

## CIOS 258 TW1 Lesson Outline Week 1

See Lessons and Links Web Site for information to support this lesson!!!

<http://www.cysewski.com/digitalphotography/CIOS258WLessonHandouts.htm>

### Course Assignment Due Next Week

|      |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |     |    |
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| 9/13 | 9/20 | <p><b>FIRST ASSIGNMENT</b></p> <p><b>Photographic Intention: Why do you take photographs?</b></p> <p>Describe, briefly, five photographs that you did not take, but wished you had? See the <a href="http://www.unphotographable.com/index.shtml">http://www.unphotographable.com/index.shtml</a>. Post your description of the five photographs to the course web log.</p> <p><b>OR do one of these alternative Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you bought your camera what photographs did you imagine taking?</li> <li>• What photographs do you wish you had taken, but did not?</li> <li>• If you could go back in time and could take photographs of something, what would you take?</li> </ul> <p><b>AND SECOND ASSIGNMENT</b></p> <p><b>Photographic Seeing: The Essential Camera Concepts: How does the camera work?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look on the web for a single photograph that you like, post the URL to the photograph to the course web log.</li> </ol> <p><b>AND</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Also look on the web for a photographer that you like and post a URL to a web site that shows the photographers work.</li> </ol> | 200 | 40 |
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### Lesson Purpose

- Overview of course and course method and expectations.
- Overview of course information resources.
- Signing up for and using Blogger.
- Signing up for and using Google Reader.
- Photographic Intention
- Photographic Seeing
- Photo Walk to Gaffney, Noble and Lacy Street. No Cameras!

### Course Orientation

- Course Syllabus
- Course Text Book
- Assignment Checklist
- Attendance Sheet
- Course grading
  - Completion (If there is a problem just do it again better!)
- Audit and Education
- Course Expectations
  - Explore and Risk
  - No Busy Work!
  - Have fun
  - When in doubt try it
  - Share with others
- What do I need to take this course?
- Adding your name to the course web log.
- Questionnaire
- Assignment: Photographic Intention.
- Assignment: Photographic Seeing.

## **Class Resources**

- Class Resources  
<http://www.faculty.uaf.edu/ffsdc/syllabus/>
- CIOS 258 Exploring Digital Photography Web Log  
<http://exploringdigitalphotography.blogspot.com/>
- Useful Photographic and Technical web links  
<http://www.cysewski.com/UAF/technews/TechNews.htm>

## **Course Introduction**

### **Course Purpose: (Why on Earth am I taking this course?)**

The purpose of this course is to become a good photographer! A good photographer can use ideas, vision, a camera and editing tools to create photographs that fulfill an explicit purpose or intention.

The process of photography is:

1. Thinking and Feeling
2. Seeing
3. Taking
4. Selecting
5. Editing
6. Sharing

Photography is a means of communication. Some photographs become more valuable over time. There are many purposes and reasons to take photographs. Photography is a skill that will grow and change the more that you use and develop it. The process of photography is fun. The more you photograph, the more photographs you see.

### **Photographic Intention: (Why do I take photographs?)**

A person takes photographs for a reason. There are many reasons to take photographs. When you photograph you have a frame of reference or intention to take a photograph. Thinking about the reasons for your photographs will help you organize your approach to photography. People can have multiple reasons to take photographs.

### **Seeing Photographs: (What do I see? Why do I take this specific photograph)**

Assuming that you have a reason or intention to take a photograph you take photographs because you see something to photograph. You see something that fulfills your intention. The more photographs you take the more photographs that you see. A photograph is a specific moment in time. The moment in time is expressed through light captured by a camera. Seeing something to photograph and seeing like a camera are not identical. Being able to translate what you see into a photograph that expresses your original vision takes experience and technical knowledge.

### **Using a Camera: (How do I use a camera to capture what I see?)**

Photographic techniques are tools used to fulfill your photographic intention. Cameras are a means to an end. Every decision that you make in setting the camera is a compromise, there is something gained and something lost. All cameras involve the same set of compromises.

A camera does not see like a human. A camera does not have the dynamic range of the eye. A camera does not have depth perception. A camera sees color differently than a human. A camera abstracts what a human sees.

It takes experience to be able to translate what you see into a photograph. To be able to express your intention, to be able to capture what you see, you must master camera technique. What is in your head, what you intended to do, or even the memory of the event is not the same thing that is in the photograph.

Photographic techniques are the tools you use to bring your intention, what you wanted to show, closer to the photograph, what you actually captured. Turning what you see in your mind into what people see in the photograph is the art of photography.

### **Selecting, Evaluating, and Archiving Photographs: (My photographs are everywhere, how do I get organized?)**

If you do not organize your photographs you will be overwhelmed? If you do not develop a method of organizing your photographs you might lose the photographs and the memories that they contain. Sometimes what you see later, in a photograph, is different from and maybe even better than your original intention. It is important to make your photographs accessible and easy to view. A good organizing and archiving system provides a method to think about and re-experience and re-evaluate your photographs. It is important to see your photographs from different contexts and perspectives; a photograph can grow and change as your experiences change. If you do not have a method for selecting, grouping, and archiving photographs you will not be able to re-appreciate your photographs.

Before doing major selecting, wait to make judgments on your photographs. Sometimes it takes time to appreciate what you have taken; it is too easy to focus on the details or the flaws in the photograph and to miss the actual value of the photograph. Let time pass, at least a month, before evaluating your photographs.

**Editing Photographs: (The photograph does not look right, now what do I do?)**

Editing or enhancing a photograph clarifies and expresses your original photographic intention. Photoshop or Picasa are tools to improve or clarify your original intention. Using cropping, straightening, editing, adjusting the dynamic range, sharpening, cleaning up small details, and adjusting color are means to clarify a photograph. Using software to adjust an image is as important as using a darkroom to print an image, software is an integral part of digital photography.

**Sharing Photographs: (I want to share my photographs with others?)**

Sharing photographs is making a commitment to the selected photographs that these photographs are good enough to share. There is always the balance between perfect, good enough, and laziness, at some point it is necessary to evaluate and share your photographs. The motivation to share improves the entire photographic process. By making your photographs available you will be able to review and reflect upon what you have done.

**Photographic Intention: (Why do I take photographs?)**

A person takes photographs for a reason. There are many reasons to take photographs. When you photograph you have a frame of reference or intention to take a photograph. Thinking about the reasons for your photographs will help you organize your approach to photography. People can have multiple reasons to take photographs.

Taking photographs should express your intention. My goal for this course is for you to have the skills to express your photographic intention to your audience. Many times you communicate more than you intended, but you should at least be able to communicate your intention. What is in your photograph should communicate the reason that you took the photograph. The information should be within the photograph, not in your explanation or in your head.

**Questions to think about**

- How does a camera’s “vision” differ from human vision?
- How does a photograph of a moment differ from the experience of the moment?
- How is your memory of an event conditioned by a photograph of an event?

**Kinds of photographic intention (A random selection)**

Intentions can change or grow, there can be multiple intentions in a single photograph

|               |         |             |
|---------------|---------|-------------|
| Memory        | History | Fun and Joy |
| Documentation | Sharing | Humor       |
| Expression    | Emotion | Celebration |
| Editorial     | Beauty  | Anger       |
| Subjective    | Pride   | Boredom     |
| Psychology    | Money   |             |
| Family        | Client  |             |

**There are multiple sources of inspiration, some are:**

|                                |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| History                        | Art                 |
| Photographs you like           | Just seeing!        |
| Reviewing your own photographs | Your feelings, wow! |

**Questions to think about.**

- When you bought your camera what photographs did you imagine taking?
- What photographs do you wish you had taken, but did not?
- If you could go back in time and could take photographs of something, what would you take?

## Seeing Photographs: (What do I see?)

### Purpose

You take photographs because you see something to photograph. The more photographs you take the more photographs that you see. A photograph is a specific moment in time. The moment in time is expressed through light captured by a camera. Seeing a photograph and seeing like a camera are not identical. Being able to translate what you see into a photograph that expresses the original vision takes experience and technical knowledge.

### The inclination to take a photograph

- Emotion
- Light
- Texture
- Form
- Content
- Color
- Memory
- Philosophy
- Politics
- Compassion
- Editorial position

### What is the process of turning intention into a photograph

- Catalyst or Inclination
- Frame or boundary
- Plane of focus
- Dynamic Range (Exposure)
- Color Balance
- Enhance through editing

### Taking a picture

- Point of View
- Framing
- Composition is leading the eye to discover what you intended
  - A camera has no depth perception; it is like viewing an image with one eye.
  - Frame
    - Line
  - Balance
    - Form Color
  - Foreground
    - Light
  - Background
    - Shadow
  - Size
    - Motions
  - Position
    - Focal Plane or Depth of Field
  - Point of view

## The Photographic Problems: From what we see to what we take!

- Dynamic Range and contrast
- Plane of focus and depth of field
- Perspective and focal length
- Subject and camera movement
- The color we see and the color the camera sees
- The multiple possible uses of an image

## **Some old Web Log Entries**

### **Dead Dogs**

Years ago I was taking some photographs around Seward, I was wandering around near the end of a road and discovered a dead dog. I turned away, but then thought about it, stopped, and went back and took the photograph. The dead dog made me feel, and if I feel I should take a picture of what it is that is catalyzing that feeling. Photography is not only for the beautiful or the funny; it can even be for the bored. I have used this experience to remind myself, as I walk around, if I feel something, or have an inclination to take a photograph, take it.

### **Upside Down Sunset**

In high school, 40 some years ago, I had a crucial experience. I was raised in the Seattle area and was by the beach, Salt Water State Park, it was sunset. I was resting on a piece of driftwood. For some random reason I looked at the sunset upside down. The scene came to life, it became three dimensional, I could see the depth, the color, and the pattern. It became real, the sunset was not being obscured by my expectations. The sunset was a completely different experience. Photographically, but also in my life, I have, because of this experience, tried to look at things upside down. I try to reverse an idea, I try to see a different angle, if an idea is worth thinking about it should also reveal when it is reversed. Photographically an image should come to life in an unexpected way. Beautiful pictures are especially difficult. The classic picture of Denali and Wonder Lake is truly beautiful, but it is also boring. The challenge is to somehow bring the image alive, to reveal it in a unexpected way, to maybe see it upside down.

### **Everything we see is new?**

I was trying to describe to a friend why Thailand was so interesting to me. I told him that "Everything that I saw was new.". As I thought about that statement I realized that no matter where we are, everything that we see is new, the light, the time, the thoughts, it is always new.

We, and I, do not see it that way. Our minds tell us that it is the same: I already saw that; I already took that picture etc. etc. Our minds and our thoughts organize and inhibit what we see. The more I thought about "everything that we see is new" I realized that it illuminates that fuzzy area between what we see, and what we think about what we see. Navigating that border of perception is where we make photographs. Photographs are an interaction between what we see, what we experience, what we feel, and what we think. Even our intentions can determine what we photograph.

Remembering though that, no matter what we think, the actual fact is that "everything we see is new."

## From The Nature of Photographs: Stephen Shore (See Link on Lessons and Links web site)

<http://www.amazon.com/Nature-Photographs-Stephen-Shore/dp/071484585X>

### The Physical Level

- The Print: The actual physical media.
- Flat
- Has edges
- Static
- The Print and the Computer Screen
- Color
- Tonal Range
- As an object: Where does it exist and how does it change the meaning?

### The Depictive Level

- The photographer imposes an order on a scene
- Flatness, frame, time, and focus
- Choosing a Frame
- Choosing a vantage point
- Choosing the moment of exposure
- Choosing a plane of focus

### The Mental Level

- “Pictures exist on a mental level that may be coincident with the depictive level-what the picture is showing-but does not mirror it. The mental level elaborates, refines, and embellishes our perception of the depictive level. The mental level of a photograph provides a framework for the mental image we construct of (and for) the picture.”

### Mental Modeling

- “The mental level’s genesis is in the photographer’s mental organization of the photograph. When photographers take pictures, they hold mental models in their minds; models that are the result of the proddings of insight, conditioning, and comprehension of the world.”
- “For most photographers, the model operates unconsciously. But, by making the model conscious, the photographer brings it and the mental level of the photograph under his or her control.”
- “When I make a photograph, my perceptions feed into my mental model. My model adjusts to accommodate my perceptions (leading me to change my photographic decisions). The modeling adjustment alters, in turn, my perceptions. An so on. It is a dynamic, self-modifying process. It is what an engineer would call a feedback loop.  
It is a complex, ongoing, spontaneous interaction of observation, understanding, imagination, and intention.”

## From The Photographer’s Eye: John Szarkowski (See Link on Lessons and Links web site)

<http://www.amazon.com/Photographers-Eye-John-Szarkowski/dp/087070527X>

- **The Thing Itself:** “The first thing that the photographer learned was that photography dealt with the actual: he had not only to accept this fact, but to treasure it; unless he did, photography would defeat him.”
- **The Detail:** “The photographer was tied to the facts of things, and it was his problem to force the facts to tell the truth. He could not, outside the studio, pose the truth; he could only record it as he found it, and it was found in nature in a fragmented and unexplained form-not as a story, but as scattered and suggestive clues.”
- **The Frame:** “The central act of photography, the act of choosing and eliminating, forces a concentration on the picture edge - the line that separates in from out-and on the shapes that are created by it.”
- **Time:** “There is in fact no such thing as an instantaneous photograph. All photographs are time exposures, or shorter or longer duration, and each describes a discrete parcel of time. This time is always the present. Uniquely in the history of pictures, a photograph describes only that period of time in which it was made. Photography alludes to the past and the future only in so far as they exist in the present; the past through its surviving relics, the future through prophecy visible in the present.”
- **Vantage Point:** “Much has been said about the clarity of photographs, but little has been said about its obscurity. And yet it is photography that has taught us to see from the unexpected vantage point and has shown us pictures that give the sense of the scene, while withholding its narrative meaning.”

## Thoughts on Photography PDF Download from Lessons and Links web site

<http://www.cysewski.com/digitalphotography/takingphotographs.pdf>

## Speaking of Photography

### Famous quotes on photography.

By Matthew Holden Lewis

September 2006

“Utter truth is essential and that is what stirs me when I look through the camera.”

—**MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE**

“The virtue of the camera is not the power it has to transform the photographer into an artist, but the impulse it gives him to keep on looking.”

—**BROOKS ATKINSON**

“I hate nothing more than sugary photographs with tricks, poses and effects. So allow me to be honest and tell the truth about our age and its people.”

—**AUGUST SANDER**

“I go back now, to Pennsylvania, and on one of the walls of the house in which my parents now live there hangs a photograph of myself as a boy. I am smiling and staring with clear eyes at something in the corner of the room. I stand before that photograph, and am disappointed to receive no flicker, not the shadow of a flicker, of approval, of gratitude. The boy continues to smile at the corner of the room, beyond me. That boy is not a ghost to me, he is real to me; it is I who am a ghost to him.”

—**JOHN UPDIKE**

“There is a lot of talk about camera angles; but the only valid angles in existence are the angles of the geometry of composition and not the ones fabricated by the photographer who falls flat on his stomach or performs other antics to procure his effects.”

—**HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON**

“All amateurs...think they have to have the sun at their backs. You'll find this is wrong: If you get the sun to one side and catch the shadows, you get a 'Rembrandt-lighted' picture with good contrasts.”

—**FRANK JAY HAYNES**



## Speaking of Photography

### Famous Quotes

By Matthew Holden Lewis  
August 2006

“I realize more and more what it takes to be a really good photographer. You go in over your head, not just up to your neck.”

—**DOROTHEA LANGE**

“I was born in Hoboken. I am an American. Photography is my passion. The search for truth my obsession.”

—**ALFRED STIEGLITZ**

“Being an artist, I had an artist’s instincts....You can see the picture before it’s taken; then it’s up to you to get the camera to see.”

—**JAMES VAN DER ZEE**

“A photograph is not an accident—it is a concept. It exists at, or before, the moment of exposure of the negative.”

—**ANSEL ADAMS**

“When that shutter clicks, anything else that can be done afterward is not worth consideration.”

—**EDWARD STEICHEN**

“It’s in trying to direct the traffic between Artifice [sic] and Candor, without being run over, that I’m confronted with the questions about photography that matter most to me.”

—**RICHARD AVEDON**

“A photograph is a secret about a secret. The more it tells you the less you know.”

—**DIANE ARBUS**

“It is part of the photographer’s job to see more intensely than most people do. He must have and keep in him something of the receptiveness of the child who looks at the world for the first time or of the traveller who enters a strange country.”

—**BILL BRANDT**