

PHOTOJOURNALISM

Instructor: Jean Santopatre

Class meets:

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Photojournalism is all about “the decisive moment.

“The decisive moment is that very moment which evokes the ultimate significance of a given situation. .. In whatever one does there must be a relationship between the eye and the heart”... words of world-renowned photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Photography is derived from the Greek words *photo* meaning light, and *graphy* meaning to write. In essence, Photography is writing with light.

This photojournalism course provides students with experience in newspaper and magazine assignments, and has an added service learning component. Students will work with the 5th graders at St. Ann School in Bridgeport on a collaborative Migration photo story project.

As a Service Learning component, this course will integrate the technique and art of using photography to help you become more socially aware of and connected to people who have come to America for a better life. This will help you to recognize, the ***Know/Do /Be*** bridge as an educational and integral part of life.

Fairfield University students will meet on a regular basis with their 5th graders at St. Ann School. You may choose one of these students' families to document for your Migration photo story. Along with your final project, we will have a collaborative Photo Show with the 5th graders at Harborview Market in Black Rock.

Objectives:

- Analyze and appreciate photographs that make an impact on the viewer
- Analyze how newspapers and magazines use images
- Learn how to edit and deal with editors
- Produce a Photo Story on the theme of Migration
- Understand the power and Influence of Images
- Understand the social responsibility of image production (social ethics)

Goals

- To gain relevant and meaningful service with the Bridgeport community through the photographic lens. This story may spark an idea for further academic pursuits, thereby helping to forge understanding and social justice. The families will also learn from you in an unscripted and unpredictable way which you will reflect and journal about.
- Enhanced academic learning of the Photo Story by interacting with a family in a community different from your own.
- To understand the reason for migration, and visually document a family while incorporating the **Know/Do/Be Bridge** (to be discussed in class).

Required Materials

- Kobre, K. **“Photojournalism, The Professional’s Approach.”**
- 35 mm digital camera, preferably an SLR with additional lenses and manual setting
- **Truth Needs No Ally: Inside Photojournalism**
- **Service Learning Journal-reviewed monthly**
- Memory sticks and DVD’s to save photos and class presentations
- **The New York Times** and **Connecticut Post**

Recommended

- **20th Century Photography (a complete guide to the greatest artist of the photographic age)** by Reuel Golden.

Class Format

We will use the text, **“Photojournalism. The Professional’s Approach”**, by Ken Kobre to discuss the basics of photojournalism. You will also be expected to read and critique photographs in **The New York Times** and the **Connecticut Post**. We will look at other newspapers online and in class to discuss which appear to be more progressive in their reporting and photo reportage style.

The course is built around five photo assignments, a Photojournalist Web Quest as the Midterm, and the Photo Story as the Final. There is a substantial writing component to this course.

- Reading evaluations on each assigned chapter highlighting the 3 key points
- Reflective essay on each photo assignment (details to follow)
- Reflective Journal from beginning to end—where you were and where you are now. You will include details on your Photo Story project.
- Every photo assignment will include accurate caption information.

All assignments must be handed in on time! Failure to hand it in on time will result in a full grade deduction.

We can discuss the possibility of re-shooting an assignment graded C and below. Be prepared for open, honest critiques of your work. Aesthetic and technical coaching will be shared and hopefully accepted in an open, constructive, and collegiate spirit. Photojournalism has no single correct method—all viewpoints will be encouraged.

Regard the Photo Story assignment, as if you were commissioned by **The New York Times** to produce this for their Sunday magazine.

Grading Summary:

5% Dawn, Noon, Dusk
5% Rule of Thirds
5% Spot News
5% General News
10% Feature
10% Portrait
15% Mid Term: Photojournalist Web Quest
25% Photo Story Final
10% Class Participation
10% Reading Evaluations

100 %: Total

Grading Standard

“A”- Outstanding Achievement. Full participation in class and a leadership role. Shows extraordinary command of all integral parts that make a photo with tremendous impact.

“B”- Superior level of achievement. Handles assignments well. Better than average.

“C”- Acceptable level of achievement.

“D”- Minimal level of achievement. Passing.

“F” – Failure to complete the assignment at a university level.

Reading evaluations (Thank you, Fr. Mayzik)

When you have an assignment to read a chapter, an article, a book for class, you have an opportunity to be informed, enlightened, inspired, transformed, stimulated—even agitated or angered by the information and

ideas presented to you by the author. There is also the chance that you might also be bored—which could be the author’s fault, or yours. What you get out of your reading has a lot to do with you, and with the attitude you bring to it. If it is merely an assignment, you will rush through it, more intent on getting through it than letting it get to you. If you see it as an opportunity to learn something, and you dive into even the most convoluted, dense prose with a patient, open-minded attitude, you may be delighted and surprised by what it has to offer to you (and to your life!). For that to happen (for someone’s written ideas and thoughts to touch your life) you need to do two things:

1. You must read the material thoroughly and patiently, asking yourself at various points along the way: ‘Do I understand what this author is saying?’. Can you explain the thoughts and ideas, the major concepts and terms, in your own words? The author probably spent a great deal of time working on that chapter—so there must be something of substance in the contents.
2. Once you know what the author is saying, you need to take a second (and more important) step: you need to ask yourself what you think about the author’s thoughts and ideas. This is the time to wrestle with the truth of those ideas. It is a time of reflection, meditation, and ultimately some judgment: you take those ideas within and touch them to what you know, and make at least a temporary judgment. Your reaction might be “Wow! That’s amazing, I never saw the connections before.” Or, “Gosh and begolly, that’s phat, man!” Or, you may conclude that the author’s ideas are false, or stupid, or wrong, or silly: “That’s crap, totally, what an idiot!” Whatever your judgment, it’s the whole point of the reading.

The READING EVALUATIONS are meant to help you take both steps in your approach to the assigned readings. Use a single sheet of paper.

- I) The FIRST part of the evaluation allows you to identify three MAIN THEMES, CONCEPTS, IDEAS and TERMS of the reading, and to explain them. (Although it is not the primary purpose of the evaluation, this helps me to know if, at least, you have read the material.)
- II) The SECOND part of the evaluation asks you to write about your reaction to those themes, concepts and terms: “WHAT DO YOU THINK?” These are your reflections, and I encourage you to try to make connections within them.

DON’T simply write how amazed or impressed you are, or how stupid or boring you thought it was: “Gosh, I can’t believe how much goes into the process of making a movie. It has really opened my eyes, wow.” INSTEAD, try to make some comparisons to other knowledge, other experiences: “

Reading about the energy levels of color made me think about the colors used at McDonald's—vivid oranges and yellows. It's very different from the colors that are on the walls of my favorite restaurant, Tommy's. I wonder why they did that?" DON'T give me a critique of the author's writing style: "This chapter was repetitious and boring..."

I will respond to your reflections, which you can read when I return them to you. Naturally, I will be most interested in this part of the reading evaluation ("WHAT DO YOU THINK?"), and it will have a large part in evaluating your understanding of the material.

You need not re-write the entire assignment, trying to squeeze millions of lines onto the reading evaluation page.. Just a little warning: I take these reading evaluations SERIOUSLY when it comes to considering your grade. You can be sure that your grade will be significantly downgraded if you do not hand in the evaluations (on time!) or appear to be treating them lightly with cursory comments and little thought or depth. (A "good" on your work will be good for your final grade.) Your work should reflect a thorough reading of the text, and a thoughtful reaction to its contents. Feel free to use back side of the summary sheets if you run out of space, but I recommend just filling one side of a page, single spaced.

Reflective essays

This cover memo gives you a chance to step back from each of the five photography assignments and discuss your intent. For each photography assignment, please also hand in a Reflective Essay in which you discuss, in 2-3 paragraphs:

- ✓ What textbook/classroom lessons have been relevant (or misleading).
- ✓ How the assignment compared to others you may have done.
- ✓ What went right, what went wrong.
- ✓ What was easy, challenging, surprising.
- ✓ What lessons you learned.
- ✓ What skills you still need to sharpen.

Getting your work published

I will look for opportunities for you to get your work published in the Fairfield Minuteman, The Fairfield Citizen-News and the Fairfield Mirror. I will give you extra credit for any photo published; keep track of any publication and bring me evidence at the portfolio meeting.

We can create our own web site to publish class work, including the photo essay.

Attendance

I am very old-fashioned about attendance; I take it every period based on the theory that you learn more when you are in class. Your final grade in the course will drop two percentage points starting with the third cut (e.g., a 90 will drop to an 88). Save your cuts for when you are sick or have an emergency, medical or academic. The only exception will be made the lingering illnesses or family emergencies that force you to miss consecutive classes. For your grade, I also take into account your being chronically late to class. For my sake and the sake of your classmates, please be on time. If you are going to miss a class, I expect you to call or e-mail ahead of class and tell me not to expect you there. We then can make arrangements for you to make up the work missed.

Ethics

Any image that is made must be **TRUTHFUL**. Truth is your responsibility and your ally.

We will discuss ground rules for accuracy in photojournalism; violating those ground rules can result in receiving a Zero for the assignment. Passing off the work of others as your own can result in a Zero for the assignment or a Zero for the course.

Learning Disabilities

If you have a diagnosed learning disability, you need to bring in an information sheet from university administrators so we can address your needs.

Tentative Class Schedule:

Week 1:

Introductions

Syllabus.

Bring to class previous work.

Discussion on color, light, and design. PowerPoint presentation.

Photo Assignment: Shoot Dawn, Noon, Dusk/**Due Jan.16**

Week 2:

Reading Evaluation Kobre Chapter 1/**Due Jan. 28**

Discussion of assignment.

Composition –Rule of Thirds.

PowerPoint and web sites

Photo Assignment: Composition and Reflective Essay & Spot News/**Due Jan.28**

Week 3:

Feb 4:Composition ASSIGNMENT DUE/REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Discussion on Kobre Ch. 1/Discuss 3 key points

Reading Evaluation/ Ch.2 in Kobre -3 key points-typed and present to class/**Due Feb.6**

Photo Assignment: General News/**Due Feb.6**

Feb.6: In class iWeb/web page construction

Week 4:

Preview to Photo Feature photography—PowerPoint presentation

Reading Evaluation Ch.3 General News– Kobre- 3 key points/**Due**

Feb.11

Photo Assignment: Creative Lighting & Reflective Essay / **Due Feb.13**

Week 5:

Feb.20: Portrait examples from the Masters—Then & Now

Reading Evaluation Ch. 6 Kobre-Portraits-3 key points/ **Due Feb.20**

Photo Assignment: Shoot a portrait photo /**Due Feb.25**

Check in with you St. Ann partner- Start journaling your Photo Story Project...Choose subject...work out photo schedules w/ family

Week 6:

Portrait Photo Assignment & reflective Essay/ Due Feb.25

Discuss Portraits/Personality-key points

Critique assignment in class

Reading Evaluation Ch. 5-Feature-Kobre/**Due Feb.27**

MidTerm: Photojournalist Web Quest Due Feb.27

Week 7:

The Photo Illustration examples

PowerPoint presentation on various photographers' photo stories

Introduce the Photo Story

The Photo Story Web site

Photo Assignment: Feature photo/**Due March 10**

Reading Evaluation/ Ch.9. Photo Illustration-3 key points/**Due March 12**

Check in with St. Ann partner.

Week 8:

March 17: PowerPoint-: A Week in the Life of a Jesuit. Discussion with subject-Jim Mayzik, SJ

Photo Assignment: Photo Illustration/Reflective Essay/**Due March 19**

Reading Evaluation/ Ch. 8-Kobre- The Photo Story- 3 key points/**Due March 17**

Week 9:

March 26:Critique Assignments

Edit 5 photos from Photo Story & present in class/**Due March 26**

Reading Evaluation Ch. 10- Kobre- Photo Editing-3 key points/**Due**

March 31

Continue Photo Story Project & Journal

Check in with St. Ann partner.

Week 10:

Discuss Photo Editing/ Photo story

Update on Photo Story Progress

Reading Evaluation Ch.14- Kobre- The Law- 3 key points/**Due April 2**

Assignment: Continue Photo Story Project & Journal

Week 11:

Reading Evaluation Ch.13-The Law/Discussion on Law/ **Due April 7**

Assignment: Continue Photo Story & Journal

Reading Evaluation Ch.15-Kobre- Ethics- 3 key points/**Due April 9**

Week 12:

Reading Evaluation Ch.4 Ethics/**Due April 14**/Ethics Discussion

Photo Editing/Layout of Photo Story/April 14 & April 16

Various Photo Presentations

Assignment: Finish up details to Photo Story and Journal

Check in with St. Ann partner and help edit photos for Harborview Show.

Week 13:

Prepare for Harborview & Kelley Center Photo Show/**April 21 & 23**

More Photo Inspiration

Final Layout on Photo Story-in class

Week 14:

Wrap up discussions/ View stories

Harborview Market Photo Show w/ St. Ann's 5th graders/April 25

April 28: Photo Show at Kelley Center w/ 5th graders & families.

Final: Photo Story Project and Journal Due/April 30