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Photography: The Black Box of History

Symposium, March 16-17, 2018

Organized by:

**Dr. Thierry Gervais, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
and Head of Research, Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto**
Dr. Jason Hill, Assistant Professor, University of Delaware, Newark (DE)

DESCRIPTION

Developed by cyberneticists, the analytical concept of the black box is deployed “whenever a piece of machinery or a set of commands is too complex” (Ashby, 1956, 86). Photography is the black box *par excellence*, permitting image-makers and viewers alike to focus on inputs and outputs without regard to the machinery in between. Both the camera and the image, in their apparent simplicity, obscure complex technical and cultural operations. Scholars of society and media as varied as Bruno Latour and Vilém Flusser have observed this condition, the latter describing photography as “a super-black-box made up of black boxes” (Flusser, 1983, 71). This obscurity has made photography a difficult object to place at the centre of historical practice. Historians have tended to ignore the presence of the black box and simply place its inputs and outputs at the centre of their descriptions of the world, an approach that has led – if not compelled – them to undertake “the most magical tricks, [to] build descriptions of the world that, ultimately, are based not in presumed knowledge but in ignorance” (Glanville, 2007, 189). How might historians begin to reckon with photography’s black box?

First, we must open these boxes, and call their contents to testify. Opening the black boxes that are photographs makes them testify to the image-making activities that produced them: activities that structure the lives of various countries and communities, in artistic circles and in family settings, in professional and amateur environments. In *La Photographie, Histoire et contre-histoire*, François Brunet analyzes the way photographs have challenged histories of images and more generally the way they have contributed to debates on the legitimacy of historical sources. Brunet argues that the implications of these debates are so profound that the boundaries between photographic history and history practice more broadly are no longer relevant, and he proposes instead “a history of photography as history, and as counter history” (Brunet, 2017, 16). Advancing from this premise, this symposium will investigate how photography is conceptualized as a problem in historical practice today and how recent technological and epistemological transformations have engendered new interpretive and analytical possibilities. It will bring together researchers whose methods, subjects, and questions exemplify the ever-increasing fertility of the history of photography as a field that revisits history and produces alternative perspectives.

“Photography: The Black Box of History” is composed of four sessions dispatched over two days: Catalogue/Database; Operator/User; Camera/Technology; Subject/Matter. Each session will highlight specific approaches to the history of photography and will raise methodological questions. The conference will commence with a keynote address by Elizabeth Edwards (Andrew W. Mellon Visiting Professor at the Victoria and Albert Research Institute, London, UK; and Professor Emerita of Photographic History at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK).

Description of the sessions:

Catalogue/Database: The session “Catalogue/Database” considers the always prevailing conditions of technological and systematic transformation characterizing the conceptualization, application, and management of photographic collections and materials by museums and institutions. By what means, this panel asks, have institutions negotiated the promises and perils of photography’s reproductive and distributive logic? And how has this same photographic logic in turn helped to reshape those same institutions? Recently, scholars have undertaken an increasingly granular consideration of photography’s varied operations within distinct institutional practices, emphasizing the formation and management of

individual collections and the shifting meanings assigned to photographic materials within particular institutions and under distinct technological regimes (Edwards and Morton, 2015; Lister, 2013; Tagg, 2012). This session proposes a consideration of the fluid mechanics and cultural impact of photography's routine application and organization behind the institutional scenes, both as a reprographic technology and as a problem of data management.

Presentations include: "Photo-organized: On the (re)organizational Principles of Museum Reprographics" by Dr. Kelley Wilder (De Montfort University, UK); "The Family Camera Project" by Dr. Thy Phu (Western University, CA); and "When Images Become Data" by Dr. Estelle Blaschke (Université de Lausanne, CH).

Operator/User: The session "Operator/User" investigates the role of key figures in the production and dissemination of photographs. Over the past decade, scholars have highlighted the plurality of photographic meanings and the political role of spectatorship (Azoulay, 2008; Hariman and Lucaites, 2016). Looking beyond the sole photographer's authorship, this approach to photography also emphasizes the role of unknown operators (amateur photographers, printers, retouchers, etc.) and third parties (owners of photographic agencies, editors, artistic directors, etc.) in the dissemination of photographs (Hill and Schwartz, 2015). Investigating the work of figures acting behind the curtain, such analysis stresses the collective aspect of image dissemination and its social, economic, and cultural role (Gervais, 2016). This session gathers papers that decipher the process of making photographs public and highlights how each step and individual involved in this process are historically significant.

Presentations include: "The Visual Making of German History: Max Pohly and Black Star" by Dr. Christian Joschke (Université Paris-Nanterre, FR); "France, China, and the Cliché of History" by Dr. Catherine Clark (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA); and "(Re) Viewing: How Photographs Shaped Indigenous Art Narratives from the 1960s to the 1980s" by Dr. Carmen Robertson (University of Regina, CA).

Camera/Technology: The session "Camera/Technology" will bring the technological aspect of photographs to the centre of historical analysis. Historian François Brunet explained that at the heart of the invention of the idea of photography is a semiological theme and a political promise: from the French law endorsing the daguerreotype in 1839 to the release of the Kodak camera at the end of the nineteenth century, photography has been promoted as an image without artistry and an image for all (Brunet, 2000). In this process, photographs appear as images without a technique, despite their indispensable apparatus: the camera. The denial of the machine in history and the denial of its cultural significance has long been identified (Simondon, 1958) but remains prevalent in a history of photography that favours images. The photographic cameras which produce images and most of the technologies which allow their mass dissemination remain neglected by historians. This causes the misinterpretation of historical visual sources and, more importantly, dismisses the human avidity for images and therefore the role of this avidity in our societies (Latour, 1987). In this session, scholars will address cameras and technologies as the products of human desires, mediators, and pillars of our cultures, and not only as functional objects.

Presentations include: "Fully Visible and Transparent" by Dr. Andrés Mario Zervigón (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, USA); "Broken" by Dr. Jennifer Bajorek (Hampshire College, USA); and "Load, Point and Shoot: Cameras, Gun Cartridges, and the 'Black Boxes' of History" by Dr. Jennifer Tucker (Wesleyan University, USA).

Subject/Matter: As an imperfect technology of historical record and inquiry, bound, as Kracauer had it, to register only the "epidermis of things" immediately before its lens and only at the very instant of exposure, the camera reaches always for its accessories (Kracauer, 1960). The panel "Subject/Matter" will take up this question of photography's always necessary, compensatory entanglement in and negotiation with supplemental technologies and structures that operate along a variety of spatial, temporal, and informational axes, from the wax tableau's slower and steadier prior mode of historical picturing, to the jet plane's accelerating regime of spatial distribution, and metadata that at once articulates and constrains the digital photograph's horizon of historical possibility. Building on a wave of recent scholarship examining the dynamics of photography and historical knowledge/practice (Edwards, 2009; Hunt and Schwartz, 2010; Tucker and Campt, 2009), this session considers how both photographers and historians are pressed to range beyond the limits of the image.

Presentations include: "Writing B-roll: Image, Data and Event" by Laura Wexler (Yale University, USA); "Photography as Counterfactual History" by Dr. Jordan Bear (University of Toronto, CA); "Media in Motion: Photojournalism and the Reorganization of Time and Space in the Jet Age" by Vanessa R. Schwartz (University of Southern California, USA).

Partners



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- Tucker, J. and Campt, T. (2009), "Engagements with Photography in Historical Inquiry," in *History and Theory*, 48:4, pp. 1-8.

Photography: The Black Box of History
PROGRAM
Friday, March 16, 2018

8:30 am — *Doors open*

9:00 am — Welcome

Paul Roth, Director, Ryerson Image Centre (Toronto, Canada)

9:10 am — Introduction

Dr. Thierry Gervais, Associate Professor, Ryerson University and Head of Research, Ryerson Image Centre (Toronto, Canada)

9:20 am — Keynote Address: “History and the Black Box of Photography: Some Thoughts on Photographs, Method and Historiography”

Prof. Elizabeth Edwards, Andrew W. Mellon Visiting Professor at the Victoria and Albert Research Institute (London, UK) and Professor Emerita of Photographic History at De Montfort University (Leicester, UK)

10:20 am to 10:45 am — Coffee break

CATALOGUE/DATABASE

Moderated by Dr. Thierry Gervais

Associate Professor, Ryerson University and Head of Research, Ryerson Image Centre (Toronto, Canada)

10:45 am — “Photo-organized: On the (re)Organizational Principles of Museum Reprographics”

Dr. Kelley Wilder, Director, Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University (Leicester, UK)

11:30 am — “The Family Camera Project”

Dr. Thy Phu, Associate Professor, Department of English and Writing Studies, Western University (London, Canada)

12:15 pm — “When Images Became Data”

Dr. Estelle Blaschke, Postdoctoral Researcher, Centre des Sciences historiques de la culture, University of Lausanne (Switzerland)

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm — Lunch break

OPERATOR/USER

Moderated by Prof. Marta Braun

Professor, School of Image Arts, Ryerson University (Toronto, Canada)

2:00 pm — “The Visual Making of German History: Max Pohly and Black Star”

Dr. Christian Joschke, Assistant Professor, Department of the History of Art and Archeology, Université Paris Nanterre (France); Lecturer, University of Geneva (Switzerland)

2:45 pm — “France, China, and the Cliché of History”

Dr. Catherine Clark, Associate Professor of French Studies, Global Studies and Languages, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge, MA, USA)

3:30 to 4:00 pm — Coffee break

4:00 pm — “(Re) Viewing: How Photographs Shaped Indigenous Art Narratives from the 1960s to the 1980s”

Dr. Carmen Robertson, Professor, Visual Arts Department, University of Regina (Regina, Canada)

4:45 pm — END

5:15 pm — “Collaboration: A Potential History of Photography” exhibition tour and cocktail reception

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PROGRAM

Saturday, March 17, 2018

9:00 am — *Doors open*

9:25 am — Welcome

Dr. Blake Fitzpatrick, Chair, School of Image Arts, Ryerson University (Toronto, Canada)

9:30 am — Introduction

Dr. Jason Hill, Assistant Professor, Modern and Contemporary Art and Visual Culture, University of Delaware (Newark, DE, USA)

CAMERA/TECHNOLOGY

Moderated by Dr. Jason Hill

Assistant Professor, Modern and Contemporary Art and Visual Culture, University of Delaware (Newark, DE, USA)

9:40 am — “Fully Visible and Transparent”

Dr. Andrés Zervigón, Associate Professor of the History of Photography, Department of Art History, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (New Brunswick, NJ, USA)

10:25 am — “Broken”

Dr. Jennifer Bajorek, Assistant Professor, School of Humanities, Arts & Cultural Studies, Hampshire College (Amherst, MA, USA)

11:10 am to 11:40 am — Coffee break

11:40 am — “Load, Point and Shoot: Cameras, Gun Cartridges, and the Black Boxes of History”

Dr. Jennifer Tucker, Associate Professor, Department of History, Wesleyan University (Middletown, CT, USA)

12:25 pm to 2:00 pm — Lunch break

SUBJECT / MATTER

Moderated by Paul Roth

Director, Ryerson Image Centre (Toronto, Canada)

2:00 pm — “Writing B-roll: Image, Data and Event”

Dr. Laura Wexler, American Studies and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Yale University (New Haven, CT, USA)

2:45 pm — “Photography as Counterfactual History”

Dr. Jordan Bear, Associate Professor, Department of History of Art, University of Toronto (Toronto, Canada)

3:30 pm to 4:00 pm — Coffee break

4:00 pm — “Media in Motion: Photojournalism and the Reorganization of Time and Space in the Jet Age”

Prof. Vanessa R. Schwartz, Director, Visual Studies Research Institute, and Professor, Art History, History and Film, University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA, USA)

4:45 pm — Conclusion

Paul Roth, Director, Ryerson Image Centre (Toronto, Canada)

5:00 pm — END

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ABSTRACTS & BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Jennifer Bajorek, "Broken"

It is a well-known fact of West African photography histories that the cameras were often broken. In the middle of the twentieth century in particular, as cameras and other photographic equipment and supplies were increasingly marketed as consumer products in European colonies, African photographers were deliberately sold broken or defective instances of the photographic apparatus. The sale of broken equipment made it possible for metropolitan suppliers to off-load second-hand or refurbished equipment in colonial space. It also helped to spur a radical democratization of photography in a decolonizing Africa. This paper takes the “broken” camera as a speculative figure and analytical concept—running parallel, at least nominally, to the black box—allowing us to explore aspects of West African photography histories that do not conform to dominant Western/Northern accounts. What happens when the very ubiquitousness of the system is referred to, and reframed vis-à-vis, the failure of its core mechanism? What methods must be devised to write the history of a wittingly broken or defective apparatus, one that by definition does not conform to the expected industrial, economic, or even photochemical or photomechanical norms or protocols?

Biography: Jennifer Bajorek writes and does research on literature, philosophical aesthetics, and photography. Her articles on photography, photographic archives, and contemporary institutions for photography in Africa have appeared in Aperture Magazine; Autograph; Theory, Culture & Society; Third Text; Social Text; Africultures; Afriphoto; Fotota, and the Galerie du Jeu de Paume blog. She is an assistant professor of Comparative Literature at Hampshire College, USA; a research associate in the Research Centre in Visual Identities in Art and Design in the Faculty of Art, Design, and Architecture at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa; and the co-founder, with Erin Haney, of Resolution Photo, a non-profit organization dedicated to photography and photography collections in Africa. Her latest book-length project, *How to Write a Visual History of Liberation: Photography and Decolonial Imagination in Africa*, was awarded a Creative Capital Arts Writers Grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation in 2013-2014 and is forthcoming from Duke University Press.

Dr. Jordan Bear, "Photography as Counterfactual History"

What are we to make of a photograph of Napoleon, whose death preceded the medium's 1839 announcement by some eighteen years? The historical impossibility of such a representation has hardly impeded its existence, as Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Napoleon Bonaparte and the Duke of Wellington* (1994) seems to demonstrate. One might object that this photograph merely depicts a scene from Madame Tussaud's wax museum, itself a space of simulacral historical representation. But, as I will argue, such a distinction relies both upon a spurious conception of photographic indexicality and upon a specific epistemology of historical representation that has informed our sense of photography's historicity. The assurances putatively offered by photography are linked to those which began to be furnished by other visual representations of the past in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Using Napoleon as a test case, I sketch some of the roots of skepticism about photography to a far more consequential and wide-ranging disavowal: that of the existence of the past itself.

Biography: Jordan Bear is Associate Professor of the History of Art at the University of Toronto. His scholarship has focused on the historical intersection of photography, knowledge and belief. His recent book, *Disillusioned: Victorian Photography and the Discerning Viewer* (Penn State University Press 2015), received the Historians of British Art Book Award for Exemplary Scholarship on the Period after 1800. He is currently editing a collection of essays on the once-popular and now-forgotten genre of history painting, entitled *What Was History Painting and What is it Now?* (McGill-Queen's University Press forthcoming 2018).

Dr. Estelle Blaschke, "When Images Became Data"

The talk addresses the emergence of electronic data management in handling large photographic collections. Starting in the early 1960s, new methods for enriching photographs with machine-readable data and code were developed to make use of the computer's ability to search through massive sets of (visual) records. In this talk, I will retrace the collaborations between the photographic industry and the computer industry during the second half of the twentieth century. I will discuss

the particularities of photography that facilitated the “datafication” of images, which resonates with today’s idea of the networked or programmable image and ask how this development may affect the writing of (photo) history.

Biography: Estelle Blaschke (M.A., Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin; Ph.D., EHESS/Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne) is a postdoctoral researcher at the Université de Lausanne. Her current research on the history of microfilm is part of the collaborative research project “Encapsulating World Culture. The Rise and Imaginary of Microfilm (1920s to 1950s)” funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. From 2009 to 2011 and in 2014 she was a fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin. She is the author of the book “Banking on Images: The Bettmann Archive and Corbis (Spector Books, 2016).

Dr. Catherine Clark, “France, China, and the Cliché of History”

The photographs brought back by French visitors to the People’s Republic of China in the late 1960s and early 1970s are not very good pictures of China. These amateur photographers produced snaps of their groups and guides posing in front of monuments. They photographed model scenes of labor on factory floors and, more rarely, on collectivized farms. Read as representations of China, they appear a disappointing cross between tourist snapshots and official propaganda. This paper, however, proposes to read them not as French representations of China but as windows onto what it means to do history in the photographic age. Using public and private archives and interviews with the French who visited and lived in China between 1962 and 1976, it asks how photography shaped their encounter with the PRC. Using the notion of “cliché of history” elaborated in my forthcoming book, it will explore how the content of photographs and the act of photography both shaped and disrupted French encounters with Maoist China. In doing so, it will open up questions of photography as evidence, photographic propaganda, and the social history of photography in the era of the snapshot.

Biography: Catherine Clark is Associate Professor of French Studies at MIT and a 2017-2018 Member of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. She is a cultural historian of France since the nineteenth century and writes about the history of photography, historical methodologies, and France’s interest in the world. Her research has appeared in the American Historical Review, the Journal of Visual Culture, Contemporary French Civilization, and Etudes Photographiques. Her book “Paris and the Cliché of History: the City and Photographs, 1860-1970” will be published by Oxford University Press this summer.

Prof. Elizabeth Edwards, “The Practices of History: Some Thoughts on Photographs, Method and Historiography”

This paper asks what it is to “do history” in the age of photography. But rather than addressing the philosophical aspects of this question, I consider the practices and apparatus of history itself. I shall begin with a brief critical overview of the advice given to historians on “How to read photographs.” I suggest that this “advice” reflects not only the uneasy disciplinary relationship with photographs as historical sources, but also reveals the assumptions that underlie the practice of history itself. I then go on to consider the historiographical implications of these positions. I will argue that the “advice” given fails to address the historiographical disruption offered by photographs. For photographs go to the very core of the fundamental underpinning assumptions of the practice of history itself — relationships with, for instance, ideas of time and distance, evidence, the constitution of an event, agency, and context.

Biography: Elizabeth Edwards, visual and historical anthropologist, is Professor Emerita of Photographic History at De Montfort University and currently Andrew W. Mellon Visiting Professor at the V&A Research Institute. She is also Honorary Professor in the Anthropology Department at UCL and, was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2015, the first photographic specialist so honoured. Her most recent monograph was “The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination 1885–1918” (2012). Her current book projects are on photography and the emergence of concepts of the collective ownership of ancient monuments and on photography and the apparatus and practice of history.

Dr. Christian Joschke, “The Visual Making of a German History: Max Pohly at Black Star”

Credited most often as a photographer, Max Pohly gave to Black Star — shortly after the creation of the photo agency — a sum of 1265 photographs. The pictures document German matters as various as cultural heritage, the First World War, the Spartakist riots, or the rise of the Nazi Party. Looking at their versos, one would be stunned by the casual approach to

captions and credits, the erasure of stamps, and the deletion of written text. It is as if Pohly had a distant relationship to the events he was meant to capture and that he took some liberties with the principle of documentary precision, aiming the pictures toward a new audience: the staff working in American illustrated magazines, who would have had difficulties with events, names, or locations which meant nothing to them. These marks of erasure are traces of the photographs' changing meaning, their evolution from one context to another: produced by documenting events shortly after they happened, the pictures became, as they were imported to the U.S., part of a popular narrative about German history.

Biography: Christian Joschke is Assistant Professor at the University Paris Nanterre and lecturer at the University of Geneva. He is currently working on a research project with the Centre Pompidou in Paris about social and documentary photography in the 1930's. He recently published "Les yeux de la nation. Photographie amateur dans l'Allemagne de Guillaume II" (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2013) and "La Guerre 1914-18" (Arles: Photopoche, 2014). He is co-editor in chief, with Olivier Lugon, of the scholarly journal "Transbordeur: Photographie Histoire Société."

Dr. Thy Phu, "The Family Camera Network"

Family photographs are one of the most ubiquitous yet least understood forms of cultural expression. Although they often appear in personal collections, they also cross into the public spheres of art galleries, newspapers, and beyond. And yet, research on family photographs has been limited because when existing collections do feature these materials it is usually in the form of orphan images, which lack contextual information. To address this problem, The Family Camera Network, a research Partnership, was developed to build a public archive in collaboration with The Royal Ontario Museum, a mainstream cultural institution, and The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, an activist community organization, in order to collect and preserve family photographs and stories about them. This presentation considers the ethical and practical challenges that arise when private artifacts are held in trust for the public — an issue that is especially fraught given the nature of these materials—and the methods that The Family Camera Network has developed to address these challenges. How might such an archive shed light on the transnational histories of Canada, and to what extent does a multimedia repository of family photography advance knowledge about the history of photography?

Biography: Thy Phu is an Associate Professor in the Department of English and Writing Studies at Western University in London, Ontario, Canada. Her research and teaching focus on cultural studies, visual culture, Asian North American literature, critical race studies, and American studies. She has also held positions as Visiting Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore and Visiting Associate Professor at Yale University. She is affiliated with the Royal Ontario Museum as a research associate and was recently elected to the College of New Scholars at The Royal Society of Canada. Her work focuses on the visual representation of race and gender among diasporic communities, and has been supported by SSHRC Connection, Insight, and Partnership Development Grants. She is the author of "Picturing Model Citizens: Civility in Asian American Visual Culture" (Temple University Press, 2012) and co-editor of "Feeling Photography" (Duke University Press, 2014).

Dr. Carmen Robertson, "(Re) Viewing: How Photographs Shaped Indigenous Art Narratives from the 1960s to the 1980s"

When contemporary Indigenous art emerged in the 1960s, Canadians learned of new artistic developments largely through text and image in the form of media reports. Media photographs, privileged during this period as "real" and documentary, often reinforced the finite and restrictive. What are we to make of the image-making activities that fueled journalistic reportage of this new art movement? Are they simple illustrations? Do they complicate narratives? As artifacts inscribed with stereotypical tropes, photos of artists and their art from the period between 1960 and 1990 demand deeper analysis. Such images have impacted the history of display and collection of contemporary Indigenous art and contributed to a dismissal of exciting new art movements. Re-reading journalistic photographs of early trailblazing Indigenous artists and representations of their art from this period in order to dismantle colonial discourses opens discursive forms of resistance and power that re-vision this history.

Biography: Carmen Robertson is a Scots-Lakota Professor of Art History at University of Regina in the MAP Faculty with research centering on contemporary Indigenous arts and constructions of Indigeneity in popular culture. In 2016 she published Norval Morrisseau: Life and Art with Art Canada Institute (Toronto,) and Mythologizing Norval Morrisseau: Art and the Colonial Narrative in the Canadian Media (UMP). In addition to essays in such scholarly journals as American Indian

Quarterly, Canadian Journal of Art History, Media History, RACAR and Third Text, Seeing Red (UMP, 2011), co-authored with Mark Cronlund Anderson, has elicited awards and favourable reviews by scholars and non-academic pundits. She sits on the editorial board of the Australian Journal of Indigenous Education and holds memberships in a number of scholarly associations. She is a board member of the Norval Morrisseau Heritage Society. Robertson also maintains an independent curatorial practice. She recently guest curated Dana Claxton: The Sioux Project—Tatanka Oyate exhibition and symposium at the MacKenzie Art Gallery (2017-2018). Starting May 1, 2018 Robertson will begin a new joint position at Carleton University as Full Professor in the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies and the School for Studies in Art and Culture.

Prof. Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Media in Motion: Photojournalism and the Reorganization of Time and Space in the Jet Age"

In the era when jets started to "take off," long-standing ideas of social deference also began to dissolve. For some observers, the culture of the mass press played a fundamental role in such transformations. In his 1956 book *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills' account of shifting social power, he observed that "printer's ink has replaced blue blood." In England, young critics who eventually became known as the "fathers of Pop" at the Institute for Contemporary Art, such as Lawrence Alloway and Reyner Banham, studied mass culture and celebrated their ephemerality. Such an approach distinguished him from other British intellectuals such as Richard Hoggart, who focused on the timeless values of folk culture. Alloway re-defined culture across space, beyond national borders and across media forms. He celebrated the speed of the mass arts, but in his essay "The Long Front of Culture" (1959) Alloway identified what he called a cultural continuum or flat-bed visual field: "an expendable multitude of signs." As a flat-bed visual field, I want to suggest he saw culture as if it were like so many images in magazines. So much of the history of photography has focused on the hierarchies and inequalities that the medium of photography has perpetuated. This paper considers how photography flattened time, (creating a sense of presentism) and breached distance in relation to one of its most potent practices: photojournalism and how connected that practice is to the history of mechanized transport.

Biography: Vanessa R. Schwartz is Professor of Art History, History and Film at the University of Southern California where she also directs the Visual Studies Research Institute and Graduate Certificate program. An historian of modern visual culture, especially film and photography, she trained in Modern European History with a concentration on France and urban culture at Princeton and UC Berkeley. She is the author of "It's So French! Hollywood, Paris and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture" (University of Chicago, 2007), "Modern France: A Very Short Introduction" (Oxford University Press, 2011) "Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in fin-de-siècle Paris" (University of California, 1998) and co-editor, with Jason Hill of "Getting the Picture: The Visual Culture of the News" (Bloomsbury, 2015), with Jeannene Pryzblyski, "The Nineteenth Century Visual Culture Reader" (Routledge, 2001) and with Leo Charney, "Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life" (California, 1995). She is currently writing, "Jet Age Aesthetics: The Glamour of Media in Motion," in support of which she has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship as well as fellowships at the Cullman Center at the New York Public Library and at the Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian. She and Daniela Bleichmar ran a 2017 Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar on "Visual History." She has also been a fellow at the Getty Research Institute, The Humanities Research Institute, UCI, the Warren Center, Harvard; held invited professorships at Stanford, McGill, Paris I-The Sorbonne, the Ecole Normale Supérieure and will be a visiting professor at the University of Geneva in Fall 2018.

Dr. Jennifer Tucker, "Load, Point and Shoot: Cameras, Gun Cartridges, and the 'Black Boxes' of History"

This paper explores what it might mean for historians to take seriously the shared history of firearms and cameras, two technologies that co-evolved in the late nineteenth century and that had a profound impact on society in the twentieth century. Drawing upon new archival research on nineteenth and early twentieth century camera and firearm production and consumption in Britain and the U.S., the paper explores their complementarity at several levels of structure, chemistry, industrial organization, research, and marketing. It identifies ways in which the technologies are interoperable, and why technologies, such as cameras and guns, pose certain shared methodological problems for historians. More broadly, it raises broader questions for consideration about the writing of history, the role of the historian in ethical discussions and how photography is conceptualized as a problem in history today.

Biography: Jennifer Tucker is Associate Professor of History at Wesleyan University where she specializes in the study of technology, law, photography, media and culture focusing especially on 19th /early 20th century topics. She is a core faculty

member in the Science Society Program, the College of the Environment, and the Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program (Interim Chair, 2017-19). Her first book, *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science*, and other articles and book chapters, explore the historical relationships of photography, science and culture in nineteenth-century Britain. She recently completed a manuscript for a second book, about a Victorian trial of imposture and identity, a major legal case involving facial recognition technology. With UCLA legal scholar Jennifer Mnookin, is co-editing a forthcoming *Photography and Law Reader* with Bloomsbury Academic Press. Her interests in history, technology and law extend to the study of firearms in British and imperial history. She is currently co-editing a book collection of historical essays, "Firearms and the Common Law: History and Memory," forthcoming with Smithsonian Institution Academic Press, and served as organizer/moderator of a roundtable discussion with curators of US and UK firearms museums collections exploring the topic of the role of museums in narrating firearms history today (forthcoming *Technology and Culture*, July 2018). With Elizabeth Edwards and Patricia Hayes she edits the "Photography and History" monograph series at Bloomsbury Academic Press; with Martin Collins (National Air and Space Museum) the "Image, History, Technology" feature of *History and Technology*; and, with Jason Ruiz (University of Notre-Dame) serves as co-chair of the *Radical History Review* journal. Her new book project focuses on Victorian chemical towns; her op-eds on history, science and the law have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Inside Sources*, and other media outlets.

Dr. Laura Wexler, "Writing B-roll: Image, Data and Event"

Writing B-roll proposes that we can consider metadata as the B-roll of the digital image and re-envision its primacy as well as the modes in which this metadata is visualized in, or sutured, to an image. So doing would produce a significant shift in what we are able to see and show in historical photographs. Among other case studies, it will examine how Photogrammar's employment of B-roll — that is to say, its practice of interpreting images as numbers before displaying them as pictures — points to possibilities for unexpected or divergent understandings of the past, and prompts as well the writing of narratives that use digital archives in new ways to affect the present.

Biography: Laura Wexler is Professor of American studies, Professor of film and media studies, and Professor of women's, gender, and sexuality studies at Yale. She is also Co-director of the Yale Public Humanities Program, founding director of Yale's Photographic Memory Workshop, and Principal Investigator of the Photogrammar Project. Her scholarship presents and critiques intersections of race, gender, sexuality, class and nation within the visual culture of the U.S., from the nineteenth century to the present. She is the author of *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Kelley Memorial Prize, AHA), coauthor of *Pregnant Pictures*, and coeditor of *Interpretation and the Holocaust*, and *The Puritan Imagination in Nineteenth Century America*, as well as many essays and book chapters. Her most recent publication is "The Purloined Image," in *Photography and the Optical Unconscious*, edited by Shawn Michelle Smith and Sharon Sliwinski, (2017). She is a Visiting Lecturer of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and a Distinguished Lecturer of the Organization of American Historians.

Dr. Kelley Wilder, "Photo-organized: On the (Re)organizational Principles of Museum Reprographics"

This talk will address the meaning photographs made in the museum reprographics department. Addressing both the economic forces at play in twentieth century reprographics business and the altered workflow of digitization projects, this talk argues for a look at the reorganization of museums according to photography. Its intended goal is not to look at the meaning of individual photographic images in the contexts of museum catalogues, but shift the focus to the overarching organizing principle of image-led cataloguing.

Biography: Kelley Wilder is a photographic historian, with interests in the cultures of science and knowledge generated by photography and photographic practice. In her work Kelley considers the photographic practices of scientists and artists like William Henry Fox Talbot, Sir John Herschel, Henri Becquerel and others. New projects include work on Photographic catalogues and archives, and Nineteenth and Twentieth century material cultures of photographic industry and image making. She is the author of "Photography and Science" (Reaktion, 2009) and co-author with Gregg Mitman of "Documenting the World: Film, Photography and the Scientific Record" (Chicago, 2016).

Dr. Andrés Mario Zervigón, "Fully Visible and Transparent"

In 1890, the Jena Glass Works of Carl Zeiss released the Anastigmat photographic lens and advanced a chapter in optical technology that seemed to have progressed automatically, even in a predetermined manner, since the medium's origins. This valuable innovation offered a consistent field of focus across the photographic plate and corrected for a number of additional aberrations at lower and higher f-stops. But why exactly was Zeiss developing this expensive device and what drove photographers to buy it? This paper suggests that the consistent focus and varied depth of field it provided were not in and of themselves the desired goals of these improvements, but that they were instead visible signals of a pictorial model that makers and consumers had been seeking since 1839. The goal was a transparent realism that remained stubbornly external to the medium, an illusionistic standard that had been mediated by painting since the Renaissance and was now apparently possible in photography.

Biography: Andrés Mario Zervigón's scholarship concentrates on the interaction between photographs, film, and fine art, and generally focuses upon moments in history when these media prove inadequate to their presumed task of representing the visual. He is the author of "John Heartfield and the Agitated Image: Photography, Persuasion, and the Rise of Avant-Garde Photomontage" (University of Chicago Press, 2012) and "Photography and Germany" (Reaktion Books Exposures series, 2017). With Tanya Sheehan he edited "Photography and Its Origins" (Routledge, 2014), with Sabine Kriebel "Photography and Doubt" (Routledge 2017), and with Donna Gustafson "Subjective-Objective: A Century of Social Photography" (Zimmerli Musuem/Hirmer Verlag, 2017). His current book project is Die Arbeiter-Illustrierte Zeitung -- The Worker's Illustrated Magazine, 1921-1938: A History of Germany's Other Avant-Garde," for which he received a CASVA Senior Fellowship (2013-14). At Rutgers Dr. Zervigón leads *The Developing Room*, an academic working group that promotes interdisciplinary dialogue on photography's history, theory and practice.