

Fall 2009

Photography or Art Image Research Paper Assignment

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First Year Seminar
Images as Information: Visuality Across the University

Benjamin R. Harris
Fall 2009

Assignment Description

Option 1: Photography or Art Image Research Paper Assignment (25 pts)

- A. Choose a photograph or a photograph of a work of art.
- B. Conduct library research on your selected image. You will (1) draft research questions, (2) keep a research log, and (3) write an abstract of your paper during the research process.
- C. Write a 6-8 page paper (app. 1500-2000 words) using research and your own critical thinking. Your paper should (1) describe the image, (2) provide background on the creation of the image, (3) and develop an arguable claim about the historical, social, cultural, political, or aesthetic importance of the image.

There are a number of questions you might consider as you conduct research on your topic:

- 1. What is the historical moment or context depicted in the image?
- 2. Who is the artist/photographer? What were his/her motives in creating this image?
- 3. What tools, materials, etc. were used to create this image?
- 4. Does this image contain symbolism, or does it attempt to symbolize a topic, time period, etc.?
- 3. Does your selected image have a “controlling image”? Or is the image itself a “controlling image”?
- 4. What process was involved in the creation of the image?

These are just examples of possible research questions. Ultimately, the direction of your research and your paper will depend on the image you select.

This paper will be formatted in MLA style and should conform to the rules of the class regarding written work.

Note: Your essay must cite *at least* 5 scholarly research sources. However, you must also submit a “Works Consulted” list that includes a total of 10 research sources that you reviewed in the course of your research. The purpose of this additional bibliographic requirement is to show that you were able to select the best and most useful information from a range of sources.

Grading:

- Topic selection (2)
- Research (8)
- Quality of description and background (5)
- Quality of argument (5)
- Citation (3)
- Mechanics (2)

Option 2: Imaging Practices Research Paper Assignment (25 pts)

- A. Select a discipline or a profession of your interest and locate an imaging practice utilized in that community. This imaging practice can be contemporary or historical.
- B. Conduct library research on the imaging practice. You will want to locate information on technologies developed to create images and examples of published images used by individuals in your selected community. You will (1) draft research questions, (2) keep a research log, and (3) write an abstract of your paper during the research process.
- C. Write a 5 to 7 page paper (app. 1350-1900 words) in which you (1) explain the purpose and use of the imaging practice, (2) describe the origins and/or development of the practice, and (3) offer 2-3 examples of the practice in context. This paper will be formatted in either APA or MLA style and should conform to the rules of the class regarding written work.

Note: Your essay *must* cite 5 research sources. However, you must also submit a “Works Consulted” list that includes a total of 10 research sources that you reviewed in the course of your research. The purpose of this additional bibliographic requirement is to show that you were able to select the best and most useful information from a range of sources.

Grading:

- Topic selection (2)
- Research (9)
- Quality of description (5)
- Selection and use of examples (4)
- Citation (3)
- Mechanics (2)