

Visual Culture and Visual Methods, Aarhus University



Monday 24 – Thursday 27 September 2012

Media Studies, IT Campus, Aarhus, Nygaard Building 5335, room 091

Lecturers:

Sarah Pink, Professor, Social Science, Loughborough University, UK

Annette Markham, Internet researcher, US

Charles Traub, Department Chair of Photography, Video and Related Media at the School of Visual Art, Photographer, US

Mette Sandbye, Department Chair of Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, Copenhagen University, DK

Anne Marit Waade, Associate Professor, Aarhus University, DK

Visual culture encompasses more than the study of images or the use of visual methods. It takes as its premise the idea that the way people experience their reality goes well beyond the material or the textual. The perspective of visual culture turns our attention toward the centrality of visual experience in everyday life. This course considers the conceptual premises for visual sensemaking and focuses on methods of analysis and interpretation that challenge text-centric approaches. Particularly in contemporary mediatized contexts, seemingly endless streams of images, sounds, and fragments of information characterize and constitute social

life. How do we make sense of visual expressions or visual aspects of culture? How do we use visual methods or more broadly, how do we challenge methods that rely on (or were designed for) the analysis of texts? What does a 'visual culture' approach look like in practice? The goal of this course is to explore these questions theoretically, discuss case studies, and also practice methods through sets of short, guided exercises and assignments.

We invite Ph.D.-students from anthropology, media studies, visual studies, art history and museology who study visual practices in different contexts, e.g. media communication and online practices, everyday culture, art and museology, marketing, communication and teaching. Leading scholars within visual ethnography, online methods, visual studies, aesthetics and curative culture will take part in the course and give talks and lead exercises to improve the participants empirically and analytically approaches and ideas.

Course content:

The course will include presentations by the instructors on core concepts and debates underlying a visual culture approach, different ways of conducting research within this framework, and exemplar projects. Over the course of three days, students will participate in hands-on exercises and present specific methodological issues related to their research projects for feedback).

Purpose of the course:

Advantage: Lots of exposure to new ways of looking at visual culture; focus on practicing methods within a laboratory environment, where the participant gets lots of feedback from experts and colleagues. This is different from the norm and will be likely seen as very useful and productive in a practical way.

Cost: No course fee. Meals can be purchased on campus.

ECTS: 5

Max. no. of participants: 20

Deadline: June 15st 2012

Please submit an abstract in which you describe your Ph.D.-project and reflect your research questions and methodological challenges. See the website for further information.

Contact person; **Marianne Hoffmeister:** mho@adm.au.dk

Format:

The course is a "hands-on" exercise format, whereby students do many small exercises to practice different approaches and tools of exploring visual culture. The class is intended for PhD students at all stages in the research project. We ask students to bring materials to analyse. These materials can comprise any form of visual media or visual phenomenon. Students may choose to bring materials from ongoing thesis work, test out an idea for a future project, or materials from a "side project." Students need not have spent any time in analysing the materials they bring prior to this class. For the purposes of the class project, students will likely be able to work on only a short segment of these materials (e.g., a series of images, one portion of a website, a video clip, etc.). Students will also be assigned several pieces to read prior to the class. Short informal presentations will be required at the end of the class, to discuss issues and questions emerging from participation in the course.

Coursework: All participants are asked to read a compendium in advance. Students will be asked to submit a project description or short paper in advance, to provide background

information for the lecturers and other participants. All participants will be asked to read others' descriptions or papers in advance. More information will follow.

Organiser:

The course is organized by *Research School for Media, Communication and Journalism* in cooperation with *AIOR Program* at Aarhus University.

Contact person: Anne Marit Waade, Associate Professor, Media Studies, Department of Aesthetics and Communication Aarhus University, DK. E-mail: amwaade@hum.au.dk

Time Schedule (preliminary)

Monday 24 September:

- 1200 Lunch and introductions of participants and their research interests
1300 Course outline, discussion of process and outcomes
1400 Lecture: Introduction: Key concepts and debates: *AM Waade* and *A. Markham*
1530 Exercise 1: Taking a visual approach to research design
- Introduction to the exercise
 - Work in groups in the field
 - Return to discuss process with the other groups and regroup
 - More group activity in the field (as determined by exercise leader)
 - Return to meeting room to discuss outcomes and end exercise
- 1830 Dinner
1930 Informal discussion of research issues/problems by participants
2045 Break for the evening

Tuesday 25 September:

- 900 Lecture: *Sarah Pink*
1030 Exercise 2: Fieldwork and visual culture methods: Led by *Sarah Pink*
- Introduction to the exercise
 - Work in groups in the field
 - Return to discuss process with the other groups and regroup
 - More group activity in the field (as determined by exercise leader)
 - Return to meeting room to discuss outcomes and end exercise
- 1230 Lunch
1330 Lecture: *Mette Sandbye*
1500 Exercise 3: Learning how to see and analysing images: Led by *Mette Sandbye*
- Introduction to the exercise
 - Work in groups in the field
 - Return to discuss process with the other groups and regroup
 - More group activity in the field (as determined by exercise leader)
 - Return to meeting room to discuss outcomes and end exercise
- 1800 Group dinner
1900 Lecture and discussion: *Anne Marit Waade*
2030 Late night exercise at *Film City Aarhus*
2200 Break for the evening

Wednesday 26 September:

- 900 Lecture and discussion: *Annette Markham*
1015 Break
1030 Exercise 4: Layered visualization: A practice theory approach: Led by *Annette Markham*

- Introduction to the exercise
- Work in groups in the field
- Return to discuss process with the other groups and regroup
- More group activity in the field (as determined by exercise leader)
- Return to meeting room to discuss outcomes and end exercise

1230 Lunch

1330 Lecture and discussion: Charles Traub

1500 Exercise 5: led by Charles Traub

- Work in groups
- Return to discuss process with the other groups and regroup
- More group activity in the field (as determined by exercise leader)
- Return to meeting room to discuss outcomes and end exercise

1700 Presentation and discussion of participant research projects, focusing on methodological questions

19.00 Dinner

2045 Break for the evening

Thursday 27 September:

900 Presentation and discussion of participant research projects continues

1200 Lunch

1300 Farewell, the workshop ends.