CAST 202: Visible Bodies and the Politics of Sexuality  
Fall 2015  
MWF 2:30-3:20 // King 321

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Rice 112  
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*** This course fulfills a GSFS major requirement ***

This course examines the role of visual culture in producing varied and often-contested concepts of sexuality in American society. We will examine how mainstream culture universalizes certain experiences of gender and sexuality as normative or deviant, and how the politics of race, ethnicity, class, ability, and age have historically structured these categorical identifications. Further, we will analyze how marginalized groups have used visual representation to contest and subvert these hegemonic ideals. Instead of a survey, we will examine selected case studies from the media, medical, legal, and artistic fields to explore how differences in sexuality and embodiment are produced and/or contested through visual representations. We will study key theoretical concepts such as the gaze, spectacle, surveillance, and agency that will form the foundations for your own writing projects.

In addition to writing academic papers, the class will re-curate an exhibition currently on view at the Allen Memorial Art Museum (AMAM). The exhibition, “The Body: Looking in and Looking Out” addresses themes relevant to this class as they relate to embodiment and representation. Specifically, the exhibit invites consideration of questions like these: “How do we know what we know about our embodied selves and the world they occupy? How is our understanding mediated by the methods we employ to study and represent that embodiment? In what ways is the body itself an instrument of—or an impediment to—knowledge/insight? What parts of material existence elude, invite, or defy representation?” (Hyman, exhibition notes). Working with Omeka, a free, open source content management system for online digital collections, we will create a virtual exhibition that re-curates the show using analytical concepts studied in class. We will collectively decide the theme and title for the exhibition and then in small groups, you will write section and label texts, as well as design the online presentation of your section. The ultimate goal is to gain fluency in analytical principles, learn to write for a wide audience and experience some of the challenges and joys of curatorial work.

Course Objectives:  
• To utilize intersectional and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of visual culture;  
• To develop a historical perspective on the role of visual culture in shaping dominant and contested ideas about embodiment and identities;  
• To build a critical vocabulary of key terms in American visual cultural studies;
• To develop visual literacy skills and become conversant in the range of methods used in visual culture studies;
• To improve visual, reading, writing and communications skills.

Required Texts
Books are available at the Oberlin College Bookstore and on reserve at Mudd Library:


* Articles can be located on Blackboard (BB).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
*This course will use Blackboard for announcements, handouts, articles, and assignments.*

I - PARTICIPATION (10%)

Preparation & Attendance
An important component of the course will be class discussions; therefore regular attendance is required. Attendance in class, however, does not constitute participation. You must come to class having carefully read all material and be prepared to discuss, question, argue, and perhaps rethink issues raised in the readings.

Some of the topics we discuss in class are controversial or provoke strong personal feelings. It is therefore crucial that we maintain a climate of open and honest debate in the classroom. We all have much to learn from perspectives different from our own and therefore I ask class members to carefully think through your ideas and to listen and ask questions with respect. The goal in this class is not consensus but rather to consider a range of perspectives and to develop your own positions with greater insight.

_content Alert:_ please be aware that some issues discussed in this course may provoke difficult reactions for some. I cannot always anticipate those reactions, but will always respect any student’s need to take care of themselves in response to them.

II - ASSIGNMENTS
This WR course is designed to introduce students to some of the central methodological tools used in visual culture studies. Each of the three individual assignments addresses a different methodology while all ask you to work with theoretical concepts discussed in class. The exhibition labels may draw from any or all of these methodologies. See handouts on BB for more information.
Paper # 1: Visual Analysis (15%)
Visual analysis is the cornerstone of visual culture studies because it provides a crucial source of evidence for any argument about how representations produce meanings. For this assignment, select an image that is provocative or fascinates you in some way. The first part of the assignment is a 1-page description and the second part takes this description and turns it into an analysis.

Part 1, one-page, P/NP. Due September 16 by 2:30pm.
Part 2, 3-4 pages. Due September 25 by 2:30 pm.

Paper # 2: Contexts of Production, 4-6 pages (20%). Due October 16 by 2:30pm.
The contexts of production (who made the image, what technology was used, when it appeared, where it appeared, etc.) are critical elements in understanding the politics of meaning in visual culture. Historical, cultural, political, and/or institutional contexts provide insights into the intent of the producer(s), meanings generated at the time, and subsequent interpretations of an image. Examine the varied contexts of production ranging from the creator of the image to the venue in which it appeared to the social, political and/or cultural events, conditions, and beliefs systems that have some degree of influence on the image.

Paper # 3: Contexts of Reception, 5-7 pages (25%). Due December 19 by 4pm.
One of the key tenets of cultural studies is that texts do not have a single meaning. Instead, scholars argue that audiences interpret texts from varied perspectives, depending on one’s social location. This assignment asks you to examine the context of reception, that is, how audiences respond to an image, a text, or a performance from perspectives shaped by sexuality, gender, race, class and other factors. We will discuss in class different methods for studying audiences, ranging from surveys and interviews to observations and ethnography.

Curating an Exhibition (30%)
Tasks: participation in small working groups, object research, label writing.
Label drafts due November 4 by 2:30 pm
Final versions of labels due November 16 by 2:30 pm - absolutely no extensions

ALL ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES ARE FIRM DEADLINES
Written assignments should be word-processed, double-spaced, and use a standard font type and size (12 point Times New Roman or the equivalent). Include your name, the date, a title, and page numbers. Please be sure to proofread carefully for style and grammar and comply with the page limits. Use MLA Style for formatting in-text citations, endnotes or footnotes, and Works Cited. This style guide is available on Mudd Library’s website. An abbreviated version can be found in the “Resources” on BB. Papers that do not follow proper formatting instructions may receive a 1/3-grade deduction.

All written assignments must be submitted via Blackboard. You must upload your essays as .doc or .docx files (no Pages, .rtf or .pdf). If your paper is not a .doc or .docx file, it will be counted as late. It is your responsibility to make sure your essay posts correctly to Blackboard. After you attach the file, double-check to be sure you are able to download and open it in Word.
COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Etiquette
Please arrive a few minutes early so that we may start class on time. Turn off all cell phones. No texting. Laptops are great for consulting readings and note taking, but please do not use class time to check email, surf the web, or engage in social networking. If you abuse this privilege, I will no longer allow you to use electronic devices in class.

Tardiness and Attendance Policy
Tardiness: It is your commitment to this class and your classmates that you will be present and ready to begin work at the start of class. Repeated lateness (after three late arrivals) may result in significant deductions to your final grade in this course.
Attendance will be considered in determining your final grade. Students will be allowed two absences, excused or unexcused, over the course of the semester without affecting the final grade for the course. The third absence will result in a loss of two points from the participation grade. Students missing four or more classes can receive no higher than a B+ for the course. Students who miss five or more classes may not receive credit for the course. Under special circumstances (prolonged illness, death in the family, etc), exceptions can be arranged through consultation with the instructor and the Dean of Students’ office.

Late Papers and Extension Requests
Papers not turned in by the due date and time will be penalized and will not receive written comments. I will deduct 1/3 of a grade for each 24 hours an assignment is late (i.e., from B+ to B). Assignments submitted later than 1 week past the original deadline without a written extension will be given credit only at the instructor’s discretion and will generally earn no greater than a minimum-passing grade. Requests for extensions must be submitted by email at least 48 hours prior to the assignment due date and are generally available only for extraordinary circumstances. If you receive an extension, you must include a copy of my approval (including revised due date) with your assignment in order to receive on-time credit.

P/NP
If you are taking this course P/NP, you must fulfill all course obligations and complete all assignments in order to receive credit for the course.

Academic Incompletes at the end of the semester
Extensions on final projects require an approved incomplete from the Dean of Studies. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Honor Code
This course adheres to the policies of the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System, which applies to all work submitted for academic credit, whether it is a creative project, a quiz, an exam or a paper. All work must include the statement: “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment”
For papers, you must cite all written sources that you use, whether you quote directly or paraphrase. This is true whether you are using electronic or printed materials. Incomplete or improper citations are a form of plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with proper citation formats, or have questions please consult me, a reference librarian, a writing tutor and/or a style manual. Lack of familiarity with proper procedures is not a sufficient defense. See Oberlin Honor Code, http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code2.html

Students with Disabilities
If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this class, please let me know. Support is available through Student Academic Services. Please contact the Office of Disability Services for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

Accommodations for student athletes
If you are a member of an Oberlin college sports team and your athletic schedule will cause you to miss class at any point in the semester, please inform me immediately.
## CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M Aug. 31</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>W Sept 2</td>
<td>Embodied Identities</td>
<td>Reading: Tompkins, 1-52</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Sept 4</td>
<td>Modernity and Embodiment</td>
<td>Reading: Tompkins, 53-122</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Sept 7</td>
<td>Labor Day – No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>W Sept 9</td>
<td>Visit to AMAM</td>
<td>Meet in the museum sculpture court promptly at 2:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Sept 11</td>
<td>Visual Literacy – Discuss Exhibition</td>
<td>Reading: Practices, Chap. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>S Sept 13</td>
<td><strong>Short statement of your interests due to BB Exhibition page by noon</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M Sept 14</td>
<td>Advertising Normativity and Deviance</td>
<td>Reading: Tompkins, 123-187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Sept 16</td>
<td>Visit to AMAM</td>
<td>Meet in the museum sculpture court promptly at 2:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Sept 18</td>
<td>Practices of Looking</td>
<td>Reading: Practices, Chap. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>M Sept 21</td>
<td>Sexuality and Discourse</td>
<td>Reading: Foucault, 17-35, 77-114 (BB)</td>
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<td>W Sept 23</td>
<td>Yom Kippur – No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Sept 25</td>
<td>Exhibition Working Session</td>
<td><strong>Part 2 of Paper #1 due to BB by 2:30pm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M Sept 28</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Visuality</td>
<td>Reading: Somerville, “Queering the Color Line” (BB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>W Sept 30</td>
<td>Disability, Sexuality and Social Regulation</td>
<td>Reading: Elman, Intro &amp; Chap. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Oct 2</td>
<td>Exhibition Working Session</td>
<td><strong>Metadata for Exhibition Items Due to Google Spreadsheet</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M Oct 5</td>
<td>Omeka Training – Meet in Mudd 113</td>
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Guest Speaker: Megan Mitchell, Digital Initiatives Coordinator

W Oct 7  Disability, Sexuality and Social Regulation  
Reading: Elman, Chaps. 2 & 3

F Oct 9  Exhibition Working Session

S Oct 11  **Exhibition Collections Due to BB by noon**

M Oct 12  Disability, Sexuality and Social Regulation  
Reading: Elman, Chaps. 3-4

W Oct 14  Medicine, Bodies and Social Control  
Reading: Karkazis, “Fixing Sex” (BB)

F Oct 16  Medical Gazes  
Reading: Butler, “Doing Justice to Someone” (BB)  
**Paper #2 due to BB by 2:30pm**

M Oct 19-F Oct 23  ******* FALL BREAK *******

M Oct 26  Public Intimacy & Sexuality Subjectivity  
Reading: McGlotten, 1-61

W Oct 28  Public Intimacy & Sexuality Subjectivity  
Reading: McGlotten, 62-136

F Oct 30  Exhibition Working Session

M Nov 2  Queer-of-Color World Making  
Reading: Rodriguez, 1-68

W Nov 4  Queer Futurity and Embodied Sexualities  
Reading: Rodriguez, 69-138  
**Exhibition text drafts due to BB by 2:30pm**

F Nov 6  Affect, Subjectivity and Live Performance  
Reading: Rodriguez, 139-189

M Nov 9  Exhibition Working Session

W Nov 11  Reception Studies and Fan Culture  
Reading: Pearson, “Fandom in the Digital Era” (BB); Ng, “Reading the Romance of Fan Cultural Production” (BB)

F Nov 13  Reception Studies and Fan Culture  
Meyer, “‘She acts out in inappropriate ways’” (BB)

M Nov 16  **Exhibition Final Text and Pages Due to BB by 2:30 pm**

W Nov 18  Transnational Fan Cultures  
Reading: Oh, “Mediating Diasporas and Fandom”
F Nov 20  Diverse Masculinities and Spaces of Resistance  
Reading: Gao, “The Virtuosic Virtuality of Asian American YouTube Stars,”  
http://sfonline.barnard.edu/feminist-media-theory/the-virtuosic-virtuality-of-asian-american-youtube-stars/

M Nov 23  Global Flows: Performing in the Diaspora  
Reading: Practices, Chap. 10; Hobson, “Digital Whiteness, Primitive Blackness” (BB)

W Nov 25  Exhibition Presentation Practice  
**Final Paper Proposals**  
**Due by 5pm**

F Nov 27  Thanksgiving Break – No Class

M Nov 30  **Presentation for Museum Staff**

W Dec 2  Global Flows: Performing in the Diaspora  
Reading: Cepeda, “When Latina hips make/mark history” (BB)

F Dec 4  Beyond Exoticism  
Reading: Munoz, Disidentifications, 181-200 (BB)

M Dec 7  Corporeality and Internet Activism  
Reading: Daniels, “Rethinking Cyberfeminism(s)” (BB)

T Dec 8  **Tuesday Tea – Allen Art Museum, 2:30**  
Presentation by Prof. Kozol and CAST 202 students

W Dec 9  Visual Possibilities  
Reading: Flanagan and Looui, “Rethinking the F Word” (BB)

F Dec 11  Concluding Thoughts

**FINAL PROJECT DUE TO BB DECEMBER 19 NO LATER THAN 4 PM.**
ARTICLES ON BLACKBOARD

- Daniels, Jesse. “Rethinking Cyberfeminism(s): Race, Gender, and Embodiment.” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 7, 1/2 (Summer 2009): 101-124.

APPENDIX: MAXIMUM WORD COUNTS for EXHIBITION LABELS

Introductory Text – 300 words
Section header text – 200 words
Extended Text for single object (not including tombstone) – 200 words