

AMH 3931

Picturing the U.S. Past. Spring 2023

Instructor: Dr. Louise Newman, Associate Professor

Course meets MWF, period 6 (12:50-1:40)

Office Hours: Wed, Fri, per 7, 2-3:00 in Keene Flint 212 and by appointment

Email is the best way to reach me: lnewman@ufl.edu

Course Website (e-learning/Canvas): <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Course Description

This course analyzes the ways in which academic and public historians have used pictures (paintings, photographs, posters, cartoons, graphic novels) to preserve, document & construct historical knowledge. It's a course that takes visual texts seriously and will explore the individual, community & national needs that pictorial histories and documents have fulfilled in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Primary sources examined in the course include political iconography, tourist postcards, and children's literature- all used to foster patriotism; family portraits (cartes de visite) that have produced understandings of intimate relationships; the curating of amateur photographs for public exhibits (on Trumpism and Covid pandemic), and so forth. Students should note that although we will be asking the same questions that historians commonly ask of written primary sources, this is a course without any core narrative structure. Student groups will produce these narratives for the individual topics we cover.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to improve students' ability to create valid historical arguments using visual sources, to communicate both in writing and orally, and to work collaboratively with others.

By the end of the semester, students should have:

- (1) Grown comfortable locating and interpreting diverse visual sources.
- (2) Become familiar with different types of images, and be able to explain how and why they were first produced, and how/why they have been preserved (in archives, museums, family papers, etc.) and understand how the meanings of sources change over time
- (3) Be able to construct an historical argument based on visual sources and articulate that argument in both a digital form and a print form for broad audiences.
- (4) Be able to critique (productively, constructively) the work of classmates.

Readings

Books

- Spiegelman, Art. *Maus I: My Father Bleeds History*. NY: Pantheon Books, 1986.

Articles

Listed in alphabetical order by author's last name, these PDFs may be accessed from Course Reserves on E-learning/Canvas, downloaded to your computer, and printed out so that you can work from hard copies during class.

IMPORTANT: It may be necessary for you log in using the UF VPN Client before you will be allowed to view course reserve materials from an off-campus location (e.g. Jacobson and Rice, see below). For information on installing and using the UF VPN Client, visit <https://it.ufl.edu/ict/documentation/network-infrastructure/vpn/>. For technical assistance with the UF VPN Client, please call the UF Computing Help Desk, at 352 392-4357.

- Gallman, J. Matthew. "Snapshots: Images of Men in the United States Colored Troops," *American Nineteenth Century History*, 13:2 (2012): 127-151.
- Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *The Historian's Eye*, Afterword.
- Kimble, James J. & Olsen, Lester C., "Visual Rhetoric Representing Rosie the Riveter: Myth and Misconception in J. Howard Miller's 'We Can Do It! Poster,'" *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 9.4 (Winter 2006): 533-569.
- Kroes, Rob. "The History of Photography and the Photography of History," chapter three of *Photographic Memories*, (2007), 57-83.
- Miller, Bonnie. "A Primer for Using Historical Images in Research," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 27.1 (2017): 73-94.
- Rice, Mark. *Dean Worcester's Fantasy Islands: Photographs, Film and the Colonial Philippines* University of Michigan 2014, pages to be determined.
- Wallis, Brian. "Black Bodies, White Science: Louis Agassiz's Slave Daguerretypes," *American Art* 9 (Summer 1995): 39-61.
- Yacovone, David. "Surpassing the Love of Women": Victorian Manhood and the Language of Fraternal Love," in *A Shared Experience: Men, Women, and the History of Gender*. Eds. Laura McCall and Donald Yacovone. New York University Press, 1998, pp. 195-221.

Online Exhibits

- "Beyond the Headlines: Reflections of 2021 from behind the camera," Matheson Museum's Online Exhibit (Covid-19 Pandemic) <https://express.adobe.com/page/RwvY2fyChuD2R/>
- Student-created exhibit from 2012.
<https://picturingamerica142762412.wordpress.com/2018/04/19/the-role-of-women-and-children-in-prohibition-and-world-war-i-propaganda/#more-186>

Additional Visual Texts (Primary Sources)

- *American Progress* (painting by Thomas Gast, 1872)
- *We Can Do It!* (Rosie the Riveter poster designed by J. Howard Miller, 1941)
- Billy Joel's *We Didn't Start the Fire* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDPnsTRAvIM>
- Colonial Postcards (late 19th, early 20th century)

Assignments and Grading Percentages

- Attendance & Participation 200 pts (20% of grade)
- Short assignments 300 pts (30% of course grade)
- Midterm 300 pts (20% of course grade)
- Final assignment 400 pts (30% of course grade)

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Total Points	GPA Equivalent
A	950-1000	4.0
A-	900-949	3.67
B+	875-899	3.33
B	850-874	3.0
B-	800-849	2.67
C+	775-799	2.33
C	750-774	2.0
C-	700-749	1.67
D+	675-699	1.33
D	650-674	1.0
D-	600-649	0.67
E	<600	0

Policies and expectations

- **Late work** will not be accepted unless circumstances are severe and beyond the student's control. Please let instructor know of any adverse circumstances that may affect your ability to complete assignments on time.
- **Attendance Policy** to be discussed in class.
- **Special Accommodations:** Any student requesting special accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) **during the first week of the semester.**
- **Plagiarism** is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code and is not tolerated at the University of Florida. For a full description of the University's policy regarding plagiarism, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>

Schedule**Introduction. Pictures are more than illustrations...**

Week 1 (1/9, 1/11, 1/13) **Creating a Visual Archive** of (and for) the Present

- Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *The Historian's Eye*, Afterword (Trumpism)
- Matheson Museum's Online Exhibit (Covid-19 Pandemic)
- Billy Joel's *We Didn't Start the Fire* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDPnsTRAvIM>
- Sample photographic essay by Daniel Osachy on the Covid Pandemic, April 2020.

Week 2 (---, 1/18, 1/20) **Re-interpreting the Iconic Image** amid shifting contexts

American Progress (painting by Thomas Gast, 1872)

We Can Do It! (Rosie the Riveter poster designed by J. Howard Miller, 1941)

- Bonnie Miller. "A Primer for Using Historical Images in Research," *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 27.1 (2017): 73-94.
- Kimble, James J. & Olsen, Lester C., "Visual Rhetoric Representing Rosie the Riveter: Myth and Misconception in J. Howard Miller's 'We Can Do It! Poster,'" *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 9.4 (Winter 2006): 533-569.

Week 3 (1/23, 1/25, 1/27) **Owning, Othering, Exhibiting**--the (ab)use of photographs

- Photos of Renty & Delia Taylor & Dispute with Harvard U.
<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10947785/Descendant-two-slaves-displayed-Harvard-allowed-sue.html>
- Brian Wallis, "Black Bodies, White Science: Louis Agassiz's Slave Daguerreotypes" *American Art* 9 (Summer 1995): 39-61.
- Who Owns a Photograph: Renty & Delia Taylor," December 10, 2021. *Washington Post* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/11/10/harvard-photos-renty-delia-taylor-zeeahy-daguerreotypes/>

Week 4 (1/30, 2/1, 2/3) **Creating Memories, Mourning Loss, Documenting Genocides**

- Spiegelman, Art. *Maus I* (memoir—graphic novel)

Images as Historical Documents, Part 1: Wars, Fairs, Empires, 19th and 20th centuries

Week 5 (2/6, 2/8, 2/10) Black Soldiers and the Civil War (Portraiture)

- Rob Kroes, "The History of Photography and the Photography of History," chapter three of *Photographic Memories*, (2007), 57-83.

- J. Matthew Gallman, “Snapshots: Images of Men in the United States Colored Troops,” *American Nineteenth Century History*, 13:2 (2012): 127-151.
- Mark Rice, *Dean Worcester’s Fantasy Islands: Photographs, Film and the Colonial Philippines* University of Michigan 2014, pages to be determined.

Week 6 (2/13, 2/15, 2/17) Patriotism & **Empire Building** in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
Class visit to Smathers, Suzan Alteri

- Hess *American Political Cartoons*, Vinson, *Thomas Nast*. **Selections still to be determined.**
- Tomasa, “Settler Colonial Postcards,” PDF distributed in advance of class.
- Eric Breitbard, “A World On Display: Photographs from the St. Louis Fair of 1904.”
- Bonnie Miller. “A Primer for Using Historical Images in Research” *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism* 27.1 (2017): 73-94.
- Mark Rice, *Dean Worcester’s Fantasy Islands: Photographs, Film and the Colonial Philippines* University of Michigan 2014, pages to be determined.

Weeks 7 (--, 2/22, 2/24) and 8 (2/27, 3/1, 3/3) **Midterm Exercises (Group Work)**

- Model Student work <https://picturingamerica142762412.wordpress.com/2018/04/19/the-role-of-women-and-children-in-prohibition-and-world-war-i-propaganda/#more-186>

Week 9 (3/6, 3/8, 3/10) Spring Break – No class meetings

Images as Historical Documents, Part 2: Intimate Matters, 19th, 20th and 21st centuries

Week 10 (3/13, 3/15, 3/17) What happened to Fraternal & Sisterly Love?

- David Yacovone, “Surpassing the Love of Women”
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Week 11 (3/20, 3/22, 3/24) Sex Across the Color Line

Week 12 (3/27, 3/29, 3/31) To be determined

Week 13 (4/3, 4/5, 4/7) Student Presentations

Week 14 (4/10, 4/12, 4/14) Student Presentations

Week 15 (4/17, 4/19, 4/21) Student Presentations

Week 16 (4/24, 4/26) Conclusion