

Curatorial Research: Acceptable types of research resources

In all cases, when I ask you to research and curate 5 photographs (as I will ask you to do every week), these photographs ***must*** come from

(a) **A BOOK (print/physical book) in the Hampshire College (Harold F. Johnson) Library.**

One aim of this course is to get you using physical books, physically housed in the HC Library collections, to do your curatorial research!

Libraries are AWESOME, and the *oversized* photography history section (on the 3rd floor of the Harold F. Johnson Library, near the SPARC office/northeast side of the building) and the Robert Seydel Collection (on the 2nd floor of the Harold F. Johnson Library, with the cool seating area) are great places to begin your research by just browsing: call numbers starting TR = photography history; call numbers starting N = art history... (most exhibition catalogs and many artists' books will be oversized: probably folio or above, aka "elephant folio"); look also at the "ordinary" sized books (probably octavo or below) under TR (photography history) and N (art history) call numbers....

You may also use the library catalog to find books, of course, but make sure you have the filters set so that you are searching for print/physical books, and not other sources.

Check out the book/books to bring to class! Or scan or make a photocopy...

OR

(b) **a print/physical book or books that I have placed on reserve for the course** in the Hampshire College Library (ask at Info Bar: can be checked out of the library for 4 hrs. max).

You may check books out on reserve to bring to class, but you may in this instance find it easier to scan (learn to use the book scanner in the library!) or make a photocopy.

OR

(c) **reference artists/thinkers drawn from the list of "intertexts/dialogues"** that I have included on the course website for each week.

Ideally, you will be using "a" (physical books in the library's photo history and art history holdings) or "b" (physical books I have put on reserve for the course) to research your reference artists or related intertexts/dialogues; you might also use "d" (below).

Digital images found through open image-searching on the internet MAY be appropriate for SOME artists (esp. if they are contemporary artists w/their own websites), but remember only 1 of the images you curate each week can come through open image-searching.

OR

(d) specialized digital research resources (searchable collections databases) that I have placed on the course website (see **DIGITAL RESEARCH RESOURCES**).

In order to encourage the development of your research skills, I will require that, **of the 5 images you must bring in to class as part of your curatorial research each week, ONLY 1 MAY HAVE BEEN FOUND THROUGH OPEN GOOGLE/INTERNET SEARCHING. ALL 4 of the others MUST come from print/physical books AND/OR from specialized DIGITAL RESEARCH RESOURCES pre-selected by me (see top of course website!).**

NOTE:

It is RARELY and ALMOST NEVER acceptable to do open Google searching, use social media, or use AI platforms to do curatorial (scholarly and creative) research for this course.

Why?

A major aim of this course is to enhance your knowledge of specialized resources that can be used for scholarly and creative research on photography history and to help you develop your academic research skills using scholarly and artists' publications on photography. The print catalog (exhibition catalog or "catalog raisonné"), artists' book, or photobook are all irreplaceable in studying the history of the medium.

Cultural and political factors also play a role. If you just use the internet for your research, you are going to get a preponderance of sources centering mainstream/white-dominant/US-centric/Euro-centric/Anglo-centric/heteropatriarchal/capitalist/free-market-friendly photographs and photographers. **Using specialized resources can help to combat these trends and is, in fact, urgently necessary to implementing a decolonial research practice and lens.**

(I recognize that digital tools are cool, and I, like you, use them all the time – but there are also many things they cannot do, and indeed many kinds of information they cannot help you to find and generally are designed to lack or very intentionally overlook...)