Course Description:
This course examines photographic histories in their complex relations to institutions of collection and display. It looks at the production and circulation of photographs within particular institutional frameworks to explore the discursive production of photographic meaning in relation to the development of photographic technologies, and social, cultural and economic histories.

Course Objectives:
Students will develop an understanding of current issues in photographic history and theory as they relate to institutions of collection and display. Through discussion and evaluation of both focused case studies and broader themes in photographic history, students will develop their ability to think and write critically about photographs and their complex relations to institutional, social and cultural contexts.

Grade Breakdown:
Exhibition Review 20% February 12
Presentation 20% April 2 or 9
Reading Response 20% 1 week after reading covered in class
Final Paper 40% April 16

Schedule of Readings:

January 8 Week 1: Introduction: The Invention of Photography: Technology and Image

January 15 Week 2: Looking at Photographs

January 22 Week 3: Photographic Portraits: Public and Private Identities
Opening of Malcolmson Collection of Historical Photographs at UTAC
January 29 Week 4: Photography in the Service of Colonialism: Anthropological Photography

February 5 Week 5: Document / Art

Panel Discussion on Photography at UTAC

February 12 Week 6: Photography and the Display of Nature

Exhibition Review Due

February 19 Reading week

February 26 Week 7: Photography in the Museum
Vid Ingelevics, “The Mirror Stage of the Public Museum”, Lost in the Archives, Alphabet City: Culture, Theory, Politics, No. 8 Fall 2002
March 5 Week 8: The Family of Man and the limits of Photographic Universality

March 12 Week 9: The Perfect Moment: Displaying Difficult Photographs

March 19 Week 10: Diane Arbus and the Ethics of Display
Carol Armstrong, “Biology, Destiny, Photography: Difference According to Diane Arbus,” October vol. 66 (Fall 1993)

March 26 Week 11: Photography and Postmodernism

April 2 Week 12: Presentations

April 9 Week 13: Presentations

April 16 Final Papers Due