

## **Faculty Information Literacy Stipend**

Final Report

**Name:** Eileen Maxson

**Course:** ASPH 3360: Special Topics in Photography: Creating a Body of Work

**Semester:** Spring

**Introduction** (This section to include why you decided to create the assignment, and how the information literacy learning goals support the course.)

The primary objective of this course was the creation, by each student, of a cohesive, self-directed body of visual work. For photography students accustomed to responding to/ relying on the framework of assignments – creating truly independent work is no small task. At the same time, doing so is really *the challenge* for developing artists. The related questions at hand, as a student and beyond, include: what distinguishes my voice as an artist? In what context does my work belong and speak to? How does my work build upon and expand that conversation?

My contention, presented through this course, is that research and information literacy are invaluable and foundational tools for visual artists in pursuit of answers (as unique as they are) to the above questions. We become better artists by learning how to find, respond to, and organize information that interests, inspires and challenges our thinking and our making.

As such, the information literacy objective of this course supported and enhanced each student's work through introductions to sources of art information, search methods, and strategies for critically assessing this information. Regarding information literacy, the ultimate goal of the course was to enable each student to create an annotated bibliography and artist statement that reflected and enriched their work as artists.

### **Description of the information literacy assignment or activities**

During the course, students worked towards information literacy goals over three assignments. Each assignment was supported by in-class presentations and indispensable support from Beverly Mitchell, Assistant Director and Art & Dance librarian, Hamon Arts Library.

## **Assignment #1: Finding Keywords & Sources**

For this assignment, students began articulating the direction of their independent work through a brainstorming exercise. To begin the semester, students were asked to generate 6-12 keywords that were representative of creative interests and the work that they planned to pursue during the semester. From there, the students were first instructed, by Beverly Mitchell, on best search practices and then tasked with conducting searches of at least five sources of information (ex: journals, blogs, magazines, artists' websites, museum catalogs).

For this session, the students were assigned in groups of two or three to search these different formats for information as listed above and discuss the type and quality of information. For example, students would discuss what type of information they would expect to find on an artist's website and how comprehensive, critical, or unbiased it might or might not be.

Building upon these keywords and searches, the students then selected five sources to further research and assemble into an annotated bibliography. The two stipulations for this initial bibliography were:

- 1) One of their initial five sources MUST be a theoretical text that addresses photography. Students were given a generous list of suggested texts, and also advised that this text will be presented orally to the class.
- 2) Each annotation must be 150-250 words.

Also in this session, the students looked at examples of annotated bibliographies and discussed the content of the information presented in the bibliographies as well as the audience for whom it was written.

## **Assignment #2: Articulating Your Direction**

For this assignment, students expanded on their research and the annotated bibliography of five sources completed during Assignment #1. For Assignment #2, students were tasked with adding seven additional sources (also 150-250 word annotations) to their bibliography for a total of twelve sources. Students were permitted to draw up to two of these additional sources from the class bibliography, but were required to write their own annotations for these sources.

At the mid-point for this assignment, students were also assigned a partner and asked to conduct artist interviews with one another. In advance of these interviews, students exchanged their in-progress bibliography, which, together with their visual, photographic work, formed the basis of their questions and answers. The purpose of this part of the assignment was for students to further clarify their individual direction (both research and visual) through responses to peer challenges. Once transcribed, students exchanged the interviews with another peer, who acted as an editor. The resulting interview was then submitted back to the artist and interviewer for further revisions. In relative contrast to an interview conducted via a journalistic, contemporaneous approach, I wanted students to use the editing process as an additional tool for clarifying their thoughts, ideas and work going forward. Thus, the conversation between the artist and interviewer happened in person but evolved over the semester on the page.

### **Assignment #3: Developing an Artist Statement**

Drawing on the intersection of their completed, annotated bibliography, artist interview, and visual work, students were then given the assignment to write an 'artist statement.'. The main, intended purpose of this statement was to perform as a fully articulated, written companion to their final body of visual work. Each student's statement was to be conceived as a component equal to their photographs, meant to enrich a viewer's visual experience and understanding of their artwork with supplemental knowledge, background, and/or context. The assignment stipulated that each student's statement must cite a minimum of three sources annotated in their longer bibliography. Similar to the artist interview (Assignment #2), a schedule for revision and peer editing was also built into the student's schedule. Each student submitted a rough draft to me as well as to an assigned peer. That peer then edited the assigned draft during a class meeting. In addition to my feedback, those comments then informed changes each student made before submitting a final draft.

### **Method of assessment**

When assessing student's work for each assignment, I used the below guidelines.

#### **The Student's Bibliography (Assignment #1, #2):**

- Located appropriate, qualified sources from the assigned, 5 categories (A #1)
- Located a minimum of 12 appropriate and qualified sources (A #2)

- Demonstrated the ability to find sources through SMU catalogs, WorldCat, and use of ILL
- Articulated the main ideas of sources, and the relevance of citations to their interest(s)/topic(s)
- Created a bibliography that is complete, contains the requisite number of sources, and is properly organized and formatted

**The Student's Oral Presentation (Assignment #1):**

- Articulated a clear thesis
- Cited the requisite number of sources
- Presented relevant, accurate, and well-organized information
- Came to a well-established conclusion

**Artist Interviews (Assignment #2):**

- As an interviewer, the student drafted the requisite number of questions for their partner and demonstrated considerable thought and preparation for the interview
- As an interviewee, the student responded to questions in a manner that demonstrated considerable thought and effort towards better articulating their motivations and intentions as an artist/researcher
- The interviewer and interviewee cite references, where appropriate, from their own or their partner's research where appropriate
- The final interview was well edited regarding both quality and accuracy of content and without grammatical or spelling errors

**Artist Statements (Assignment #3)**

**The Statement:**

- Fulfilled the stated purpose(s) of an artist statement, namely functioning as a written complement to the student's visual work
- Provided supplemental knowledge, background and/or context to the student's visual work
- Articulated the student/artist's ambitions, intentions and envisioned purpose for the visual work
- Included the requisite number of sources and citations
- Was submitted without grammatical or spelling errors

**Results and impact on student learning** (This can include student self-evaluations or feedback, pre- and post-test results, rubric results, and/or impact on other student assignments.)

The impact of information literacy in the course was the most evident and quantifiable on two occasions:

- 1) When assessing the student's first and later and/or revised annotations (*written after receiving feedback from me + additional instruction from Beverly Mitchell*)
- 2) When observing and assessing their performance at the final exam in conjunction with their final annotated bibliographies

Regarding the first point, below are three examples of improved student annotations. Overall, these three samples reflect, roughly, the spectrum (regarding quality) of work submitted by students. Where some students struggled with adequately conveying the content of a source, others stopped short of assessing the quality, authority, and relevancy of their research. Regardless of each student's initial assessment and starting point, I was pleased to observe that every student made notable improvements over the course of the semester.

To my second point, for each student, the culmination of this course was the creation of an annotated bibliography, an artist statement, and participation in a portfolio review of their visual work. Though they did not specifically present their research during the review, their bibliography, statement, and research impacted their performance and experience at the portfolio review, their final exam.

During the portfolio review, seven guest reviewers (curators and artists from the community) met with students individually for 15 minute, one-on-one meetings. During these meetings, the students presented their visual work to the reviewers and received constructive feedback. Anecdotally, at the close of the review, several of the reviewers commented on the student's overall ability to strongly articulate their work, interests, and research. Specifically, they made these comments in comparison to other comparable, student groups they had encountered.

For this, I credit our work towards information literacy objectives. As a whole, I observed the students grow in the capacity to place themselves in a larger and scholarly context over the course and semester. Their artist statements were also more articulate and significantly more developed than other artist statements I received in other, similar courses. This growth and positive outcome is, I believe, directly related to the creation of each student's annotated bibliography, and overall information literacy course work.

<p><b>EXAMPLE #1: IMPROVED ANNOTATION</b></p>	
<p>Lehmann, Claire. "Color Goes Electric." <i>Triple Canopy</i> no. 22 (May 31, 2016).  <a href="https://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/color-goes-electric/#three-one">https://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/color-goes-electric/#three-one</a> (Links to an external site.).</p>	<p>Whalan, Mark. "The Majesty of the Moment: Sociality and Privacy in the Street Photography of Paul Strand." <i>American Art</i> 25, no. 2 (2011): 34-55. doi:10.1086/661968.</p>
<p><b>FIRST ANNOTATION</b></p>	<p><b>FINAL, REVISED ANNOTATION</b></p>
<p><b>Feedback:</b></p> <p><i>Very strong summary of the content of the article. To improve this and future annotations, assert your assessment of the text. Through describing the text, you have built a strong foundation of authority. Now be subjective. From your perspective, what are the strengths or weaknesses of the text?</i></p>	<p><b>Noted Improvements:</b></p> <p><i>Thorough and persuasive assessment of the text. The voice of the student is evident and clear in the annotation. The objective of ascertaining the relevance (strengths/weaknesses) of the source to her research is successfully articulated.</i></p>
<p>"Color goes Electric" is an article written by Claire Lehmann about the upbringings of color photography, not only as a new medium for artist but also for scientists. The article discusses the initial reactions to color photography from critics who held generally mixed but negative reviews. Color photography was believed to be too real because it replicated what was already there and therefore had no room for artistic intention. At the same time, color photography was too fake because the colors were often exaggerated. Lehmann then discusses why colors are often remembered</p>	<p>In the article titled "The Majesty of the Moment" written by Mark Whalan, Paul Strand's street photography is examined. The aspect of photographing individuals without their knowledge or permission is not discussed in full in this article but is instead sprinkled throughout its sections which mainly focus on the social and political implications that Strand's street photography evoked. The fact that his photos could provide a cultural critique is present. Most interesting was the discussion of the relationship created between the photographer and the subject. Since Strand</p>

<p>to be much more vibrant and saturated than they really are, moving into a discussion about major image producing companies like Kodak and Afgar. These companies produced and used reference images in surveys to determine consumer preferences. Lehmann also explains that rendering systems have to be put in place because the camera sees color in a way that is different than how the human brain perceives color and therefore film and digital cameras had to account for this difference. These companies' reference images employed different color rendering systems which helped determine which film and digital cameras rendering systems should be put in place to align with consumer preferences and to gain sales. Lehmann includes expertise from image scientist as well as opinions from art critics providing the article with scientific explanations of the journey it took to make color photography possible and how culture reacted to it.</p>	<p>used a deceptive camera to photograph individuals, he was able to intrude on their privacy. However, there exists the possibility that the person being photographed would challenge the photographer if noticed. Therefore, is this technique moral? This question may not be able to be answered however it is certain that there is a sense of detachment between the photographer and the subject. The article appropriately describes this experience as single moments of social contact that break the implied atmosphere of privacy in public settings. Most importantly, this article elaborates on the feelings, concerns, and limitations many street photographers have been and still are faced with.</p>
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<b>EXAMPLE #2: IMPROVED ANNOTATION</b>	
<p>Grundberg, Andy. "Sweet Illusion: Vik Muniz." <i>Crisis of the Real: Writings on Photography</i>. New York: Aperture Foundation, 2010. 254-58. Print.</p>	
<b>FIRST ANNOTATION</b>	<b>FINAL, REVISED ANNOTATION</b>
<b>Feedback:</b>	<p><b>Noted Improvements:</b></p> <p><i>Significantly more detailed and in-depth</i></p>

*Too short. Grundberg discusses several of Muniz's other works, which you may consider discussing. Focus also on creating a more authoritative annotation. What is your assessment of the text? Consider, what, from your perspective, are the strengths and weaknesses of the writing? Is this a useful text for you, why?*

*discussion of the text.*

Andy Grundberg has compiled a large collection of writings on photography, one of them being "Sweet Illusion." The text considers the life of Vik Muniz, an abstract sculptor. Muniz works with many types of mediums, focusing on creating abnormality in his art. Through his abnormality, Muniz both creates and destroys his work. In his painting, *Sweet Illusion*, Muniz creates the piece out of chocolate syrup. The artist does this only to later destroy his work after it is photograph. Muniz supports the text's ideas that he creates his work to be a transformation of what is considered normal. Rather than allowing a concrete meaning to his work, Muniz thinks of it as a game. All viewers will eventually get to the meaning behind the work, but they will each take their own individual routes (sic) and put in their own experiences.

Grundberg studies artist Vik Muniz in the text "Sweet Illusion: Vik Muniz" in the book, *Crisis of the Real: Writings on Photography*. In the text, Grundberg looks at several Muniz' work and how each of the subjects he chooses has historical reference. Often Muniz will choose a serious subject that he expresses with wit, adding a sense of playfulness to it. *Sigmund* (1997) is a 5-by-4- foot photograph of a painting Muniz created out of chocolate. The idea of "original" is challenged here due to the destruction of the original chocolate image. He only leaves his viewers with a secondary representation of it after photographing the canvas. This trend is continued with *The Sugar Children* (1996). Here, Muniz depicts drawings of plantain worker's children made of sugar grains. Rather than keeping the series intact, Muniz clears each sheet of paper after photographing it and moving onto the next image. The abnormality of Muniz's art results in the nickname, "low tech illusionist." Grundberg points out that Muniz enjoys treating his artwork as a game. Although everyone will eventually get to the same point, it is up to the viewer to get to a starting point. This path to understanding is



	<p>determined by a viewer’s life experiences and background. Muniz creates his work so people can understand and sense their individual capacities. He works with materials and subjects that are well known, but puts a spin on it to challenge the viewer.</p>
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<b>EXAMPLE #3: IMPROVED ANNOTATION</b>	
<p>Respini, Eva. “On Defiance,” Aperture 225 (2016): 100–107.</p>	
<b>FIRST ANNOTATION</b>	<b>FINAL, REVISED ANNOTATION</b>
<p><b>Feedback:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When you say “various women artists”, which artists specifically? this will open up possibility also for you to elaborate using materials from your presentation</li> <li>-Define “unconventional methods” and answer what tied together they were using photography as an abstract medium, right? Explore / elaborate on this.</li> <li>-Define “new grounds”</li> <li>- Overall, add more specificity and details from the article. These “facts” will build a foundation. Once established, apply your voice/assessment of the text. What are the strengths (and/or weaknesses of the text or of individual artists)? Why is this article informative or important to you?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Noted Improvements:</b></p> <p>In her second annotation, this student added additional details and specific information from the text. The student’s revision also indicates a beginning effort to apply an assessment of the text and the source’s relevance to her work.</p>
<p>In Eva Respini’s article, “On Defiance”, she covers and analyzes various women artists and how they the use unconventional methods to execute their messages they wish to convey through the art that they produce.</p>	<p>In Eva Respini’s article, “On Defiance”, she covers and analyzes various women artists including; Cindy Sherman, Miranda Lichtenstein, Liz Deschenes, and Sara VanDerBeek. It describes how they the use</p>

These women are “defiant” in art because they had explored and conquered “new ground(s)” in photography. In their art these women are conveying the changes they would like to see amongst the world. The author also covers the gender gap that is present in the majority of art museums. There is a “shared interest,” among the women artists mentioned in the article, in the status, power, and representation of both images and women within cultural production.

unconventional methods in photography to create an abstract medium to execute their messages they wish to convey through the art that they produce. These women are “defiant” in art because they had explored and conquered “new ground(s)” in photography. In their art, these women are conveying the changes they would like to see amongst the world. The author also covers the gender gap that is present in the majority of art museums. There is a “shared interest,” among the women artists mentioned in the article, in the status, power, and representation of both images and women within cultural production. This article was helpful for me to get a better insight on how women artists “defy” art and what it means for them regarding the primarily male-dominated art world.

**Summary and next steps** (This can include your reflections on working with the students on information literacy goals, how you might improve on the assignment or activities, and/or how you might address information literacy goals using other methods or in other courses.)

From my perspective, one of the biggest challenges of this course was the disparity between student’s levels/ranges of experience. The class was comprised of sophomores to senior level students, and as such students experienced some level of frustration when asked to flex up/down in their experience level with both visual and information literacy skills. For this reason, in the future I would limit enrollment to a similar course to advanced, upperclassman. In addition, limiting enrollment to this group would allow the group to dig deeper into questions of authority in their academic research. Beverly’s final presentation to the class initiated a discussion on this topic as well as how our work as scholars may be considered in dialogue with our sources. In response to these topics, the students were universally activated and engaged. In future, this seems a prime area to expand upon with advanced students.

On the other hand, I plan to incorporate the thorough, introductory information (searching/locating sources), provided by Beverly Mitchell, in my 1300 level course. In that course, students begin to learn how to work as an artist/photographer by patterning themselves after an accomplished artist/photographer they admire or are otherwise inspired by. The first step of the assignment is to research a minimum of twenty individuals (from a provided list), and create a log of found sources and notes. After teaching this course twice at SMU, it is clear to me that students in this, an introductory level, course would benefit immensely from a thorough introduction and instruction on information literacy. I look forward to speaking more with Beverly about how this assignment may be improved upon as a foundation for information literacy and art/photography.

In addition, I also plan to apply what I have learned during this collaboration to future work with incoming graduate students. Currently, at the end of a two-year course of study, MFA students are required to write a thesis paper that supports their visual work. In an effort to better prepare the students for such an encompassing task, during their first year of study, I plan to direct them towards creating an annotated bibliography. Based on my experience this semester, my speculation is that this will positively influence graduate students' overall - academic and visual - output.

**Appendix** (This includes the assignment sheet, rubric if used, and example(s) of student work.)

- Appendix A Assignment Sheet #1
- Appendix B Group Bibliography
- Appendix C Assignment Sheet #2
- Appendix D Example of Student Interview
- Appendix E Example of Individual Student Bibliography
- Appendix F Assignment Sheet #3
- Appendix G Example of Student Artist Statement

## APPENDIX A

### ASPH 3360: Special Topics: Developing a Body of Work

#### SEMESTER OVERVIEW:

Assignment #1 = Bibliography & Oral Presentation

Assignment #2 = Artist Interviews

Assignment #3 = Artist Statement

#### ASSIGNMENT #1

##### **PART ONE:** *Finding Keywords & Sources*

This assignment is designed to help you to begin articulating the direction of your independent work through a brainstorming exercise. To start, you'll be asked to generate 12 keywords that are representative of the work/creative interests that you are inspired to pursue during the semester. From there, you'll be tasked with conducting searches of at least five sources of information (ex: journals, blogs, magazines, artist' websites, museum catalogues). Beverly Mitchell, Art and Dance Librarian will be guiding us through this process by offering information on best research practices and introducing SMU's resources on **Thurs January 26**.

Next, using your keywords and searches, you will select at least 5 sources (4 of any category, 1 theoretical text) and organize them into a bibliography. After a close reading of each source, you will write 150-250 word annotations and add these to your bibliography. By the end of the semester, you will expand this first iteration of your research (5 sources) to include a total of 12 sources.

##### **PART TWO:** *Oral Presentation* - **\*\*DUE: Thurs, Feb 16\*\***

As one of the first 5 sources, each student will choose a critical essay or theoretical text from a supplied list (or, with advance approval, one of their choosing). For this source, each student will present an oral, in-depth critique/summary to the class. By doing so, the class will rapidly share and the most essential information and ideas in numerous texts.

##### **PART THREE:** *Group Bibliography* - **\*\*DUE: Thurs, March 2\*\***

Each student will then contribute their bibliography, including annotations, to a compiled group bibliography.

#### FORMATTING:

Follow Chicago Manual of Style (CMS).

See Beverly Mitchell's excellent guide for specifics: <http://guides.smu.edu/art>

And also : <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/03/>

**ASPH 3360: Special Topics: Developing a Body of Work**

### **ASSIGNMENT #1: Oral Presentation**

**\*\*\*Draft of your first annotation is due at the beginning of class on Tues, Feb 21 \*\*\***

**\*\* The Final Draft of your first annotation is due at the beginning of class on Thurs, Feb 23\*\***

### **Grading Rubric**

- Articulated the content, including the main thesis, of reading presented
- Presented relevant, accurate, and well organized information
- Came to a well-established conclusion
- Completed an annotation of requisite length, properly organized and formatted

### **Roadmap to an "A" Oral Presentation**

- **Describe and contextualize the text and author(s) that you will be presenting.** Help us as a group understand where the author and their work/text is coming from.
  - Present biographical information on the author(s)
  - Present relevant context (for example historical) to the text/author(s)
- **Interpret/Inform us, what is the writer trying to establish, convey or posit in the text?**  
What is the writer's thesis or specified purpose in the text?
  - Answer: How did the writer arrive at and support a specific thesis/conclusion?
  - Answer: What artists are discussed in the text? How is their work "used"?
- **Make a judgement/ Form your own conclusion about the validity, relevancy, quality etc of the thesis presented by the author**
  - Answer: Is the text/Are the author's ideas relevant, successful, important?
  - Answer: Why or why not?

## APPENDIX B

### SPECIAL TOPICS IN PHOTOGRAPHY: GROUP BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Benjamin, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Translated by Harry Zohn. New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1969.**

In Walter Benjamin's brief but informative essay, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, he discusses the effects of the rise of film and photography on traditional artistic practices, customs, and experiences. Written three years after fleeing the Nazi government, in 1936, Benjamin successfully attributes the aesthetic values of traditional artistic practice to capitalism and therefore likens it to fascism in its bourgeois tendencies. Art that is mechanically reproducible (at a much faster rate than etchings and other types of slower mechanical methods that existed prior to the advent of photography/film) and a result of the "revolutionary demand," which is in this context film and photography, is the art of the proletariat. These modern practices were not the end of an era entirely, however, and Benjamin, in fact, argues that the rise of these mechanical aids provoked a strong response by those who practiced "'pure' art," who worshiped the metaphorical "secular cult of beauty" that began in the Renaissance. These practitioners adopted *l'art pour l'art*; art for art's sake, which is in part why Benjamin argues that traditional ideas of art are capitalist to the extreme of fascism; it substitutes aesthetic beauty in the place of political art, which was an especially real dichotomy in post World War One Germany. Artists of the Surrealist and Dadaist movements had work that was explicitly political; the counterculture of Nazism meanwhile wanted a return

to a nonexistent German classicism and aesthetically Renaissance ideals. – **Madeleine HOWELL**

**Biro, Matthew. "From Analogue to Digital Photography: Bernd and Hilla Becher and Andreas Gursky," History of Photography 36 (2012): 353-66.**

This article describes the similarities and differences between analog photography and digital photography. Author Matt Biro successfully accomplishes this by comparing the works of conceptual artist Bernd and Hilla Becher and their photography student, Andreas Gursky. Often for historical and documentation purposes, the use of analog photography gained a longtime reputation for reliability. And although aesthetically pleasing and more versatile, digital photography has acquired a lack of credibility as a result of its manipulability. However, in many instances, it is utilized as a substantiated form of documentation. While the two different types of photography are divergent, the reader is assured that the inevitable change to digital photography will eventually prove that it is an accurate resource and can be trusted as well. Nonetheless, Biro ascertains that analog photography will soon be a thing of the past, due to the excessive rise in the popularity of digital media. He also points out that both analog and digital cameras automatically amend the image that is captured, so neither are 100% accurate. And while the indexicality of analog photography aided in its reputation for truthfulness, it has the ability to be manipulated too, and always has. This demonstrates that the credibility of analog and digital photography are equivalent.

– **Lauren MORGAN**

**Cotton, Charlotte. Introduction to Photography is Magic, 1-18. New York: Aperture Foundation, 2015.**

Cotton's essay is centered around the idea of using magical techniques in photography to create unique works that separate one artist's work from another. In the same way as close-up magic, an artist can create a captivating work of art by allowing viewers to form interpretations of the work based on their own imaginations. Photographic magic opens viewers up to a blend of reality and fantasy and causes them to become open to multiple perspectives of the current world. Cotton includes works from over eighty artists who each incorporate their own "magical" touches on their works. Since Cotton doesn't group the artists' work in any way, it's up to the reader to decipher Cotton's reason for including them in the book. No two magicians' tricks are the same, so it's up to the photographer to find a way to create that magical experience for viewers. A magician uses cards and wands while these photographers use various manipulations of color and materials. Cotton's text becomes inspirational for artists seeking to expand their work and include something unexpected for viewers to find. Her extensive catalog of examples is enough to spark an idea of how to cultivate one's own magic trick. Will that trick be a construction of reality using tangible materials? Or maybe perhaps manipulating the colors of an image? Whatever the case, the possibilities are endless. – **Alyssa WENTZEL**

**Crane, Susan A. 2008. Choosing not to look: Representation, Repatriation, and Holocaust atrocity photography. History and Theory 47 (3): 309-30.**

In this text, Susan Crane addresses multiple questions that have risen out of



viewing images of atrocity, specifically images of the Holocaust. She offers questions of how the  
Considers the question of images of the Holocaust rendered as useful testimony or if these  
types of images have exceeded their threshold of how useful they really can be, believing that  
atrocities images of the Holocaust should be available as public access. Crane also discusses the  
purpose of looking at photographs, which is particularly useful in considering an audience for  
my work. Her answer lies within the consideration of the role that history has played in  
determining if these types of images offer “material evidence for moral lessons” or their role in  
providing documentation of the extremes of human cruelty. She refers to Susan Sontag reading  
about her reminiscing about the first time she witnessed atrocity images of the Holocaust when  
she was just 12 years old, fostering a new school of thought within photography as to shaping  
interest and views of photography. This text provides an in-depth analysis of some of the  
questions mentioned here while also remaining relatively easy for the viewer to take in and  
understand. Crane also offers insight into how these images are useful in a classroom  
considering how images have the capacity to encourage political action or through emotionally  
motivated response. These assertions are invaluable in considering the audience in which  
images will be presented to, asking them to take an introverted approach in viewing such a  
narrative. – **Allison PLAKE**

**Crimp, Douglas. “Pictures.” October 8 (1979): 75-88. doi:10.2307/778227.**

This article details the artists and types of works that came to be known as “The Pictures  
Generation.” Cindy Sherman, Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince and other less famous artists were  
included. This article is useful for understanding the different ways consumer culture informs

image making. Some ways works are informed are: using consumer images, like advertisement pictures, and using conventions from fields like Hollywood. This article consists mostly of descriptions of some of the works and is therefore mildly useful in understanding the beginning of this post-modern movement. This article was written before much of the work it discusses had made the rounds through the art world, and a whole lot of discussion about what it meant and why it was important had not occurred yet. In fact, this article started those rounds, which is why it is important. This is a good source for understanding more about how images are treated almost 40 years later. The proliferation of internet memes comes to mind, as every image is now stripped down to it's most basic meaning and reused in a myriad of forms.

– **Gabrielle HAKES**

**Grover, Jan Zita. "Dykes in Context: Some Problems in Minority Representation," in**

**The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography ed. Richard Bolton**

**(Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992) 163-197.**

In Grover's text, she recalls her displeasure with the way that heterosexual men were depicting lesbian women for their own pleasure in novels and pornography. She parses out the differences between mainstream representations of lesbians and the visual culture that lesbian women produced for themselves. Grover notes the way that lesbian women de-sexed themselves in order to distance themselves from negative stereotypes created and perpetuated by heterosexual men. She emphasizes the importance of the context of marginalized groups, calling to attention that visual signifiers that are read one way within the context of mainstream culture can have an entirely different read from within the context of a minority group, such as

the way that “butch” women are seen as masculine in a larger cultural sense, but within lesbian communities, they are a more raw form of femininity, unprocessed through the lens of the male gaze. Grover champions the social over the formal in photographs of these groups, and warns that marginalized groups need to be aware of who they are appealing to, and at what price. Respectability politics and self-censorship, like the performative asexuality that pervades lesbian visual culture, can be just as harmful and exclusionary as the stereotypes portrayed in mainstream culture. Grover’s text is informative and instructive, not just to those within the lesbian community, but especially to the broader LGBT community that is concerned with images and representation, however, I would posit that the formal aspects of photographs are just as important as the social in developing a succinct visual culture. – **D.S. CHAPMAN**

**Kunitz, Daniel. What Art History Can Tell Us About Female Beauty Ideals. N.p.: Artsy.net, 2017.**

“Rather than a stable set of features, physical beauty is an ever-morphing construct, a fickle collective dream that we fall into once in awhile.” This thought is introduced into the reader’s minds as Kunitz begins to deconstruct society’s inaccurately placed concepts on how beauty has been defined throughout history. From a male perspective, it is interesting to see this particular analysis on women being made. He poses a neutral, yet informative viewpoint that “images of women have historically followed a pattern set down by males. Kunitz notes the physical aspect of the ideal hourglass figure which reminds society that, “the Female is always a sort of clock, which we try to freeze at a moment of youth.” Referencing back to Ancient Egypt around 1350 BC, he analyses a pattern throughout history of physical

changes such as makeup and the significance its effects have had on women up to today. He concludes with the cynical idea that resistance is futile. No matter what, society will constantly create new beauty standards that women will perpetually fail to meet. – **Sarah FUN**

**Morris, Wright. *Time Pieces*. New York: Aperture Foundation Inc., 1999.**

Wright Morris' book, *Time Pieces*, is a collection of his writings focused on the ways in which memory, words, and images interplay. Morris provides the context for his body of photographic work through this book, explaining how and why he went about marrying text and images. To him they were inseparable. Words called up images, and images called up words. On the whole, it is a unique and extensive meditation on the practice of mixing media. Morris makes a strong and thorough examination of what it means to create a photograph. His work has helped to pioneer the practice of mixing text and images, contextualizing it and giving it a tradition in which to participate. – **Jeremiah JENSEN**

**Respini, Eva. "On Defiance," *Aperture* 225 (2016): 100–107.**

In Eva Respini's article, "On Defiance", she covers and analyzes various women artists including; Cindy Sherman, Miranda Lichtenstein, Liz Deschenes, and Sara VanDerBeek. It describes how they use unconventional methods in photography to create an abstract medium to execute their messages they wish to convey through the art that they produce. These women are "defiant" in art because they had explored and conquered "new ground(s)" in photography. In their art, these women are conveying the changes they would like to see amongst the world. The author also covers the gender gap that is present in the majority of art

museums. There is a “shared interest,” among the women artists mentioned in the article, in the status, power, and representation of both images and women within cultural production. This article was helpful for me to get a better insight on how women artists “defy” art and what it means for them regarding the primarily male-dominated art world. – **Lauren AROCHA**

**Shedden, Leslie, Don Macgillivray, Allan Sekula, B. H. D. Buchloh, and Robert Wilkie. Mining photographs and other pictures, 1948-1968: a selection from the negative archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton. Halifax, N.S., Canada: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983, 4-9.**

Allan Sekula analyzes Leslie Shedden’s commissioned coal mining photograph and argues the archive images function and are influenced by the capitalist economy. To support his claim, he discusses photography as a democratic medium that is open to people of all backgrounds, not only those who are technically trained. Sekula uses the mining images as an example and discusses how the history the image’s production legitimizes power relations in through the context of its development. Photography is produced with the influence of the artist and commissioner which dictates the historic reading of an archive. Archives are often read as a marker of historical truth; therefore, the producer of the image can skew the truth of history based on the commissioner or the photographer’s own interest. Sekula warns viewers and photographers of how the prescribed readings influence and control the population’s understanding of history and seek an accurate depiction of history. – **Sally J. KIM**

**Sontag, S. (2010). *Regarding the Pain of Others* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Picador.**

In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Sontag provides philosophical insight on the history of war photography. In her book, Sontag dissects widely known images of war and human suffering from the Civil War to the present in order to raise questions about the overall effect of images of war. To do so, Sontag chooses to omit any actual images from the book, and instead focuses on descriptions, along with how the impact of how time, context, and personal experience changes the impact of photographs that chronicle human suffering. She addresses the motives and methods of war photography and raises questions as to what purpose these types of images serve, along with the intentions behind the production of war photographs themselves. She concludes by stating that most of humanity will never know what it's like to be subject to tragedy as awful as that depicted in a war photograph, however it is important for people everywhere to understand that such suffering exists, which is why war photography is necessary despite the ethical ramifications that may result. - **Sam JONES & Allison PLAKE**

**Steyerl, Hito. "In Defense of the Poor Image." *E-flux*. Nov. & dec. 2009. Accessed February 16, 2017. <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/>.**

Hito Steyerl's "In Defense of the Poor Image" is in some ways a modern footnote to Walter Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Benjamin's essay considers the mechanical and therefore rapid nature of what was at the time, in 1936, modern cameras; Steyerl, by comparison, considers the digitalization of images and what the implications and connotations of digitalization are. As the title would suggest, the most immediate association with this type of photo is poor quality; "as it accelerates, it

deteriorates.” The type of image to which she is referring is specifically digital. It’s passed around, circulated, a product of “audiovisual capitalism”, and in that way, it’s somewhat of an inverse of Benjamin’s statements; she defends the poor image, as the title would obviously suggest, despite it being a byproduct of capitalist necessity. What we have come to know as traditional photography — that is, photography processes that have become perhaps antiquated enough to be held in a similar regard to the “secular cults of beauty” mentioned in Benjamin’s essay. — Steyerl describes as “more rich”, as a byproduct of “neoliberal restructuring of media”. So, then, despite the digital imagery or even just the digital availability being a product of “audiovisual capitalism,” the result of freely-shared imagery and audio is rather communist.

– **Madeleine HOWELL**

**Whalan, Mark. “The Majesty of the Moment: Sociality and Privacy in the Street Photography of Paul Strand.” *American Art* 25, no. 2 (2011): 34-55. doi:10.1086/661968.**

In the article titled “The Majesty of the Moment” written by Mark Whalan, Paul Strand’s street photography is examined. The aspect of photographing individuals without their knowledge or permission is not discussed in full in this article but is instead sprinkled throughout its sections which mainly focus on the social and political implications that Strand’s street photography evoked. The fact that his photos could provide a cultural critique is present. Most interesting was the discussion of the relationship created between the photographer and the subject. Since Strand used a deceptive camera to photograph individuals, he was able to intrude on their privacy. However, there exists the possibility that the person

being photographed would challenge the photographer if noticed. Therefore, is this technique moral? This question may not be able to be answered however it is certain that there is a sense of detachment between the photographer and the subject. The article appropriately describes this experience as single moments of social contact that break the implied atmosphere of privacy in public settings. Most importantly, this article elaborates on the feelings, concerns, and limitations many street photographers have been and still are faced with.

– Kennedy JOHNSON



## **APPENDIX C**

**ASPH 3360:** Special Topics: Developing a Body of Work

### **ASSIGNMENT #2: Artist Interview & Annotated Bibliography (12 sources)**

#### **PART ONE: Artist Interview**

Conduct an artist interview. In preparing, you should draw from your contextual knowledge of your partner's work (oral presentation, critique, annotated bibliography, additional research). In preparing your questions, consider: what is the artist's process and subject matter? What is she or he trying to achieve/communicate with their work? What do you think is interesting and unique about the work? How is this work in conversation with scholarship, especially in photography? In your opinion, what is opaque or hard to understand or decipher about the work?

#### **As an interviewer -**

\*\* be curious, kind, supportive and challenging.

\*\* Using your smartphone or laptop, RECORD your conversation. DOUBLE CHECK your method is WORKING. Imagine that you finish talking only to realize it was not recording...

\*\* Fully transcribe your conversation and then edit it down to approximately 2,000 words. For this edit I want to see more content, however, later, we will further edit these down to 1000-14000 words.

#### **As an interviewee -**

\*\* relax and take your time answering / collecting your thoughts. The challenge is not to know all the answers before you begin talking. Through conversation, my hope is that you will find yourself somewhere new, thinking differently about where your work is and, perhaps, also where it is headed.

#### **PART TWO: Annotated Bibliography (12 sources)**

For this part of the assignment, expand on your research and the annotated bibliography of five sources completed during Assignment #1. You will be required to add seven additional sources (also 150-250 word annotations) for a total of twelve sources and annotations. You may use up to two of these additional sources from the group bibliography, but you will be required to write your own annotations for each source.

# Kennedy **JOHNSON**

*Interviewed by: Sam Jones*

SAM JONES: So you've been exploring film versus digital a lot, how do the different media play into the work you're doing?

KENNEDY JOHNSON: My experience with photography began digitally. I would take thousands of pictures with my DSLR but of course when you take such gross amounts of pictures, you're bound to end up with "good ones". Where's the talent in that? What is the thing that makes photography special? Why is this a skill if all you're doing is pressing a button? When I started working in black and white, however, the medium of photography changed completely for me. With film, you're limited in how many images you can shoot and you're also limited by how much money you have for paper, film, etc. So with film, I became more purposeful in taking pictures. I found that photography as an artform became much more meaningful with film.

SJ: How do you go about deciding what to shoot? What is that process like for you?

KJ: I wander. It's about finding things in the world that I think is or can be made to be compelling. I feel my shooting has been very surface level though and I do want to try and expand past "interesting". I'd like to try exploring different metaphors and meanings that speak to the larger contexts within my images. A lot of photographers incorporate metaphor into their work. Last semester, I fell in love with George Krause's street photography, and he does a lot of abstraction, surrealism, and metaphors. For example, he took a self-portrait where all of his photos are on his back. The metaphor was of the Greek Myth Atlas and how he had to carry the weight of the world (his work) on his shoulders. I want to convey larger contexts like this in my work moving forward.

SJ: What subject matter do you gravitate towards? Is there one thing that tends to capture your attention?

KJ: I never photograph people. People do capture my attention, but I rarely take their picture because I'm shy. I don't want them to become angry with me and I don't have the courage to ask them first. If I do photograph a person it's because I creep around them and make sure I am not noticed. Animals and lines also large reoccurring themes in my work.

SJ: Is there any artist/style that you do not like? What is your work not?

KJ: It's not that I don't like any style, it's more that if I don't know about it, it won't interest me. Like rayographs. They seem too random and arbitrary. They are interesting to look at, but it's really just a picture of a fork and a bottle opener. I don't see why people find those images exciting to look at. I also feel bored with portraiture because people are already interesting to look at. I don't think photographing them adds to that in any specific way. However, if I had studied rayographs and portraiture and learned about the history and formal qualities, I'm sure I would love it. I mean, I didn't even like black and white before I took the class. I thought it was inferior to color and digital, obsolete and out of date. But now, I barely use my digital camera.

SJ: What I'm understanding is that you like to formally compose mundane objects to make them interesting. Is that right?

KJ: Yes, I think it is. Objects that are already interesting speak for themselves. They don't need me to photograph them. I like to challenge myself to find things that may not seem interesting that I can make interesting. Eileen said my work is introverted which is for sure true. I am an introvert. I can walk around by myself and just be really observant. I see things walking around in my own little world that nobody else sees, and then I photograph them.

SJ: When you go out, are you really connected to everything that's going on? Or do you put headphones in? How does that process work for you?

KJ: Headphones are distracting for me. I like to go by myself so I don't have to worry about boring a friend if they come with me. I'll walk around for hours; I really take my time. It's very much about wandering. It's meditative for me. That's why I don't like digital as much; I don't get into that meditative state as easily. I even like the sound the film camera makes. I can hear the shutter taking the picture and just that alone, the sensory feeling that I get, contributes to the experience of taking pictures. I like film because it feels like I'm the one doing the work, not a piece of technology.

SJ: As far as the darkroom goes, does that give you the same meditative feeling as shooting?

KJ: Yes. I gather my things, sit down and turn my music all the way up. I was reading articles about film and someone stated that it feels like church to them. It definitely feels like church to me too because I can be in there for three hours and not even realize that time has passed. I feel relaxed and very content. I'm in this dark little world and my muscle memory just takes over. My experience in the darkroom feels very automated. Of course I'm thinking and making careful decisions, but it feels effortless to me. I love it even though it's super frustrating. So I've been thinking about taking film pictures and scanning my negatives. This way I can still work with film but I won't stress myself out trying to get the perfect edits using only a contrast filter and a lightbulb. It feels like it could be a happy medium for me.

SJ: So, in your bibliography you have a source about color, but I haven't seen any color photographs from you. Are you interested in color at all?

KJ: I am, but I feel like color takes away from composition and I have to sacrifice one for the other. When I look at my images in color, I feel like there's just too much going on. At the same time, I might be able to find a way to do it so that it doesn't feel like I'm giving up composition for color. For the next crit, I think I will show some color prints. I'm not completely against color, but I do feel violated by color after reading "Color Goes Electric" because the industry has changed the way we think about color. Our cameras make scenes more saturated than they actually are and this distorts our memories. I almost would just rather not deal with color or at least make sure the color photographs I print are not too saturated.

SJ: What's the biggest take away you got from your research?

KJ: In camera lucida, Barthes talks about "punctum" which is the element in a photograph that makes it personally interesting. Out of a thousand photos, only one may stand out to you because of your personal taste and biases. I understood the concept, but he put a name to it. "Punctum" is something I want to think about. Maybe punctum is what makes photography so special. Maybe photography becomes skillful, digitally or chemically, when the punctum of your photos speaks to a large audience. Or maybe photography becomes special when the punctum speaks especially strong to any one person.

## APPENDIX E

Allison Plake

### Annotated bibliography

**Bourla, L. 2015. *Shaping and reshaping memory: The lodz ghetto photographs*.**

***Word & Image* 31 (1): 54-72.**

In this text, Bourla focuses on the works of three photographers that photographed the Lodz ghetto including two professionals, Mendel Grossman and Henryk Ross, both of which worked for the Jewish council governing the ghetto. The other, Austrian amateur and accountant Walter Genewein, who held a position in the Nazi administration of the Lodz ghetto. All three men had the same goal in mind, to capture the reality of the ghetto. However, they each in turn bring a different perspective through the lens. Bourla argues that using photographs of this subject should be considered questionable as to the stereotypes of narratives. The background of these three photographers creates an interesting dynamic. Bourla also notes the circumstances of each and that they had special permission to photograph unlike many others who were stripped of their photographic equipment when the Nazis occupied Poland. Bourla prompts questions as to if there is a correlation that exists between the photographer's original intention versus the interpretation of viewers as they contemplate a sense of ghetto reality.

**Cesarani, David, and Eric J. Sundquist. 2012. *After the holocaust: Challenging the myth of silence*. New York;London;: Routledge.**

In the first chapter of this text, "Challenging the 'Myth of Silence': Postwar responses to the destruction of European Jewry", Cesarani examines the ways in which Jews began to document the Nazi racial persecution in their home communities in Europe. In doing so, they worked individually and collectively to capture and preserve evidence to these fateful acts. After a brief introduction of history, he brings us to the ways in which Polish Jews preserved history as survivors. The Jewish Historical Commission was established in Lublin, prompting survivors to provide eye-witness accounts postwar. Over four years the Commission was able to acquire 2,250 testimonies. This early research remains a pivotal part in spearheading efforts to bring such atrocities to widespread audiences through books and memoirs. This text is especially useful in understanding and carrying on the horrors of what took place within the camps across Europe.

**Crane, Susan A. 2008. *Choosing not to look: Representation, repatriation, and holocaust atrocity photography*. *History and Theory* 47 (3): 309-30.**

In this text, Susan Crane address multiple questions that have risen out of

viewing images of atrocity, specifically images of the Holocaust. She offers questions of how the Holocaust is rendered as useful testimony or if these types of images have exceeded their threshold of how useful they really can be, believing that atrocity images of the Holocaust should be available as public access. Crane also discusses the purpose of looking at photographs, which is particularly useful in considering an audience for my work. Her answer lies within the consideration of the role that history has played in determining if these types of images offer “material evidence for moral lessons” or their role in providing documentation of the extremes of human cruelty. She refers to Susan Sontag reading about her reminiscing about the first time she witnessed atrocity images of the Holocaust when she was just 12 years old, fostering a new school of thought within photography as to shaping interest and views of photography. This text provides an in-depth analysis of some of the questions mentioned here while also remaining relatively easy for the viewer to take in and understand. Crane also offers insight into how these images are useful in a classroom considering how images have the capacity to encourage political action or through emotionally motivated response. These assertions are invaluable in considering the audience in which images will be presented to, asking them to take an introverted approach in viewing such a narrative.

**Gutner, Bryna. 2009. Holocaust photography: Iconic and imagined images. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.**

In this thesis, Gutner examines the use of photography in conjunction with authenticating events from history, specifically the Holocaust and how that has become redefined across generations. He prompts that the way the United States views these images differs from other parts of the world in that the U.S. uses the images as remembrance and public awareness while others use these images as historical documentation of the events that occurred. Gutner begins by providing a history of photography in documenting events along with passages exploring this concept and concepts of a contemporary setting suggesting that artists are constantly trying to find new and inventive ways to portray these images and their historical meaning and the role that modern technological advances such as Photoshop bring to such images. He goes on to explain how second and third generation Americans born after World War II react to Holocaust images differently than those that have first hand memories. This is an obvious statement to make but also references the fact that pictures do not show and evoke the same horrors as actually experiencing the events in person. There is a fine line between historical accuracy and memory in regards to issues of exploitation and respect.

**Moore, A. 2006. Picturing atrocity: Photography in crisis - A symposium report. *History of Photography* 30 (4): 376-83.**

In this text, the author, Sally Miller, reviews *Picturing Atrocity: Photography in*

*Crisis* in which, fundamental questions of basic human rights are raised in regards to photography. The author covers a variety of themes related to this subject within seven different sections- Response and Responsibility, Becoming Iconic, Photographing Atrocity, Circulation and Public Culture, Ordinary Atrocities, Atrocity Askance, and the Afterlife of Photographs. This review sums up the entirety of the original book, highlighting the Photographing Atrocity section as the most important and relevant arguing that “having an ethnographic perspective would enrich the debates explored through this volume.”

**Mulder, Mark. 2014. Visualizing the holocaust: The perceived benefits and concerns of including holocaust atrocity images in museum exhibits. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.**

This study examines the ways in which images of the Holocaust should and could be represented in galleries of holocaust institutions specifically. In addition, this text also confirms that professionals working in this field agreed that these images were important in furthering education but they were also concerned with the audience that would see these images of atrocity. This unique study is important in that it provides evidence to support important factors that designers and developers should consider when compiling images for gallery space. Mulder points out that following the war, and early on, Holocaust images were used to counteract public skepticism. He argues that the museum is a site of performance and that the management of these sites are represented through objects. He is able to relate this to Holocaust specific museums in which we are asked to “change from spectator/bystander to a witness.” It is here that we are prompted to differentiate between specific memory and historical memory.

**Shedden, Leslie, Don Macgillivray, Allan Sekula, B. H. D. Buchloh, and Robert Wilkie. *Mining photographs and other pictures, 1948-1968: a selection from the negative archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton*. Halifax, N.S., Canada: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983, 4-9.**

Allan Sekula analyzes Leslie Shedden’s commissioned coal mining photograph and argues the archive images function and are influenced by the capitalist economy. To support his claim, he discusses photography as a democratic medium that is open to people of all backgrounds, not only those who are technically trained. Sekula uses the mining images as an example and discusses how the history the image’s production legitimizes power relations in through the context of its development. Photography is produced with the influence of the artist and commissioner which dictates the historic reading of an archive. Archives are often read as a marker of historical truth; therefore, the producer of the image can skew the truth of history based on the commissioner or the photographer's own interest. Sekula warns viewers

and photographers of how the prescribed readings influence and control the the population's understanding of history and seeks an accurate depiction of history.

**Shneer, David. 2014. Ghostly landscapes: Soviet liberators photograph the holocaust. *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 5 (2): 235-46.**

David Shneer provides an interesting take on the way that Soviet liberators photographed and internalized those images of the Holocaust. He makes a larger point that while many think of Auschwitz as the landmark site of the Holocaust, many others still existed. Shneer argues that the photographs taken during the Soviet Holocaust liberation are a better representation of the experience of genocide than the “human drama of survival” portrayed in American and British photography. He explains how the Holocaust was integrated into Soviet life on a mundane level and that those images are reflective of that understanding, haunted by the dead not the living. He goes onto explain the ways in which there are issues with Auschwitz being defined in the way that it has, which is especially useful in understanding images pertaining to this project because that was a similar way of thinking amongst the members of the trip when visiting Auschwitz. For the Soviet Union, it is not Auschwitz that embodies the Holocaust but Kiev’s Babi Yar, which is where during the German two-year occupation was the most violent and largest act of Nazi atrocities that photographers and journalists had seen. The natural landscape has become the symbol for them and the absence of life hangs in the air as the images hauntingly show the forest, ravines, and trenches taken by the liberators. This text exemplifies a different side to viewing atrocities that many may not think to consider.

**Sontag, S. (2010 ). *Regarding the Pain of Others* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Picador.**

In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Sontag provides philosophical insight on the history of war photography. In her book, Sontag dissects widely known images of war and human suffering from the Civil War to the present in order to raise questions about the overall effect of images of war. To do so, Sontag chooses to omit any actual images from the book, and instead focuses on descriptions, along with how the impact of how time, context, and personal experience changes the impact of photographs that chronicle human suffering. She addresses the motives and methods of war photography, and raises questions as to what purpose these types of images serve, along with the intentions behind the production of war photographs themselves. She concludes by stating that most of humanity will never know what it’s like to be subject to a tragedy as awful as that depicted in a war photograph, however it is important for people everywhere to understand that such suffering exists, which is why war photography is necessary despite the ethical ramifications that may result.

**Stańczyk, Ewa. 2014. the absent Jewish child: Photography and holocaust representation in Poland. *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 13 (3): 360-80.**

This piece is extremely relevant to what I seek to represent in my work in dealing with the difficult subject matter that is photographing the Holocaust in Poland. Photography played a vital role in spreading knowledge and awareness of the events that took place. It seeks to provide the reader with an understanding of how to dissect such images and what to take away from them. She explains that it was the demise of the Polish people and Soviet regime that took 'center stage' when discussing the past which, in turn marginalizing the portrayal of the Shoah in World War II. In addition, this article focuses on the phenomenon surrounding how the Polish community currently deals with issues of the past and the Holocaust by way of the *absent Jewish child*. She then goes on to discuss the idea of 'postmemory' in which, we understand knowledge of an event based on study and stories which open up for a different interpretation and connection to images. This is something I am conscious of in my work and I think it is important that we move away from that kind of thinking and really begin to take in and attempt to understand the past. *The absent Jewish child* has become an icon to the country and a symbol of the past to commemorate those many lives perished in the holocaust.

**Trachtenberg, Alan. 2001. *Remembering to forget: Holocaust memory through the camera eye*. Vol. 20. West Lafayette: University of Nebraska Press.**

This text focuses on a review of Barbie Zeilizer's book, "Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera Eye." Trachtenberg recalls important details discussed within Zeilizer's book such as how she "courageously addresses the ambivalence and the paradox produced"—the more we see, the less we remember. Zeilizer suggests that when viewing images of the Holocaust, this act can hinder the experience when seeking knowledge about the actual events in that preventative action may not occur. She concludes that bearing witness means that we must take responsibility for what we see but that repetition of such images prompts complacency. This text is useful in that it draws on important aspects of viewing images from the Holocaust and how the viewer should seek to interpret and understand them to provide knowledgeable context of complex and abstract iterations.

**Tynan, Jane. 2012. photography, familiarity, and the holocaust: A conversation with Paul Antick. *Afterimage* 39 (4): 14.**

In this interview, Jane Tynan interviews Paul Antick about a commissioned project called "iTourist?," in which he created 14 billboards, each featuring photographs taken by Antick at different holocaust sites in Poland. In December 2006, these billboards were made public in the streets of Southampton and London and on highways between Prague and Terezin in the Czech Republic. Antick remarks about his time visiting Auschwitz and what he saw and felt, including the notion that photography was an important component for the Nazis in



recording their crimes. Some of his billboard images are reminiscent of fashion photography, and on closer look one can see what hangs in the background, exemplified in his images at Auschwitz-Birkenau. He accompanied text with these images detailing the place and time they were taken. Antick remarks on the audience perception and reactions he received when showing these works. He wanted to shake the audience up and make them think which is useful in looking at different ways to display these images and the subjects within them. Although this project is primarily absent of people, it is important to consider the message received when living subjects are included in images of the Holocaust and how billboard images can change the meaning and composition of such.

## **APPENDIX F**

**ASPH 3360:** Special Topics: Developing a Body of Work

### **ASSIGNMENT #3: Artist Statement**

An 'Artist Statement' is a written companion to your visual work. The main, intended purpose of this statement is to enrich a viewer's visual experience and understanding of your artwork with supplemental knowledge, background, and/or context.

When formulating a statement, draw on writing that you have done to this point (interviews, annotations), while further considering the following questions:

**HOW DO YOU MAKE YOUR WORK?** (*Materials, Media, Process*)

**WHAT IS YOUR ABOUT?** (*Subject Matter*)

**WHAT CONTEXTS INFORM YOU?** (*Conceptual, Political, Historical...*)

**WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO/ACHIEVE WITH YOUR WORK?**

#### **Requirements:**

- 500 Words (Minimum) - 650 Words (Maximum)
- Reference at least 3 sources (from your Bibliography or otherwise)
- Printed Rough Draft DUE @ Crit #3
- Canvas submission of FINAL DRAFT by 3:30 pm on Tues, May 2
- ALSO upload your final draft to Google Drive by the beginning of class Tues, May 2. Put it in the folder "Artist Statements" and name according to the example: Lastname\_Firstname\_ArtistStatement. We'll copy edit each other's work during class to further polish each other's statements.

# D.S. CHAPMAN

## Artist Statement

### A generative cutting

*What lessons can we learn from objects? Art objects can tell us many things - about their origins, their intended and received meanings, their makers. But what can objects teach us about how to see? About how to see other objects, or bodies, in realms far removed from the museum, gallery, or studio? If it is possible to learn from objects how to see bodies differently, can they teach us to see gender differently, to shift the ways we perceive non-normative genders?*

– Gordon Hall <sup>1</sup>

To truly transcend gender, the human form must be abandoned as the foundation for how we experience and perceive the body. Male and female must be eliminated as categories; they are rooted in bio-essentialism, and serve to police both outward expressions of gender and internal sense of self. In a performance entitled *one fist* (2010), Zackary Drucker addresses how our culture is “polarized by fucking” and that “if the model and the body disagree, it is the body that must pull itself from this pile of filth.” <sup>2</sup> The human form is too charged an “object” to fully transcend gender completely. Gender functions as a surface, though it is not just about outward presentation, and sexuality relays how bodies as forms relate to one another. The body itself is a material.

Transgender theorist Eva Hayward posits the idea that a physical transition for trans\* people is about “moving toward [oneself] through [oneself].” <sup>3</sup> The body itself is a material, and cutting through the body can be a generative act. For a trans\* person, the alteration of their initial genitals to a neopenis or neovagina, as well as the restructuring of their torso, is a way of treating the body as a sculpture: utilizing the material and testing its limits, reforming the body from itself.

In this piece I ask viewers to participate in the restructuring of the body through abstract sculpture. The objects that are subsequently produced are singular yet simultaneously relational, but not through a lens of gender or sexuality. There

is too much difference without a clean boundary line for the gendering of these objects to be easy or definitive. The images printed on the sheets of cloth are sourced from the lining from a pair of blue jeans that are featured in an accompanying performative video piece. The blue jeans function as a stand in for a body, with the lining transmuted through the process of being scanned and reprinted onto another fabric. The fabric is bodily, yet it doesn't directly reference the human form.

Perhaps, as Hall suggests, objects can teach us how to restructure gender through close interaction and observation. <sup>4</sup> The accompanying text serves as a guide, or perhaps a philosophy, not a step-by-step to creating a queer or trans\* body. The text is nebulous, resisting genres, yet it suggests both meditation and manifesto. The viewer/actor/participant chooses how to read, engage, and activate.

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1. Hall, Gordon. “Object Lessons: Thinking Gender Variance through Minimalist Sculpture.” *Art Journal* 72.4 (2013): 46-57.

2. *One Fist*. By Zackary Drucker. Venice, Italy, 2010.

3. Hayward, Eva. “More Lessons from a Starfish: Prefixial Flesh and Transspeciati Selves.” *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 3-4 (2008): 64-85.

4. Hall, Gordon. “Object Lessons: Thinking Gender Variance through Minimalist Sculpture.” *Art Journal* 72.4 (2013): 46-57.