

# Western University, Department of Visual Arts

## HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

VAH 2242G – winter 2019



Deana Lawson, *Alana Simmons and her father Dan Simmons Jr.*, 2015. After the Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr. was killed, Alana, shown here outside her grandfather's Charleston home, and her family started the movement #HateWontWin.

Class time: Thursdays 11:30 am – 1:30 pm (this is a blended course with online content in addition to weekly class meetings)

Location: NCB 117

### **Professor Sarah Bassnett**

Email – [sarah.bassnett@uwo.ca](mailto:sarah.bassnett@uwo.ca)

Office hours – Thursdays 11:30 am – 12:30 pm and by appointment in VAC 219

### **Teaching assistants**

Katie Oates [koates2@uwo.ca](mailto:koates2@uwo.ca)

Office hours – TBA in VAC 240

Bruno Sinder [bsinder@uwo.ca](mailto:bsinder@uwo.ca)

Office hours – TBA in VAC 240

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course takes a thematic approach to issues and debates in the history of photography. Throughout the course, we look at the work of key photographers, discuss ideas by key theorists and historians, and consider how photographs relate to the social, political, and artistic context in which they were produced. We examine the social and cultural role of photography, including how photography has been mobilized to advance particular political agendas and how it has influenced ideas about people from various classes and cultures. As we investigate the field of art photography, our focus is on stylistic movements from pictorialism, modernism, and postmodernism. This survey introduces students to the exciting field of photography studies

and prepares them to critically engage with our image-saturated world. This is a blended course with online content in addition to weekly class meetings.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- describe and analyze the formal properties of a range of photographs using appropriate terminology
- explain the significance of the work of important photographers from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, including how it relates to the social, political, and artistic context in which it was produced
- summarize the main argument of scholarly essays and explain your point of view on the issues in writing
- conduct research using library resources, such as books and journal articles in databases, and use the sources effectively to support your analysis of selected photographs
- participate constructively in discussions and by listening respectfully to the views of others, both online and in class

## PREREQUISITE / ANTI-REQUISITE

The prerequisite is 1.0 from VAH 1040 or two of VAH 1041A/B – VAH 1045A/B, or 0.5 or 1.0 essay course from Arts and Humanities, FIMS, or Social Science, or permission of the Department. You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an anti-requisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as the basis for an appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it without an adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

## ASSIGNMENTS

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**ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION 10%** (weekly)

**READING RESPONSE JOURNAL – 10%** (due March 14)

**VISUAL ANALYSIS ESSAY 30%** (due March 28)

**MID-TERM TEST & EXAM 20% and 30%** (Feb. 14 and final exam period)

### GRADING

Attendance & participation	10%	Weekly
Mid-term Test	20%	Feb. 14
Reading responses	10%	March 14
Visual analysis essay	30%	March 28
Final exam	30%	Exam period