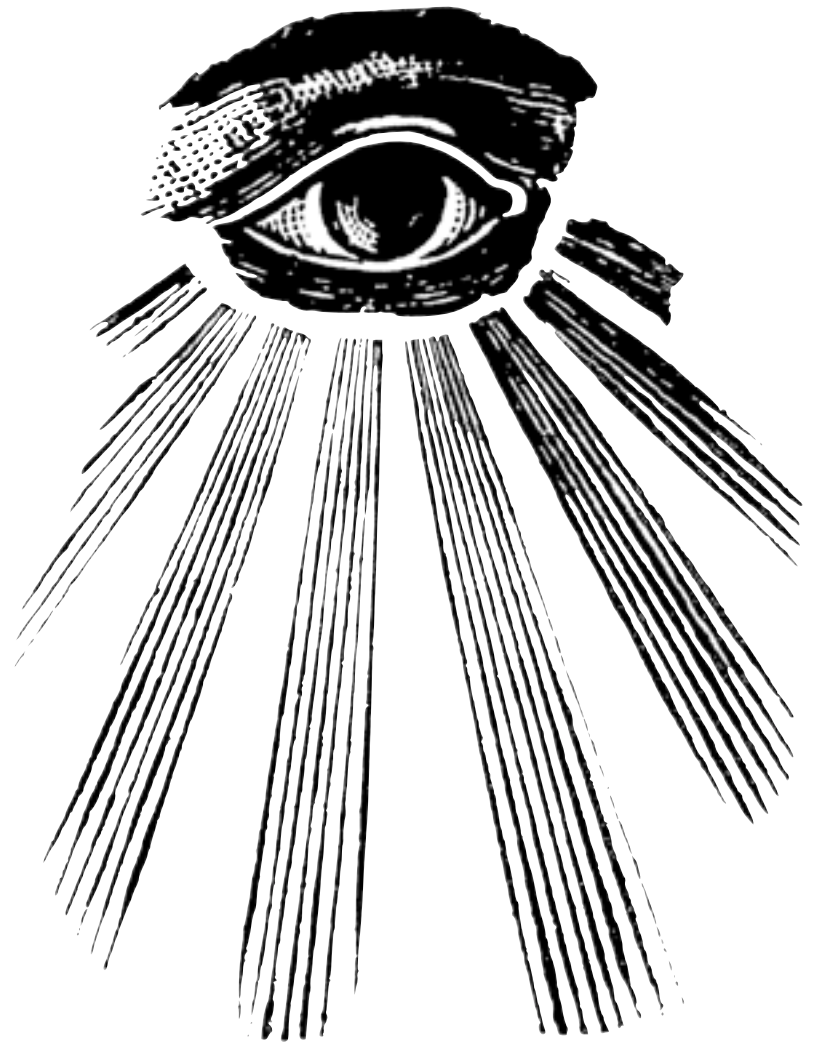


Noticing



Why a Class on Observation?

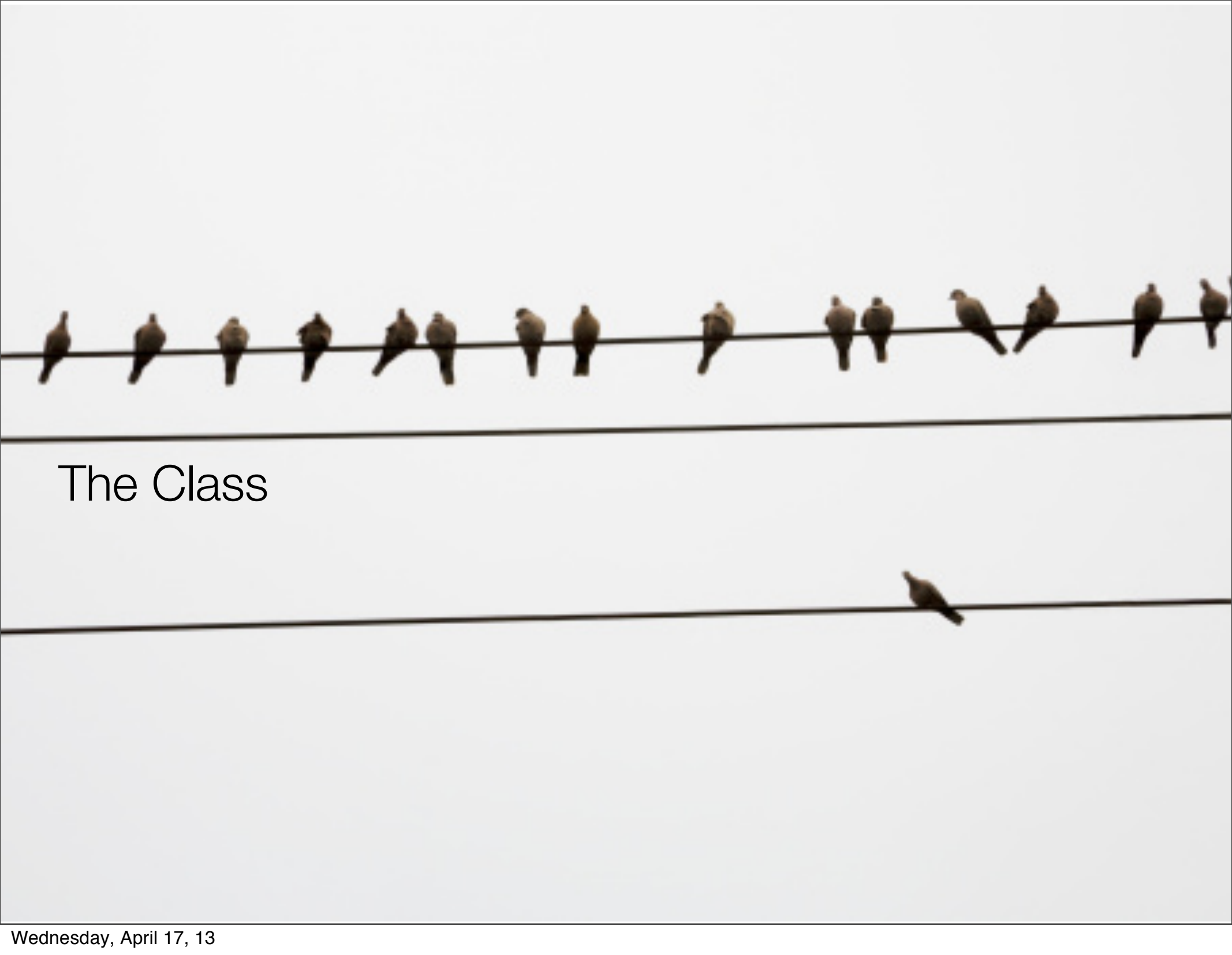
- learning how to see deeply
- opening to new experiences
- inspiring new ideas
- imbuing your work with richness
- noticing things is intrinsically satisfying



Notice 10 Things

- From right where you are, take 5 minutes, notice 10 new things





The Class

Class 1: Schemas & Scripts



Schemas

- *“In psychology and cognitive science, a schema (plural schemata or schemas), describes an organized pattern of thought or behavior.*
- *“It can also be described as a mental structure of pre-conceived ideas, a framework representing some aspect of the world, or a system of organizing and perceiving new information.*
- *“Schemata influence attention and the absorption of new knowledge: people are more likely to notice things that fit into their schema, while re-interpreting contradictions to the schema as exceptions or distorting them to fit.*
- *“Schemata have a tendency to remain unchanged, even in the face of contradictory information”*
 - *Wikipedia (rules)*

Schemas are Awesome

- screen out irrelevant information
- avoid effortful processing
- organize ideas
- save energy
- protect us for what's important



Schemas Suck

- prevent uptake of new information
- lock us into a thinking mode
- hide relevance
- hide opportunity
- thinking “inside the box”



Scripts

- Similar to schemas
- Temporal in nature: tend to be sequences of behaviors
- Restaurant script, wakeup script, dating script
- Notable when something violates our script, that can be when learning occurs
- However scripts can block details that are significant for design
- Customers often seat themselves, change sides of table, are infants, leave during the meal, move to other tables, even stand through the meal.

How to Notice Something New

- Wanting to see is the first step. Make a point of it
- *sit and listen*. Become aware of all sounds, five minutes minimum.
- *know yourself*. Spend a day writing down what you are doing every 15 minutes
- *know others*. What are people doing? What aren't they doing? What's their non-dominant hand doing?
- *be present!* No FB, video game, phone or headphones. Look and participate.
- *slow down*. Drive instead of fly. Train instead of drive. Bus, bike or walk.
- *attend to the obvious*. People go to restaurants to eat. They sit where the chairs are. Why is this so? Is this always so?



Noticing Strategies

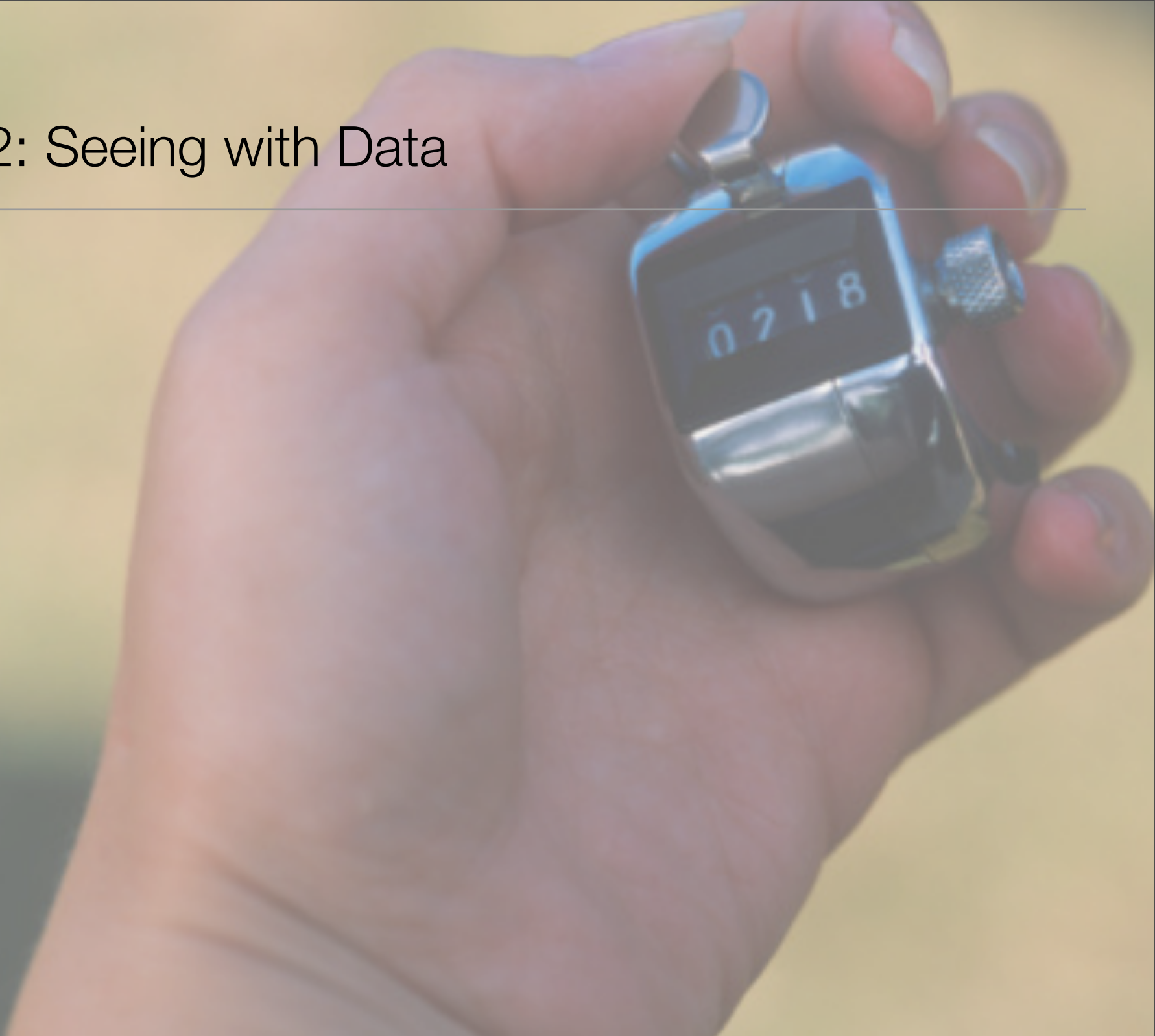
- travel, motion, taking opportunities
- randomize, chaos will change your perspective
- change mediums
- sleep someplace new
- try inverting it
- become aware of how an object come to be here and where will it end up
- pick something, what is behind, over, below and to the left and right?
- persist until you see something new (minimalism)



Understanding More

- investigate related fields
- combine knowledge from different disciplines
- -why is something located where it is? Cities? Sewer covers? Levers in a mechanism? Plants in a field? People in a park.
- talking out loud or asking others to do so is a good way to observe thought processes
- come back at different times of day, seasons
- find people with different situations, ages, motivations
- what *isn't* happening? what's *not* present? why?

Class 2: Seeing with Data



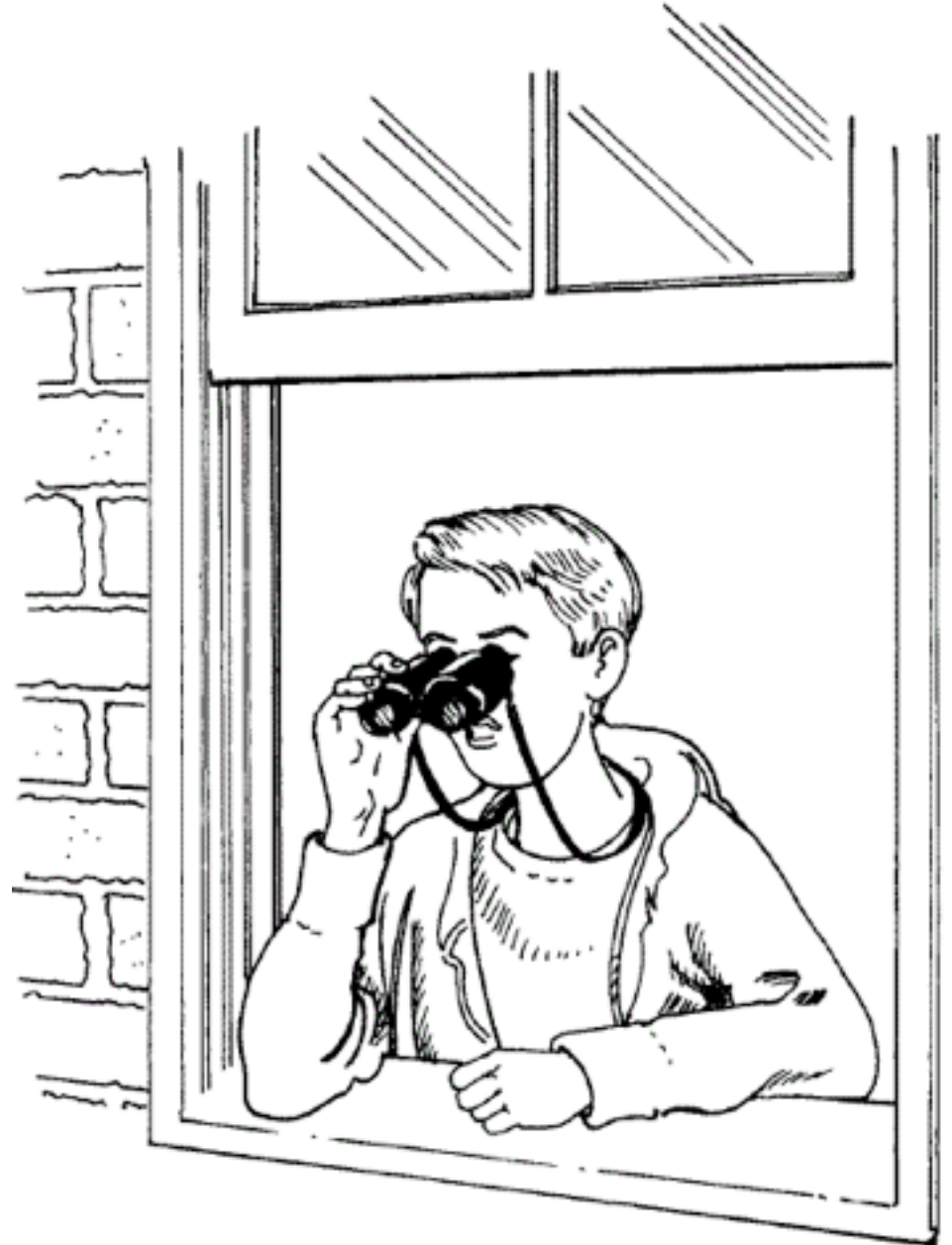
Seeing with Data

- Unmasking the invisible
- Manipulating time, space
- Comparisons across variables
- Thinking mode



Observation Assignment

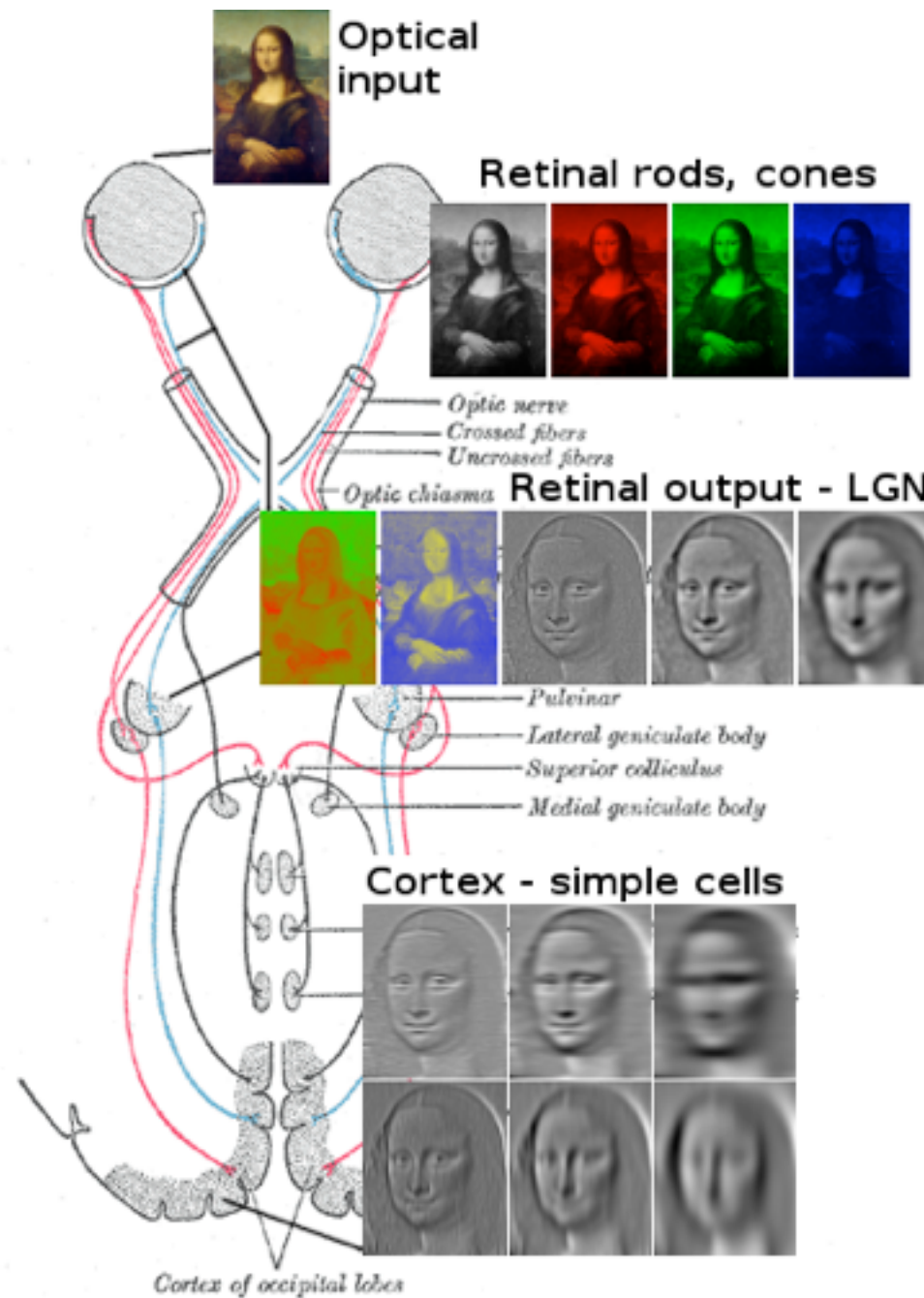
- Select a space
- List all the different behaviors that you see
- Record the prevalence of each behavior type, to better understand their relative import.
- Summarize



Class 3: Seeing by Drawing

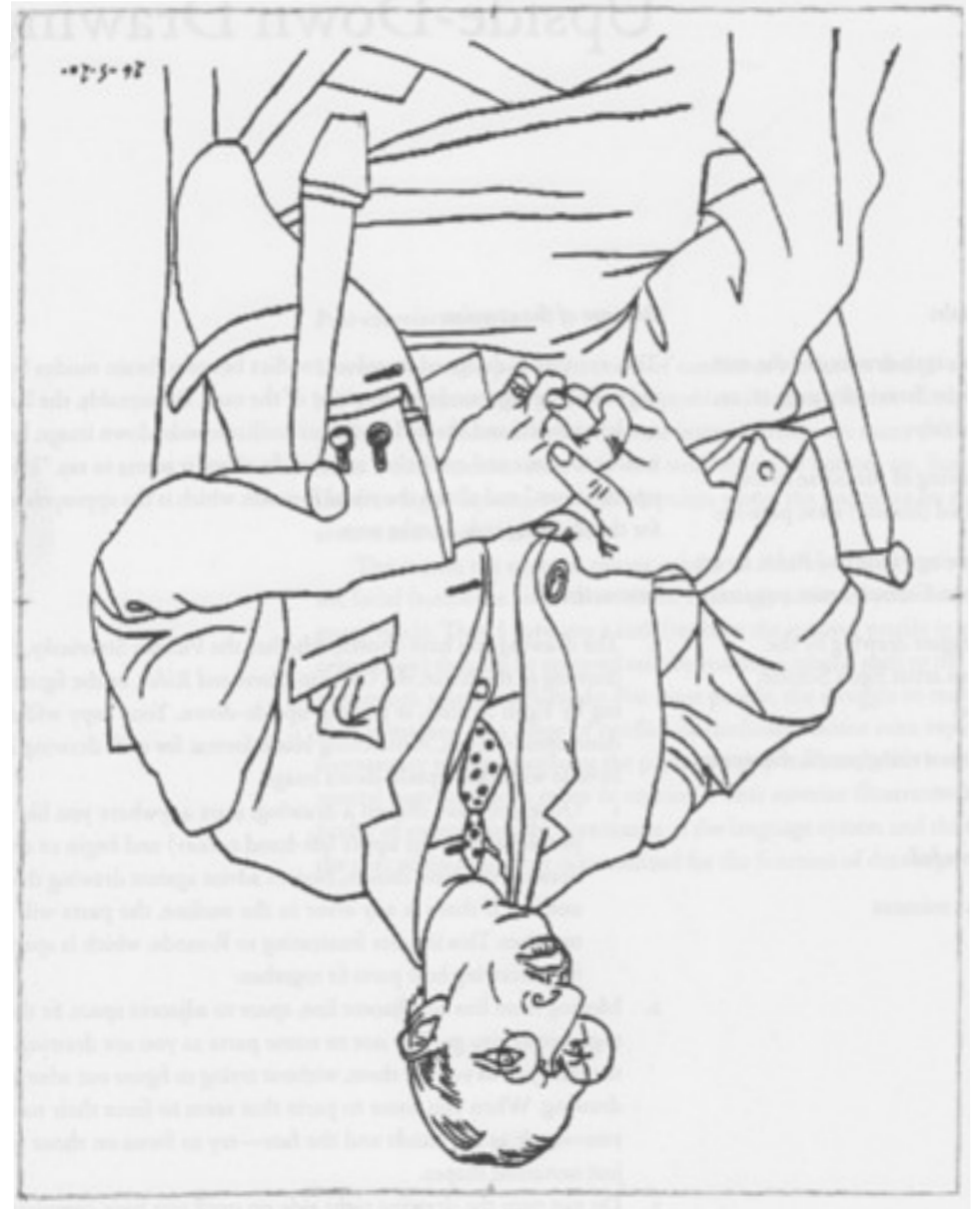


Visual System



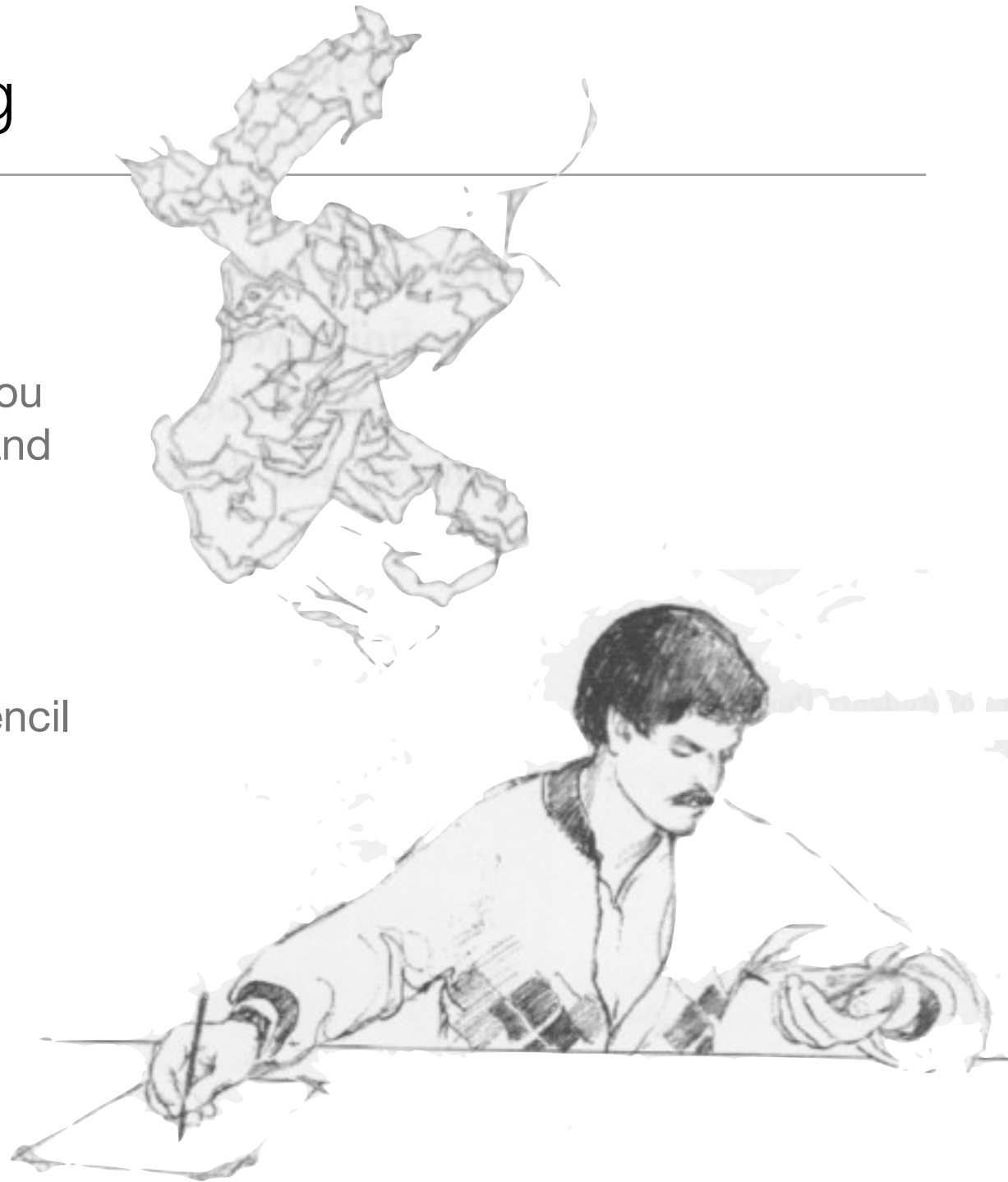
Upside-down Drawing

- copy an upside-down drawing
- start anywhere
- avoid doing the whole outline first
- avoid naming parts, just draw the lines in the same place
- don't turn your copy over until you are done.
- sign and date when you are done



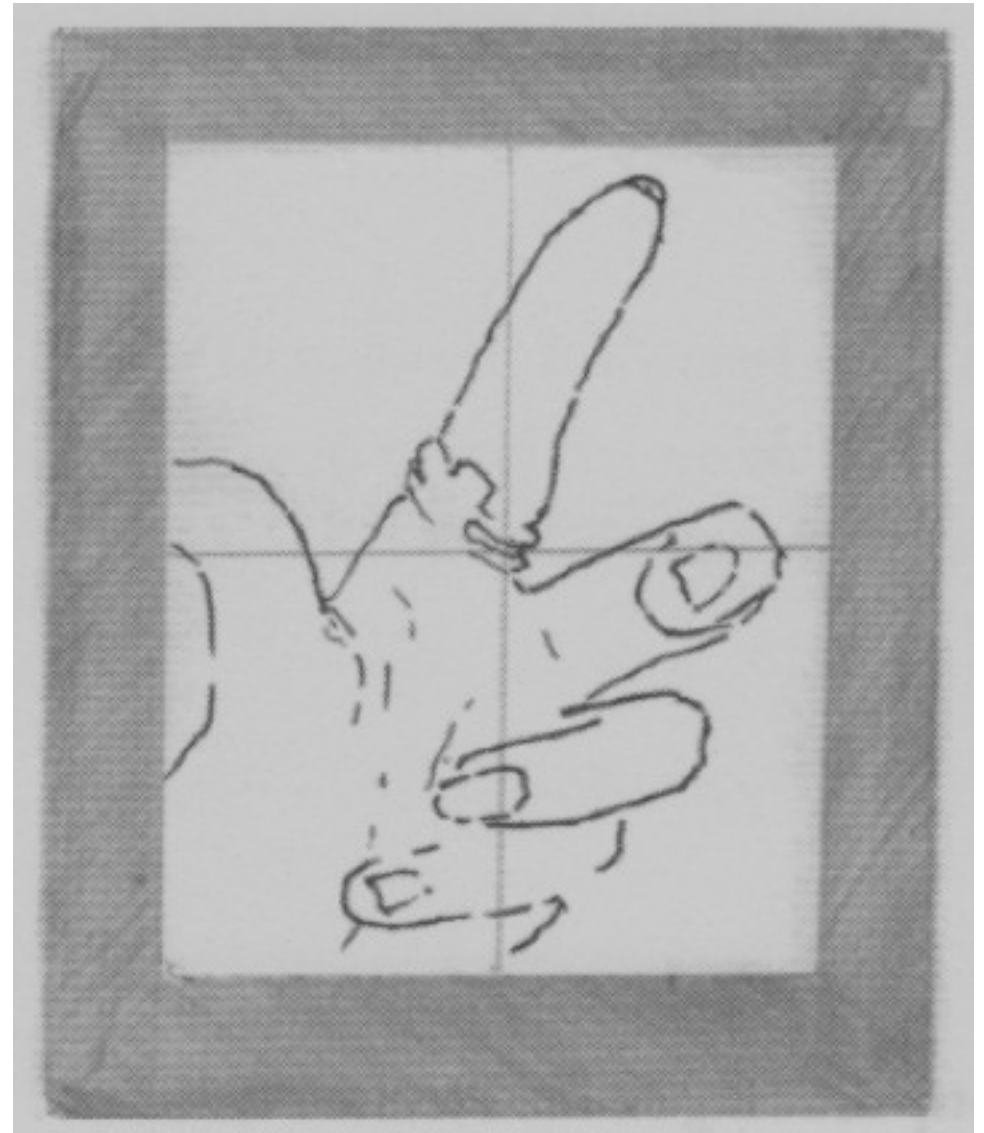
Pure Contour Drawing

- tape your paper to the table.
- without looking at your paper, you will draw the wrinkles in your hand
- go very, very slowly
- track with your eyes, let your pencil simply record
- Continue for 5 full minutes, no looking!



Hand Drawing

- Balance your viewfinder over your hand in an interesting pose
- Looking through ONE eye, trace the outline of your hand on the picture plane with an erasable (water-based) marker
- Keep your head still, and just copy the edges of your hand, without trying to “draw” your hand.
- Focus on precision, drawing the nails and major creases as well



Twenty Drawings Assignment

- Found Objects
- Stains and Splotches
- Reflections and Shadows
- Set Variations



Class 4: Listening to People



Surveys are Great

- quantify problem
- test assumptions
- fast
- cheap
- big samples are possible
- randomization is possible
- multiple variables
- casts a wide net
- confirmatory
- can also be exploratory



Surveys Suck

- hard to write well
- require testing
- recruiting needed
- self-selection
- sample bias is likely
 - motivation, boredom
- statements versus actions
- exploratory is always in *your* language
- hard to generate new ideas
- hard to follow up



Personal Interviews

- People are the most interesting object in the room
- notice them by talking to them
- ...and notice them by observing their behavior
- what do they say?
- how do they say it?
- how do they position themselves?
- what are they wearing?
- how are they put together?
- find out who the person is, what is important to them, who they'd like to be, what motivates them and what doesn't
- how they are different from your expectations?



Focus Groups



Class 5: Ethnography



What Is Ethnography?

- A way to get to know individuals and groups holistically in order to make better-informed, relevant decisions
- Ethnography is not *just* an interview
 - Should go beyond Q & A
 - Should generate a deeper understanding of the individual and their relationships to, e.g., products, services, media...
 - Should uncover not just *what*, but *why*
- Qualitative research methodology rooted in the discipline of anthropology



A Typical Ethnographic Session

- 1-3 hours (sometimes longer) with a person or group of people in their environment:
 - Home, work, shopping, doctor, travel...
- Observe and discuss behaviors, discuss meaning and usage of artifacts in environment, re-enact behaviors
- Open-ended conversation guided by both what is seen and heard
- Allows involvement of others



When Is An Ethno The Right Approach?

- Identifying opportunities for innovation
- Discovering the underlying meaning behind behaviors
- Bringing specific types of consumers to life
- Contextualizing a particular product, brand, or service within everyday reality
- Exploring sensitive topics



Contextualize: Real-Life Surroundings



- When you're in a person's everyday environment, it gives more opportunity to uncover context and history behind what they are telling you.



- Example: Two moms and their perspectives on summer education.

Class 6: Final Project

1. develop a Noticing Plan for a classmate around their desired question, topic or project
2. present to your classmate and revise together
3. execute the Noticing Plan given to you
4. create a summary of what you did, how it felt, how you pushed your boundaries, most effective parts, what you uncovered or discovered and what's next for you to notice



Mysteries

- An unplanned walk
- puzzles
- unsolved problems
- secrets
- noticing

