E58. 2420: Visual Culture Methods
Thursday 2:00 - 4:10 pm
Call number: 43292

Course co-ordinator: Nicholas Mirzoeff
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Office hours: Weds 12-2pm [email for appointment]

Visual culture is the comparative study of visualities. These visualities of course include visual images and visual media but also extend to visualizations of the social, the work of the imagination and their impact on questions of globalization. This seminar is a workshop-format, criticism-intensive, hands-on exploration of visual culture methods across media, time periods and critical methods, including new digital tools. In order to give coherence to the sequence of classes, it will center on a cross-cultural thematic exploration of the visualization of “race” in the Americas.

The class centers on the interface between the remaking of race as part of the global crisis and visual culture as both the product of globalization and a means of analyzing it. In the past five years, digital tools have transformed the possibilities open to visual culture scholars, making it possible to move in the direction of “show” and “tell,” or more exactly, to open a new dialogue between “writers” and “readers.”

This fluid moment offers exciting new possibilities for learning. This class therefore prioritizes process over product and sees participation and collaboration as critical tools in themselves. Please note: this is not a good class, therefore, for those who prefer to be passive, silent and/or fully directed by the instructor.

Class projects
The seminar will be divided into four groups who will each lead discussion in three meetings, with the emphasis on the “how” we might study a given problem, rather than aspiring to solve it in the time available. Class members should post questions and thoughts on the blog
before and after meetings. Group members will share with each other material forms (written, visual, digital) of their response prior to the seminar and two of these will then be shared with the instructor for further feedback. The group will also produce a final presentation assembling your sense of what has been learned that can be broken down into individual segments or preferably produced together.

Tools: the class blog is at: http://blogs.nyu.edu/blogs/nm45/vcmethods/  
The wiki is at https://wikis.nyu.edu/display/visualculture/Home  
You will need to use your NYU ID and/or email to access these tools.

>Meetings:

**The Politics of the Archive**

1. Week One: Sep. 9 Introductions

2. Week Two: Sep. 16

   *Visual Culture as Visual Culture*
   
   Visual thinking: archives, knowledge-creation, information, tools.
   
   Reading: Lev Manovich, “The Practice of Everyday Media Life” (2008), at www.manovich.net

   Please try and attend the presentation by Kathleen Fitzpatrick, “Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy.” @5pm 5th floor, 20 Cooper Square.

3. Week Three: Sep. 23

   *The Political and the Sensible*
   
   
   At http://www.csudh.edu/dearhabermas/interpassbk01.htm

**Re:making race in the Americas**

4. Week Four: Sep. 30

   *The Politics of Whiteness*
   
   Viewing: *Crash* (2005)


5. Week Five: October 7

   *Classification*
   

   Research the visual archive of slavery at http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/082_slave.html
6. **Week Six: October 14**  
*Genealogies of Katrina*  


7. **Week Seven October 21**  
*Radicalizing “race”*  
Port Huron Project: [http://www.marktribe.net/art-work/port-huron-project-1/](http://www.marktribe.net/art-work/port-huron-project-1/)  
Angela Davis recreation, Stokely Carmichael recreation: please follow the link to the Internet archive full-length versions.  

**The New (Racialized) Everyday**

8. **Week Eight: October 28:**  
*Postcolonial*  
Fred Moten, “The Case of Blackness,” *Criticism* vol. 50 no. 2 (2008)  
Case study: Yinka Shonibare  
“Dorian Gray,” and “The Scramble for Africa,” see [http://africa.si.edu/exhibits/shonibare/intro.html](http://africa.si.edu/exhibits/shonibare/intro.html)

9. **Week Nine: November 4**  
*Separation now and then*  

Compare and Contrast: Teddy Cruz, “Radicalizing the Local”; Explore the Redlining in the US archive: [http://salt.unc.edu/T-RACES/](http://salt.unc.edu/T-RACES/)

10. **Week Ten: November 11**  
*The Racialized Elections 2010*  
Assemble an archive of the current election campaign with regards to how “race” was constructed, (mis)represented, elided, displaced.

11. **Week Eleven: Nov. 18**
Race as technology.
Beth Coleman “Race as Technology” and Jennifer Gonzalez, “The Face and the
Public: Race, Secrecy and Digital Art Practice,” in Camera Obscura 70, vol. 24 no 1
(2009); Lisa Nakamura, “Digital Racial Formations and Networked Images of the
Wendy Chun, “Programmed Visions,”

Take a test at: Allooksame.com; Explore the work of the Mongrel collective:
mongrel.org.uk

12. Week 12: Nov 24: Thanksgiving

Where Next

13. Week 13: Dec 1

Presentation of projects: Groups A and B

14. Week 14: December 8:
Presentation of projects: Groups C and D

15. December 15: reading week