This international seminar brings together researchers working on photography and the book with interdisciplinary approaches, connecting the aesthetic and material dimensions of the photobook with social, economic and political perspectives.

Whilst the scope of the seminar encompasses general aspects of “photography and literature” — such as photographically illustrated fiction, writers’ portraits, the use of photographic activities, products or metaphors in writing — the primary theme of the seminar is the history and current state of the photobook. The aim is to encourage and disseminate research on its social history, its physical forms (including digital), its relations with the art market/bibliophile market, its networks of production, circulation, readership, as well as its engagement with race, whiteness, colonialism, gender and sexuality, and, where pertinent, its ethnographic methods.

Since the end of the economic model that allowed photojournalism to flourish in periodicals over the course of the twentieth century, photographers have increasingly resorted to alternative spaces, and most notably the book. Since the well-distributed publication of Martin Parr and Gerry Badger’s *The Photobook: A History* (2004), interest in photographers’ books has increased dramatically at auction houses, and the question of “value” has become insistent and complex. Book studies, anthropology, sociology, comparative literature, history of art… different disciplines can help shed light on the social meanings of photobooks, hence the need for an interdisciplinary seminar.

The schedule of talks is fixed and published at the beginning of each term.

---

**Seminar at the Maison Française d’Oxford 2017-2018**

*“Towards a Social History of Photoliterature and the Photobook”*

Convened by Paul Edwards (MFO / CNRS / LARCA)

**Wednesdays at 5:15 p.m. (tea is served at 5 p.m.)**

Michaelmas Term 2017

**25 October** : Introduction to the seminar
- Paul Edwards (MFO), “Towards a social history of the literary photobook and contemporary documentary bookart”
- Hermann Wittenberg (University of the Western Cape): “Coetzee and Photography”

**8 November** : Photography in and out of the book
- Terry Hale (University of Hull), “W.G. Sebald and Georges Rodenbach”

**22 November** : Photographic bookart
- Dennis Duncan (Darwin College, Cambridge), “Photographic Constraints: Georges Perec, Joachim Schmidt and Elisabeth Tonnard”