# History and Critique of the Photograph

## Prof. William Willinghton

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The aim of the course is to provide students with an extensive and carefully structured understanding of the distinctive features and development of photography from both a linguistic and cultural viewpoint.

It will examine leading international photographers and each student will get the chance to make their own photo report, which will be treated as an integral part of their final assessment.

At the end of the course the student will be able to recognize the most important photographers, distinguish the different photographic techniques and the narrative modalities of Photography.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*From reality to photographing reality*

The course will look at leading photographic reporters and narrative styles they have uses to snap that "decisive instant". The photographers will include: Henri Cartier Bresson, Robert Capa, William Klein, Richard Avedon, Margaret Bourke-White, Bill Owens, Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Sebastiao Salgado, Gianni Berengo Gardin, Ernesto Fantozzi, Mario Giacomelli, Robert Frank, Paul Strand and methods for coding and decoding reality. Students will also study a number of leading figures from other fields, who have helped develop special ways of narrating photo reports, such as Ernest Hemingway, D. J. Salinger, Edgar Lee Masters, Jack Kerouac, James Joyce, Alfred Hitchcock and Walt DIsney. Students will get the chance (in place of one the books on the reading list) to make their own photo report which will elaborate upon a homogeneous theme, in accordance with the skills at photo reporting they have learned at lectures.

***READING LIST***

Lecture notes.

B. Newhall, *Storia della fotografia,* Einaudi, Milano, 1982 (only chapters indicated in class).

S. Sontag, *Sulla Fotografia,* any edition.

Students will also be expected to read any two of the following:

D.J. Salinger, *Il giovane Holden,* Einaudi, any edition.

E.L. Masters, *Antologia di Spoon River,* Einaudi, any edition translated by Fernanda Pivano.

J. Kerouac, *Sulla strada,* Mondadori, any edition with an introduction by Fernanda Pivano.

E. Hemingway, *Il vecchio e il mare,* any edition translated by Fernanda Pivano.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures, practical work, supervised reading and analysis of images and picture reports, vision of full-length films, individual research, meetings with both national and international representatives from the world of art, visit to photography exhibitions and attendance of cultural projects in the realm of the visual arts.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The examination takes place with an oral test, which

will cover the entire course syllabus assessment, will take into account what students have learnt, of the specific terminology used, their skill at analysing photographs and their ability to identify parallels and comparisons between forms of narration from the same period in the development of of the history of photography.

Attending students will have the chance (instead of studying B. Newhall’s book on the History of Photography) to create their own individual picture report (to be created based on examples studied at lectures) to be handed in the last lesson. In this case assessment will also take into account reporting and will take into account the originality of the theme, the choice of images, the way the sequences are put together, the narrative technique employed and knowledgeable justification of the choices made by the students in their own particular way.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

*The course is introductory and therefore does not require any prerequisites.*

*The teaching material presented during the course and all the useful material in preparation for the exam will be available online, after each lesson.*

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.