

Course Title: Culture, Gender, Media II: Visual Cultures (Schülting)

Faculty Name: Sabine Schülting

Institution: Freie Universität Berlin

Semester Taught: Winter 2008-2009

The new and expanding field of Visual Culture Studies questions the 'textual turn' in cultural studies and claims that the analysis of visual material requires different approaches than the analysis of texts and that "*spectatorship* (the look, the gaze, the glance, the practices of observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) may be as deep a problem as various forms of reading (decipherment, decoding, interpretation, etc.)", as W. J. T. Mitchell puts it in *Picture Theory* (1994). The object domain of Visual Culture Studies does not merely consist of images and the visual media, but of all things that can be seen. Visual Culture Studies also pays close attention to cultural practices of looking, to the power relations at the basis of these practices, as well as to the ways in which meaning and knowledge are constructed through acts of seeing.

In addition to giving a broad survey of different theoretical approaches to Visual Culture Studies, the seminar will look at a selection of case studies in more detail in order to enable students to analyse diverse phenomena of visual cultures. Our discussion of contemporary phenomena (the cultural predominance of visual media) will be complemented by a historical perspective which will attempt to trace the history of the visual and pay particular attention to 19th-century visual cultures.

Language: The course will be taught in English (level C1).

Texts: Relevant theoretical articles as well as visual material will be provided on a Blackboard site which will accompany the seminar.

Recommended introductory reading: W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*. Chicago 1994. Nicholas Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture*, London 1999.

Contact:

Institut für Englische Philologie, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, JK 29/227, 14195 Berlin

tel. 030-838 72346 (office) – 030-838 72354 (Ms Kuhlen, secretary)

email: sabine.schuelting@fu-berlin.de

Schedule

14 Oct 2008 Introduction

21 Oct 2008 Theories of the Image

text: Mieke Bal, "Visual Essentialism and the Object of Visual Culture"

28 Oct 2008 Spectatorship – Power – Knowledge

text: Marita Sturken/Lisa Cartwright, "Spectatorship, Power, and Knowledge".

- 4 Nov 2008** Gendering the Gaze
text: Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator"
- 11 Nov 2008** The (Post)Colonial Gaze
text: Homi Bhabha: "The Other Question: The Stereotype and Colonial Discourse"
- 18 Nov 2008** Watching the War
text: Nicolas Mirzoeff, "The Banality of Images"
- 25 Nov 2008** Visuality and Art: The Invention of Perspective
text: from Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting*
- 2 Dec 2008** Producing Knowledge: The Scientific Gaze
text: Michel Foucault, "Seeing and Knowing"
- 9 Dec 2008** Museums: The Visuality of Things
text: Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, "Exhibition and Interpretation: Museum Pedagogy and Cultural Change"
- 16 Dec 2008** Victorian Visual Cultures
text: from Renate Brosch (ed.), *Victorian Visual Culture*
- 6 Jan 2009** Tutorial: essays
- 13 Jan 2009** Visual Technologies: Photography – Film – New Media
text: Susan Sontag, "The Image-World"
- 20 Jan 2009** Text and Image
text: W. J. T. Mitchell, "Ekphrasis and the Other"
- 27 Jan 2009** Visual Culture and Cultural Memory: The Visual History Archive
- 3 Feb 2009** Visual Culture and Cultural Memory: The Visual History Archive
- 10 Feb 2009** Summary – Conclusions – Open Questions