

A man in a dark suit and tie is rowing a small boat on the ocean. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds, with a bright, low sun on the horizon creating a golden glow. The water is dark and textured with small waves. The man is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking towards the camera.

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CONSTRUCTIONS OF TRUTHS

STUDY GUIDE: COLLEGE LEVEL

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You can show the video series [Ways of Seeing by John Berger](#) or read the book [Ways of Seeing](#). You can also refer to Walter Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Or use other books to guide your discussions such as Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida*, Marshall McLuhan's *The Medium is the Message*.

Create a collage on your own with magazines, scissors and glue. Work with a group of three to four people to work on another collage. Compare the amount of time it took to work on both projects. Now using digital technology create a collage, individually and in a group. Compare the amount of time to work on the project. Compare and contrast the images created, the meanings these images have, and the process you undertook to make the collages. You can discuss the function of the images, if any and how you would 1) reproduce them, and 2) make them accessible. You can also discuss archiving of these images.

You can also discuss the availability of images -- is there really a surfeit? How? Why? Have them also explore the ideas of inclusivity and accessibility in images by going through the different archives, sources of such images. Have them tally the number and kind of representation of persons with disabilities, people of color, etc. What insights have they gained? You can also have them look at stock photos and note the repetition of certain 'types' in these images. You can talk about how some offers of free studio photos have led to use of these images without consent from the subject. Discussion of copyright, consent and other legal as well as ethical issues can be done. You can use as example Richard Prince (or someone similar)

Have an inventory of programs and skills with working with images that your students have. Ask them which programs they use often, what images they create and why. Have them describe possible programs and what these can do with images. Have they ever used their knowledge and skills to combat fake news, determine deep fakes, etc? How can they help people who have fallen victim of these? If they have been victims of these, ask if they are willing to share about their experience and what they learned from it.

Revisit the iconoclasm during the Byzantine period. What beliefs are there about images? Do these beliefs persist? If yes, in what way and how? If not, what has replaced these beliefs? What are some of the conflicts regarding creating, using, reproducing and spreading of images?

IN FOCUS

James N. Kienitz Wilkins's *This Action Lies*

Have them note the three different positions as well as the different lighting points used to shoot the coffee cup. Would there be other positions and other lighting points or other techniques to multiply perspective and "to explore and saturate the space that envelops the cup of coffee"? Pair up the participants and have them note down how and what the other observed while watching the video; can one deduce from these notes the limits of observation?

Ho Tzu Nyen's *Critical Dictionary of Southeast Asia*

List down the historical, literary and pop references you recognize in the work. Compare and contrast your list with that of others. Note how many words and images are available/used for each letter of the alphabet. Does one (or more) letter/s have less? More? Are there images which are repeated? What insights were gleaned about Southeast Asia, its history, culture, etc from these exercise? What insights can be gleaned about your knowledge/understanding of Southeast Asia?

Maria Taniguchi's *untitled (crystal palace + gauguin)*

Note where the description given by different people of French artist Paul Gauguin's *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* seem to refer to the dinosaurs themselves. Compare and contrast this slideshow with that of Minerva Cuevas's. There can be a discussion on the interplay of what is unseen and what is seen, the influence and effect these have on the viewer, and accompanying (or lack of) language and its form (verbal, written, English or other language, male voice or female voice) on viewing the image.