

Western University, Department of Visual Arts
Seminar in Photography: Photography & Social Change

AH 4650G / 9594B / 9694B - Winter 2020

TUESDAYS 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

JOHN LABATT VISUAL ART CENTRE, ROOM 247



Gilles Peress, USA. NYC. 9/11/2001. FDNY paramedics near the Brooklyn Bridge walk toward the scene of the attack of the World Trade Center.

Professor Sarah Bassnett

OFFICE – VAC 219

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.

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%

Reading Response Journal – 10%

Test – 25%

Research Project Proposal – 10%

Research Project Presentation – 10%

Research Paper – 35%