Visual Studies Seminar [CAMS 350]

Winter, 2011 • Professor Schott

Required texts:


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Tuesday, January 4:


Irvine, Martin. “Ways of Looking at All Things Visual.” [Handout.]

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Thursday, January 6:
＊ Visual presentation on the technological pre-history of photography: perspective, camera obscura, camera lucida. The first photographs.


・ “Bill Presented to the Chamber of Deputies, France.” France, June 15, 1839.


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Tuesday, January 11:


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Thursday, January 13:


Tuesday, January 18:
* Students are assigned individual readings, and will offer visual presentations on defining ideas in their assigned reading.

Pictorialism
• O.J. Rejalander: "An Apology for Art Photography." [1863]

Straight Photography
• Paul Strand: "Photography" and "Photography and the New God." [Seven Arts. 1917.] and [Broom. 1922.]
• Paul Strand: "The Art Motive in Photography." [1923]
• Edward Weston: "Daybooks, 1923-1930." [Excerpt]
• Edward Weston: "Photographic Art." [1942] [Excerpt]
• Ansel Adams: "A Personal Credo." [1943] [Excerpt]

Thursday, January 20:
* Students are assigned individual readings, and will offer visual presentations on defining ideas in their assigned reading.

Bauhaus/Modernism
• Franz Roh: "Mechanism and Expression." Photo-Eye. [1929]
• Laszlo Moholy-Nagy: "From Pigment to Light." [1936]
• Anton Giulio Bragaglia: Futurist Photodynamism. [1913] [Excerpt]

Midcentury Perspectives
• Henri Cartier-Bresson: Introduction to The Decisive Moment. [1952]
• Minor White: "Equivalence, A Perennial Trend." [1963]
**Tuesday, January 25:**

- Visual Presentation on Semiotics of the Image
  - Evreinova, Tatiana: "Introduction to Semiotics by David Chandler."

**Thursday, January 27:**

- Visual Presentation on the rhetoric of advertising and culture jamming/détournement.
  - Dery, Mark: "Culture Jamming: Hacking, Slashing and Sniping in the Empire of Signs." [Excerpt]
- Assignment: Semiotic analysis of an advertising image. [3 pages]

**Tuesday, February 1:**

- We explore this week essential ideas of cultural criticism, focusing our analysis on the contemporary classic, Robert Frank's *The Americans*. We review a variety of sources on Frank, particularly Sarah Greenough's *Looking In: Robert Frank's "The Americans."*

**Thursday, February 3:**

- Assignment: Each student will be assigned a range of five or six images from *The Americans*, from which they may pick two. Write a tight, polished one-page essay for each image applying the critical approaches of cultural criticism found in this week's readings. We will pair each essay and photograph in a PDF publication on the model of John Szarkowski's *Looking at Photographs.*
Tuesday, February 8:

* Visual presentation on the panoptic gaze, surveillance, & dataveillance.
  - Bentham, Jeremy. "Panopticon; or The Inspection-House." [Excerpt]


Thursday, February 10:

* Assignment for today: Student presentations applying the ideas of the panoptic gaze, surveillance, the image as a vehicle of social/institutional control, or the archive/database/social sorting to the following individuals, ideas or works:

  - Duchenne de Boulogne: The Mechanism of Human Facial Expression [1862]
  - 19th century Physiognomy/Phrenology [key ideas, images]
  - Malek Alloula: The Colonial Harem [cultural stereotypes/control]
  - Richard Avadon: The American West [typological catalogue]
  - Trevor Paglan [contemporary new media surveillance]
  - Steve Mann & sousveillance [new media artist practicing “reverse surveillance”]
  - Sophie Calle [photographer/conceptualist]


Tuesday, February 15:


**Thursday, February 17:**


**Tuesday, February 22:**


**Thursday, February 24:**


• Manovich, Lev. “Understanding Hybrid Media.”

• Gunning, Tom. “What’s the Point of an Index? Or Faking Photographs.”

Week 9: After Photography: the image in the era of social media.

Tuesday, March 1:

Thursday, March 3:

Tuesday, March 8:
Looking back. Final class.