan Grant Essays on Photography, 1983-1989*. 1991.

Chronology: Photography in Time

1820s-1840s

Niedce Nicephore, the first 'actual' photograph and what it can tell us:
Jacques Louis Daguerre, another inventor of photography (Daguerrotypes).

France and England take the lead: Prints on paper or a unique image fixed on metal?
Material Culture Artifacts: daguerreotypes and ambrotypes; prints on paper—cartes des visites, stereographs, presentation prints, and panoramas.

1850s-1870s

Photograph in a consumer culture: Daguerreotype and print-on-paper photography come to United States.

Photography's first history in America: Gold Rush; Civil War; Reconstruction and new frontiers; nature's nation and industrialization; cities in the landscape.

A plethora of formats: cartes-des-visities; albumen prints; stereo cards; ambrotypes and tintypes; first declaration of art photography.
MCA: collectors prints; high production value books; photography magazines.

1880s-1920s

Photograph and the irony of democracy: Imperial America; Earthquake and fire; A Great War; Roaring Twenties; A Great Crash.

Learned Amateurs and Camera Clubs; Journals with class. (*Camera Work*); Masters of the Studio; A camera in every house—not quite yet.
MCA: Journals and Magazines

1930s-1950s

The Great Depression; A Second Great War; Korea is only a "conflict"; A Cold War and post war prosperity.

Artists and Amateurs side by side; Photograph and race/racism; What story do you want to tell? A family of man/A living hell; (Executive Order 9066).

1960s-1980s

An established canon; Photography in open view; Many Americas (Civil rights, women's equality, LGBTQ rights, Red and Blue America).

Color photography becomes the popular standard (oh kodachrome!)

1990s-2017

Digital! Digital! Digital! Film? Film? Film?



Sandwich 1811-1841 (1841-1841)



Timothy H. O'Sullivan 1844-1882



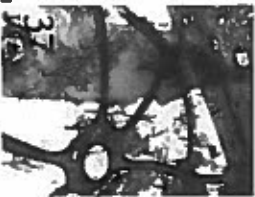
Carlson & Walker 1849-1916



Genesee Bunker 1850-1934



Louis W. Howe 1854-1924



Alvin Langdon Coburn 1871-1944



Edward Siedler 1874-1973



Alfred Stieglitz 1864-1946



Alan Bay 1868-1976



Edward Weston 1890-1958



James VanDerZee 1884-1943



Dorothea Lange 1895-1978



Walker Evans 1897-1975



W. Eugene Smith 1918-1978



Paul Strand 1890-1978



Arad Adams 1924-1984



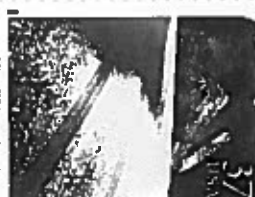
Langston Cunningham 1897-1976



Arad Adams 1924-1984



Curt Stempel 1924-1984



Alan Watts 1924-1978

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