

Practices of looking: Visual culture and contemporary life.

ANT3251 – 31300 – Spring 2013

Instructor: Craig Campbell

Class meets: Tues and Thurs 3:30 – 5pm

Class location: CLA 1.106

Office location: SAC 4.122

Office Hours: Wed. 11am-noon

Email: craig.campbell@mail.utexas.edu

T/A: Alex Dodson

email: alexdodson9@gmail.com

Office: SAC 5.122

Office Hours: Thursdays 2-3pm

In this course we will be developing methodological and analytical tools for the examination of what has been called visual culture. Visual Culture bridges Communication Studies, Media Studies, Anthropology, Art History and Cultural Studies (among other disciplines). According to one scholar visual culture experienced through mass media “is now the dominant form of culture which socializes us and provides materials for identity in terms of both social reproduction and change” (Kellner 1995). We will examine this claim and develop our own the framework for studying visual cultures. The primary text for this course is Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright’s book: *Practices of Looking* (second edition). They introduce their book by stating that the plethora of visual images today “are central to how we represent, make meaning, and communicate in the world around us” (Sturken and Cartwright 2001: 1). The first section of the course will follow *Practices of Looking* as a guide to critical approaches to the study of visual culture. The second section of the course will look at Susan Sontag’s book *Regarding the Pain of Others*. This section will focus on violence and its cultural representation, with special attention paid to cross-cultural images, visual motifs, and their interpretation. The last section of the course will explore the history and future of photography from an anthropological perspective through Christopher Pinney’s book *Anthropology and Photography*. Shorter articles from anthropologists and ethnographers will be also be used throughout the course as critical interjections from the tradition of visual anthropology.

Students in this class will develop skills associated with the critique and use of different forms of digital and analogue media. They will develop sensibilities for the examination of vision as a cultural practice.

Required readings

Available for purchase at the University Co-op

Pinney, Christopher. 2011. *Photography and Anthropology*.

Sontag, Susan. 2004. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. 1st ed. New York: Picador.

Sturken, Marita, and Lisa Cartwright. 2009. *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press.

Additional articles will be assigned and you will be given reasonable advance notice.

Grading scheme

20%	attendance and participation
25%	Reading quizzes
10%	Scrapbook #1
10%	Scrapbook #2
10%	Scrapbook #3
25%	Final Project (Due on Monday, May 6 th).

Twenty percent of your grade will be based on attendance and participation. We will have six quizzes based on the *Practices of Looking* textbook. These will be held in class and will last roughly thirty minutes each. You will have three assignments that will involve short essays and creative research. Your final assignment will be due on Monday, May 6th. Additional details concerning the assignments will be posted on the website.

Quizzes

1. Practices of Looking chapters 1-2
2. Practices of Looking chapters 3-4
3. Practices of Looking chapters 5-6
4. Practices of Looking chapters 7-8
5. Practices of Looking chapters 9-10

Practices of looking: Visual culture and contemporary life.

Course Plan – 16 weeks.

1. **Images, Power, and Politics**
 - a. January 15
 - b. January 17
 2. **Viewers Make Meaning**
 - a. January 22
 - b. January 24 – Quiz #1
 3. **Modernity**
 - a. January 29
 - b. January 31
 4. **Realism and Perspective**
 - a. February 5
 - b. February 7 – Quiz #2
 5. **Visual Technologies, Image Reproduction, and the Copy**
 - a. February 12
 - b. February 14
 6. **Media in Everyday Life**
 - a. February 19
 - b. February 21 – Quiz #3
 7. **Advertising, Consumer Cultures, and Desire**
 - a. February 26
 - b. February 28
 8. **Postmodernism, Indie Media, and Popular Culture**
 - a. March 5
 - b. March 7 – Quiz #4
- Spring break ~ no classes**
- c. ~~March 12~~
 - d. ~~March 14~~
9. **Scientific Looking, Looking at Science**
 - a. March 19
 - b. March 21
 10. **The Global Flow of Value and Culture**
 - a. March 26
 - b. March 28 – Quiz #5
 11. **Regarding the Pain of Others 1**
 - a. April 2
 - b. April 4
 12. **Regarding the Pain of Others 2**
 - a. April 9

b. April 11

13. **Photography and Anthropology 1**
 - a. April 16
 - b. April 18
14. **Photography and Anthropology 2**
 - a. April 23
 - b. April 25
15. **Photography and Anthropology 3**
 - a. April 30
 - b. May 2 – Last class

Notices

In order for you to get the most out of this class, please consider the following:

- Attend all scheduled classes and arrive on time. Late arrivals and early departures are very disruptive.
- If you have trouble hearing the lecture or media presentation because of distractions around you, quietly ask those responsible for the distraction to stop.

If the distraction continues, please let me know. It is often impossible for me to hear such things from my position in the classroom.
- Please let me know immediately if you have any problem that is preventing you from performing satisfactorily in this class.
- Use of a computer in class is limited to note taking. Texting and phone calls are not acceptable. If you must make a call or text please leave the classroom.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities.

471-6259
<http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability>