

Western University, Department of Visual Arts
**Seminar in Photography:
Photography and Social Change**
VAH 4482F - FALL 2017
TUESDAYS 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM
JOHN LABATT VISUAL ART CENTRE, ROOM 247



Sergey Ponomarev, *Refugees arrive by boat on the Greek island of Lesbos*, Nov. 16, 2015

Professor Sarah Bassnett

OFFICE – VAC 220

OFFICE HOURS – Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30pm and by appointment

EMAIL – sarah.bassnett@uwo.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Many of the social and political upheavals of the late 20th and early 21st centuries are familiar to us through photographs: the Vietnam War, the civil rights protests of the 1960s, 9/11 and the subsequent war in Iraq, the war on terror, and global migration. Focusing on modern conflict, social movements, and changes brought about by globalization, this seminar explores the diverse ways photography has been used to negotiate social transformation. In the process, we look at different practices of photography – from portraiture and photojournalism to contemporary art. We discuss recent scholarship on issues such as spectatorship and the ethics of witnessing, photography as a form of encounter, and the role of iconic images in public memory. Seminar participants will develop their own research on some aspect of photography and social change, the results of which will be presented in the form of a conference paper.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze and evaluate photographs using appropriate terminology.
- Conduct research using library resources, such as books and journal articles in databases, and use the sources effectively in a research essay.
- Articulate an argument in writing, support the argument using appropriate evidence, and address counter-arguments.
- Apply knowledge of issues and debates in photography history and theory to develop their own views, and articulate their ideas clearly in oral and written form.
- Solve problems by participating constructively in group discussions and activities. This includes sharing ideas and listening respectfully to the views of others.

PREREQUISITE

The prerequisite for the course is VAH 2242F/G History of Photography. If you have not taken this course, you require permission of the Professor or the Department. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as the basis for an appeal.

ASSIGNMENTS

PARTICIPATION – 10%

The participation portion of your grade will be based on your commitment to the course, which includes your attendance, your level of preparedness, and your contribution to class discussions and other activities. Arriving late to class, leaving early, not being prepared to discuss the readings, and not participating in discussions will significantly reduce your participation mark. This portion of your grade will assess how effectively you are able to participate in discussions by sharing ideas and by listening respectfully to the views of others. The seminar format is dependent upon participation from all students. In order to encourage participation from everyone, class members will be assigned to introduce readings throughout the course.

READING RESPONSE JOURNAL – 10% (due by 11 am Nov 7)

Select five of the assigned course readings, and write a brief summary of each one, along with your own thoughts about it. These should be about 300 words each. Your summary should state the main idea of the essay, while our comments should discuss your views on the issues. Be sure to indicate the title and author for each of the readings, followed by your summary and comment. Submit one Word document with all five reading responses through the assignments link in OWL.

TEST – 25% (Nov 14)

The end-of-term test will be comprised of short answer and essay questions. It will assess your understanding of the readings and issues we have discussed throughout the course.

RESEARCH PROJECT

proposal 10% / preliminary presentation 5% / final conference paper and presentation 40%

Your research essay should focus on a series of photographs that relate to a conflict or social movement. You may choose to delve deeper into one of the topics we've discussed in class, although you should

select a different set of photographs than the ones we have looked at. Alternatively, you are free to investigate issues that we haven't considered in class but that relate to the themes of the course.

Proposal and annotated bibliography: Your proposal should include a brief (approximately 300-word) outline identifying the issue and the selection of photographs you will write about, along with an annotated bibliography of at least six published sources you expect to use for your research. Your bibliography must include journal articles as well as books. (Relevant web sites can be used, but they should be in addition to six published sources). (due by 11 am Oct 24)

Presentations: You will present the preliminary results of your research project to the class in a 10-minute presentation followed by questions. These will be scheduled November 21 & 28, before the final conference presentations.

Conference paper: Your final essay should be written in the form of an 8-page (approximately 2500-word) conference paper. It should be thesis-driven and present an interpretation of a selection of photographs, which you support with suitable evidence derived from your research. Students will present their papers at an end-of-term conference. Your grade includes the written paper and the conference presentation on Dec. 3.

GRADING

Participation	10%	Weekly
Proposal	10%	11 am Oct 24
Reading response journal	10%	11 am Nov 7
Test	25%	Nov 14
Presentation	5%	Nov 21 & 28
Conference paper	40%	11 am Dec 3

Exemption to Senate Policy on Academic Evaluation

This course has received an exemption from the Associate Dean (Academic) to the noted policy, which requires students to receive 15% of their final grade one week before the deadline to withdraw from a course without academic penalty. Students in this course will receive 10% of their final grade by October 31.

LATE POLICIES

Extensions may be granted for valid reasons, but they must be negotiated before assignments are due. Late assignments will be penalized by 5% each day, unless appropriate documentation (a doctor's note, for example) is provided.

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the professor or the department. Accommodation for missed assignments, or attendance, totaling less than 10%, due to medical reasons, should be discussed with the professor. In order to have a request considered, students must contact the professor no later than the day after the assignment is due or attendance is missed. All course work must be completed before the last day of classes, which is 9 December 2015.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All work for the course **MUST** be entirely your own. All sources that you use for your assignments must be accurately cited. If you have doubts about how and when to cite sources, consult the Chicago Manual of Style guide on OWL in the Resources section, or talk to me before the assignment due date. All course

work must be completed specifically for this course. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic offences and they will be dealt with strictly. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course is considered cheating. Plagiarism includes:

1. Quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from any source, including all electronic sources, without acknowledgement;
2. Adopting someone else's line of thought, argument, or supporting evidence without acknowledgement;
3. Submitting someone else's work, in any form, without acknowledgement;
4. Knowingly representing as one's own an idea of another.

For information concerning Western's Plagiarism and Academic Offences (Scholastic Offences) policies see: http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/print_pg113.html

All assignments may be subject to review through plagiarism detection software. The University of Western Ontario currently uses Turnitin.com for this purpose. Turnitin is an anti-plagiarism tool that screens assignments against a database of the Internet, e-journals, e-books, and a range of other scanned material, including other assignments for this course. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

CITATION STYLE

The Chicago Manual of Style, Humanities format, is the standard style for art history. Use this style to cite your sources for your research paper and other assignments. Please refer to the guide in OWL and the Library website for examples: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>.

POLICIES & CONDUCT

Attendance is required. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and be prepared for and participate in discussions. Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures and for the required readings. Students who miss less than two classes are not required to seek accommodations for their absences. For subsequent absences students will need to seek accommodations according to the Medical Accommodation policy below. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from a classmate.

- Under Western's regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in final tests, evaluations and/or critiques.
- If a student is consistently absent from a portion of class, they will be considered as exceeding the 15% cut off.
- After three unexcused absences, a student's final grade may be lowered by half a letter grade.

Academic Accommodation: For Western's complete Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities see <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg111.html>. Please talk to me during the first few weeks of the course if you require accommodation in course requirements or scheduling due to a disability. Please visit the Student Development Centre for assistance with a disability. Students who want to request academic accommodation must register with the Centre, meet with a counselor, and provide appropriate documentation of a disability. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/> for more information.

Electronic Devices: The use of a computer in class is strongly discouraged because they often become a source of distraction for you and others. Please turn off cell phones while in the classroom. Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used during tests or examinations.

Code of Conduct: Students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the Western community with respect. See <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg111.html>. I will make every effort to foster a class environment that is comfortable for all students and where students respect all class members. We do not always have to agree with one another, however, it is important that we respect each other's viewpoints. Behaviour that is disruptive or discriminatory will not be tolerated.

Absences on Religious Holy Days: For purposes of this policy "the University has approved a list of dates which are recognized religious holidays which require members of those religions to be absent from the University; this list is updated annually and is available at departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices." For Western's Policy on Religious Holidays see <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg111.html>

Students should request permission if they wish to record lectures or class discussions for study purposes. Lectures are the intellectual property of the professor.

The last day to drop this course without academic penalty is **November 12, 2017**.

EXPLICIT CONTENT WARNING

In this course, we look at and discuss a broad range of visual material, including some images that addresses controversial subject matter and some that depicts explicit scenes of a sexual or violent nature. If you do not want to engage with work of this kind, this may not be the right course for you.

RESOURCES

OFFICE HOURS / EMAIL

Please see me during my office hours if you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course, including readings or assignments. If you would like to talk to me and cannot make it to my office hours, please ask for an appointment or contact me by email. I will make every effort to reply to your email within one to two business days. As I have other professional and personal responsibilities I typically respond to email Monday through Friday during normal business hours.

OWL SAKAI

We will be using OWL to supplement the in-class portion of the course. I will post slides from class as pdf files for your review, and the syllabus and a range of other resources will also be available. Also, all assignments will be submitted through OWL. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal> to access OWL. Use your Western user name and password to sign on. Please be sure to check your browser and make sure everything is working at the beginning of the course. See the ITS technical assistance info on the above mentioned web site, and contact ITS for additional technical assistance. The ITS Support number is (519) 661-3800.

STUDENT SERVICES

There are many organizations and offices on campus designed to assist students with the challenges of university. Please see the web site for a description of the full array of services: <http://studentexperience.uwo.ca/>. Learning Skills Services, for example, offers one-on-one assistance with academic issues. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning/> for details.

WRITING SUPPORT CENTRE 4100 WSSB

The Writing Support Centre is part of the Effective Writing Program at Western and is open to all registered students. It offers instruction on all aspects of writing and is not merely for students who have difficulty with writing. Most effective are the one-on-one tutoring sessions, where you can work with a tutor on course assignments. See <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/> for details.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.