



# Seminar: The Meaning of Photography

Sommer 2011  
BTU Cottbus

Prof. Dr. Christian Lotz

## Tentative Schedule (last UPDATE: July 04, 2011)

Nummer	Date	Topic	Reading	Reading II	Assignments
<b>Introduction</b>					
1	April 6	Introduction	moved!	Szarkowski, Introduction to <i>The Photographer's Eye, Tagg, Evidence, Truth, and Order</i>	Handout: Lotz
<b>The Constitution of Meaning in Photography</b>					
2	April 13	Realism versus Culturalism	Batchen, Burning with desire, chapter 1	Kriebel, Theories of Photography: A Short History	John, Pergande
3	April 20	The Construction of Meaning in Photography	Bright, Of Mother Nature and Malboro Men	Sekula, The Body and the Archive	Kinzelt
4	April 27	no class because of lecture in Reykjavik	----	----	
5	May 4	The Construction of Meaning in Photography	Bolton, In the American East: Richard Avedon Incorporated	Tagg, Photography as Evidence in Law	
<b>Going Back to the Basics - Barthes: Photography Between Semiotics and Phenomenology</b>					
6	May 11	Semiotics	Barthes, Rhetoric of the Image	Barthes, The Photographic Message	
7	May 18	Phenomenology	Barthes, Camera Lucida, sections 1-9	Batchen, Camera Lucida. Another little history of photography	Hilbrecht, Zirkel, Noack
8	May 25	no class because of lecture in Messkkirch	----	----	
9	June 1	Time	Barthes, Camera Lucida, sections 10-24	Kraus, Notes on the Punctum; Kraus, Notes on the Obtuse	Zimmermann, Noellner
10	June 8		Barthes, Camera Lucida, sections 25-48	Fried, Why Photography Matters, chapter 4	Pietsch, Jahnke, Syperreck

## Fried, Absorption, and Art Photography

11	June 15	Photography as Art	Fried, Why Photography Matters, chapter 1	Fried, Why Photography Matters, chapter 2	
12	June 22	Photography as Art	Fried, Why Photography Matters, chapter 3		Illing
13	June 29	Photography as Art	Fried, Why Photography Matters, chapter 5	Fried, Why Photography Matters, chapter 6	Hunger
<b>Discussion of Examples, Study Group Presentations</b>					
14	July 6	Burtinsky and Avedon	Selection made by study groups		Burtinsky2: Hunger, Hilbrecht;  Avedon: Pragato, Zirkel;  Burtinsky1: Jahnke, Noack, Illing Sherman: Noellner, Syperreck; Gursky: John, Lima
15	July 13	Avedon, Sherman, Gursky	Selection made by study groups		
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### Class Meetings:

Days: Wednesdays  
Time: 9:15am-10:45am  
Place: LG1A/304

### Office:

Phone: TBA  
Place: Lehrgebäude 10, 134k  
Hours: Wednesdays, 4-6pm

### Other Contact:

E-mail: [lotz@msu.edu](mailto:lotz@msu.edu)  
Home Phone: please ask  
Webpage: <http://christianlotz.wordpress.com>

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## Description

As a matter of fact, photography became one of the most important art forms during the last decades, which led to intense debates about the meaning, status, and ontology of photography and photographic images in cultural theory and philosophy. In this seminar we will discuss why photography became so important for us during the last decades, and how we should determine photography's relation to painting. We will consider the role of technology and the media, the conflict between realism and anti-realism, as well as the construction of meaning in photographic images (including social and political aspects). We will especially refer to photographic work produced in the US and in Germany after WWII.

## Texts

### The following texts should be bought (or be available in its entirety)

Barthes, Roland, Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography, tr. R. Howard, New York: Hill and Wang, any edition  
Fried, Michael, Why Photography Matters as never before, Yale: Yale University Press 2008

### Semesterapparat and selected chapters in reader (as pdf-files)

Bolton, Richard (ed.), The Contest of Meaning. Critical Histories of Photographies, Mass: MIT Press 1993 (die folgenden Kapitel sollten als Kopie zur Verfügung stehen: Introduction + Bright, Of Mother Nature and Malboro Men + Grover, Dykes in Context + Bolton; In the American East + Rosler; in, around, and afterthoughts (on documentary photography);

Barthes, Roland, Image – Music – Text, New York: Hill and Wang 1977 (Kapitel "The Photographic Message" und "Rhetoric of the Image" sollte als Kopie zur Verfügung stehen)

Batchen, Geoffrey *Burning with Desire: The Conception of Photography*, Cambridge: MIT Press 1999 (Kapitel 1 "Identity" sollte als Kopie zur Verfügung stehen)

Batchen, Geoffrey, *Photography Degree Zero. Reflections on Roland Barthes Camera Lucida*, Cambridge: MIT Press 2009 (Kapitel 4 + 10 + 14 sollten als Kopie zur Verfügung stehen)

Elkins, James (Ed.), *Photography Theory*, London: Routledge 2007 (Kapitel Kriebel, *Theories of Photography: A short History of Photography* + Kraus, *Notes on the Obtuse* sollte als Kopie zur Verfügung stehen)

### **Semesterapparat**

Kelsey, Robin and Stimons, Blake (Eds.), *Meaning of Photography*, Clark Studies in the Visual Arts, Clark Art Institute 2008

Batchen, Geoffrey, *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography, History*, Cambridge MIT Press 2002

Tagg, John, *The Disciplinary Frame*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press 2009

Tagg, John, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press 1993

Wells, Liz (Ed.), *Photography. A Critical Introduction*, London: Routledge 2009 (fourth edition)

### **Conditions**

- Participation in class
- Careful preparation of the readings
- Participation in one study group and group presentation on a selected photographer
- One short presentation (handout) on one of the readings

### **Leistungsnachweis**

- Group presentation and Hausarbeit

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