E58.2403 Topics in Visual Culture and Cultural Studies:

**Visuality and Globalization**

Nicholas Mirzoeff  
May 17 - June 25  
Monday/Wednesday 1:30 - 4:10 pm  
Call number: 40912 (4 credits)

Visual culture studies visuality as a key component of globalization. By visuality, we mean the visualization of history, composed of images, ideas and the imagination. This class introduces present-day visualized globalization in historical context and offers students ways to research visual culture in the intersections between globalizations past and present. Lectures and discussion trace the concept of visuality from its formation in slavery and development in the 19th century to its uses in imperial regimes and the neo-visuality of the present. We consider how visuality imagines history as war, visible only to the Hero, or Great Man, and consider alternatives proposed by abolitionists, indigenous people, and the labor movement. The second component of the class will be a series of visual media-based workshops from painting and photography to film and digital media, discussing strategies and approaches to research as well as offering students the opportunity to use primary and archival materials. Students will develop a project proposal that might be developed into a thesis, article or mixed-media project.

**Requirements**

As this is a workshop based class, attendance is important (30%). Students will make two informal presentations in the class (25%) and are expected to play an active role in discussion (15%). The final requirement is a 5-10 page (or equivalent in other media) proposal for a project based on the ideas worked on in the class (30%).

Presentations are informal and involve the raising of questions for discussion, highlighting specific passages in readings or viewings that need more exploration and linking to ideas already discussed in the class.

The “workshop” model means that we try things out, see how it looks and make adjustments as we go.

Please create an account at Dropbox.com where I will circulate PDFs.

**Class Schedule**

1. May 17: Introduction: What is visuality? When was globalization?
Part One: The Complexes of Visuality

2. May 19: Lecture/Discussion: The Complexes of Visuality:

Reading: Carlyle, On Heroes (1840) chapter 1 and browse http://www.online-literature.com/thomas-carlyle/heroes-and-hero-worship/

See also “The Present Time,” (1850) http://www.online-literature.com/thomas-carlyle/latter-day/1/

Mirzoeff, “On Visuality”

3. May 24 Slavery Workshop: Philip Curtin, from The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex; from CLR James, The Black Jacobins (1938); from David Scott, Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment (2004); Toussaint L’Ouverture, documents;

Visual image archive: Kara Walker

4. May 26: NO Class

5. June 2 Lecture/Discussion: The Imperial Complex: Pacific Modernity

Reading: Gary Okihiro, from Island Story (2009); from Bruce Cumings: Dominion from Sea to Sea (2009); Margaret Jolly, “Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representations of a Sea of Islands”

Visual research: visit and research a Pacific object and its cosmology in places like the Margaret Mead Hall of Pacific Peoples, American Museum of Natural History, or the Oceanic Art galleries of the Metropolitan Museum with collection database (http://www.metmuseum.org/Works_of_Art/collection_database/)


Viewing: Zulu (1964, dir. Cy Enflield)

7. June 9 Lecture/discussion: Anti-fascism and Military-Industrial Complexes

Reading: from The Military Industrial Complex; from Paul Edwards, The Closed World; from WEB Du Bois, Black Reconstruction (1935); Antonio Gramsci, from The Prison Notebooks

Viewing: Pan’s Labyrinth (2006)
Part Two: Globalization and Visuality in Crisis

8. June 14: Workshop: Crisis:

Readings: from Fisher, Capitalist Realism (2010), Gilles Deleuze, “Postscript on the Societies of Control” (1990)

Viewing: Children of Men

9. June 16 Workshop: Counterinsurgency:

Readings: “War”, special issue of PMLA (2009); FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency

Viewing: Battle of Algiers (1966, dir. Gillo Pontecorvo)

10. June 21 Workshop: Climate change.


Viewing: Trouble the Water (2008)

11. June 23: Presentation of projects