

Visual Communication and Digital Culture, 2020 Autumn, Henrik and Ates

Quick overview of the course days, and readings – updated version, Sept. 9th.

+ Explanation of portfolio exam (below)

Course Day 1) Henrik & Ates

Thursday, September 10: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Introduction to the main ideas and theories of the course, the course program and literature.

Explanation of the portfolio exam.

Exercise in class: Read and discuss 2 earlier Portfolios.

Preparation/readings for next class session.

Course Day 2) Henrik

Thursday, September 17: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Visual Politics: Politicians appearing in the media. Political speeches and debates on film, TV, video/social media. The unnoticed, but pervasive and persuasive work of the camera and the media montage: how we come to see the politicians and politics today.

Exercise in class: Analysis of one or two video examples. Note and present your main points – thus sketching a portfolio chapter (to be completed/perfected later).

Readings: *The Rhetorical Power of the Camera*, Henrik Juel (2018)

<http://www.henrikjuel.dk/Essays/RhetoricalPowerCamera.pdf>

Image Bite Politics: News and the Visual Framing of Elections (Series in Political Psychology) (Kindle Locations 247-256). Maria Elizabeth Grabe & Erik Page Bucy.

(New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 344 pp.)(PDF, on Moodle)

Course Day 3) Henrik

Thursday, September 24: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Visual News: The development and concept of “News” and news value/criteria. New trends in “news” in the digital era.

Exercise in class (preparation for a portfolio chapter): Describe, analyze, and interpret an important news photo – from recent years. Present and discuss in class (also a sketch for a portfolio chapter).

Readings/Video: Watch the video (35 min.)with Kathleen Hall Jamieson: *Cyberwar: Coping with the Challenges Posed by Trolls and Hackers*, 2020: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S92RZ_enbG8

Course Day 4) Ates

Thursday, October 1, 12:15 – 16:00 room 40.3.25

Visual Media and Digital Creativity

Readings:

- Deuze, M. (2006). Participation, Remediation, Bricolage: Considering Principal Components of a Digital Culture, in *The Information Society*, Vol. 22, 2006 (Coming on Moodle)
- Van Dijck, J. (2013). YouTube: The Intimate Connection between Television and Video Sharing, in *Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*. (on Moodle)

Recommended readings:

- Manovich, L. (2008). "Art After Web 2.0.", in *The Art of Participation: 1950 to Now*, (eds.) Frieling, G., Groys, B., Atkins, R. and Manovich, L. (on Moodle).
- Burgess, J. (2009). How YouTube Matters, in *YouTube: Online Video and Participatory Culture*, (eds.) Burgess, J. and Green, J., 2009. (on Moodle)

For Portfolio: (prepare before class): [Making Sense of YouTube] What can YouTube tell us about the key characteristics of our digital culture? Does YouTube point to a radical shift from traditional (mass) media or does it only reinforce the existing power relations between producers and audiences? Find an authentic YouTube channel/personality with more than 1 million followers (or one that you would call an "influencer") and prepare a short description of the reasons for their so-called "influence". What makes them successful on this communication platform? Does this channel show any of the characteristics mentioned in Mark Deuze's article? Try focusing on not only the quality of their audio-visual presentation, but also their interaction and engagement with their audience. In class, we will see if we can come up with meaningful problem formulations about this phenomenon by using YouTube as our research field.

Course Day 5) Henrik

Thursday, October 8: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Visual Nature: About environment, climate change, ecology, wild-life and animal ethics and ideology on film/tv/social media.

Exercise in class: (for the portfolio – to be decided)

Readings/Video: *Seeing Culture in Watching Nature on the Screen* Henrik Juel (2006):

<http://www.henrikjuel.dk/Essays/WatchingNature.pdf>

Watch the TED Talk video (25 min.) with Al Gore, 2016:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7E1v24DlIk>

Course Day 6) Ates

Thursday, October 22, 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Visual Methodologies and Digital Culture

Readings:

- Rose, G. (2016). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*. Sage. (Chapter 1: Researching with Visual Materials) (on Moodle)
- Manovich, L. (2017). *Instagram and Contemporary Image, Online*. (Read Preface + Introduction: Introduction: Instagram Platform as a Medium pp. 4- 23) (The full book can be downloaded un CC license here: <http://manovich.net/index.php/projects/instagram-and-contemporary-image>)

For Portfolio (prepare before class): Look up for the word "hygge" on Instagram and generate 5-6 empirical categories based on which these social media posts may be analysed. In other words: If you were to answer the question "What does hygge mean to Instagram users?", what would your

top five answers be? There is not a minimum number of images to collect for your analysis, but ideally you should stop when you stop producing new and original categories.

Course Day 7) Ates

Monday, October 26: 8:15 – 12:00 in room 40.3.25

Social Ecosystems of Visual Media

Readings:

- Jensen, K. B., & Helles, R. (2017). Speaking into the system: Social media and many-to-one communication. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(1), 16-25. (on Moodle)
- Green J. and Jenkins, H. (2011). Spreadable media: How audiences create value and meaning in a networked economy, in *The Handbook of Media Audiences*. (on Moodle)
- Shifman, L. (2012). An anatomy of a YouTube meme. *New media & society*, 14(2), 187-203

Recommended readings:

- Burgess, J. (2009). How YouTube Matters, in *YouTube: Online Video and Participatory Culture*, (eds.) Burgess, J. and Green, J., 2009. (on Moodle)

For Portfolio (prepare before class): Find an online meme (image or video) and track its viral spread. You should document and observe: How many different versions of this meme exist? What was the original content of this meme? What kinds of different meanings are attached to the meme as it gets reproduced? Then, generate *one communication scenario* in which the use of this meme can be meaningful to people communicating with each other.

Course Day 8) Henrik

Thursday, October 29: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Visual Personality and Ideology: Entertainment, sport, cultural events and fashion. The visualization of social relations, power and hegemony, historically and in modern media.

Exercise in class: To be decided

Readings: *The Presentation of Self in the Age of Social Media: Distinguishing Performances and Exhibitions Online*, 2010, Bernie Hogan (on Moodle).

Communicative Functions – a phenomenological approach to the analysis of media content (2013)

Henrik Juel, <http://www.henrikjuel.dk/Essays/CommunicativeFunctions.pdf>

Course Day 9) Ates

Monday, November 2: 8:15 – 12:00 in room 40.3.25

Audiences, Fans and Participatory Culture

Readings:

- Jenkins, H. (2006). Interactive Audiences? The “Collective Intelligence” of Media Fans, in *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*, NYU Press
- Hills, M. (2015). The expertise of digital fandom as community of practice: Exploring the narrative universe of Doctor Who, *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, Vol. 21(3) 360–374

Recommended Readings (useful for the portfolio assignment):

- Deuze, M. (2007). Convergence culture in the creative industries. *International journal of cultural studies*, 10(2), 243-263. (on Moodle)
- Klastrup, L., & Tosca, S. (2014). Game of Thrones: Transmedial Worlds, Fandom, and Social Gaming. In M-L. Ryan, & J-N. Thon (Eds.), *Storyworlds across Media: Toward a Media-Conscious Narratology* (Chapter 13, pp. 295-314). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. (on Moodle)

For Portfolio (prepare before class): Choose a visual fandom phenomenon and observe the extent to which its fan communities spread on the internet (fx. tv shows, films or entertainment, gaming or e-sports, politics, music etc). Which social media platforms bring their fans together? What do the fans do/create/share on these platforms? Are they provided by the official producers (top-down) or by grassroots efforts of the fans (bottom-up)? How do the fans' communications differ from one platform to another? Please document your findings so you can expand your theoretical arguments in your final portfolio.

Course Day 10) Henrik

Thursday, November 5: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Visual Arguments and Persuasion

Exercise in class:...

Readings: *Types of Visual Arguments*, By Ioana Grance, 2017.

https://www.academia.edu/35574206/Types_of_Visual_Arguments?email_work_card=view-paper

(also on Moodle)

The affordances and constraints of situation and genre: Visual and multimodal rhetoric in unusual traffic signs (2018) Charles Forceville & Jens F. Kjeldsen

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325727169_The_affordances_and_constraints_of_situation_and_genre_Visual_and_multimodal_rhetoric_in_unusual_traffic_signs

(also on Moodle)

Course Day 11) Ates

Monday, November 9: 8:15 – 12:00 in room 40.3.25

New Modalities, Senses and Relationships: The Future of Visual Media?

Readings:

- Ryan, M.L. (2007). Narrative and Digitality: Learning to Think with the Medium, in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, eds. James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz, Blackwell Publishing Ltd. (on Moodle)
- Scolari, C.A. (2009). Mapping conversations about new media: the theoretical field of digital communication, *New Media & Society*, 11:943.

Recommended Readings:

- Madary M. & Metzinger T.K. (2016). Real Virtuality: A Code of Ethical Conduct. Recommendations for Good Scientific Practice and the Consumers of VR-Technology, *Frontiers in Robotics and AI*, Vol.3

- Kalkofen, D., Sandor, C., White, S., & Schmalstieg, D. (2011). Visualization techniques for augmented reality. In Handbook of Augmented Reality (pp. 65-98). Springer New York. (on Moodle)

For Portfolio (prepare before class): Find one case of technological phenomena which leads you to envision the future of visual communication and digital culture. This example could be in the form of a scientific discovery or innovation, a communication product, a surveillance or privacy technology, a new system for participatory democracy or political protest, an interactive narrative platform for visual storytelling or news broadcasting, an artistic production etc. You should describe why and how this case leads you to think about a specific type of media development for the next 10+ years, and what kind of a future does it imply for the mediated society. What kinds of ethical, social, cultural, economic or political problems may arise as a result of this vision?

Course Day 12) Ates & Henrik

Thursday, November 12: 12:15 – 16:00 in room 40.3.25

Resumé of course, presentation by students of draft portfolios. Evaluation of the course.

Portfolio requirements:

Form of Examination

Individual portfolio consisting of written documents and other types of products.

The portfolio consists of 5-8 products, which are prepared in whole or in part during the course. The products can e.g. be analytical exercises, notes for presentations, feedback, reflections, written assignments, wiki contributions, social media and visual productions. The portfolio should demonstrate the individual's competences to analyze different examples of visual communication and digital culture and to generate theoretical and/or methodological reflections about the course themes and relevant literature. The portfolio should also include a concluding section where the various products are related to each other in a larger perspective outlining the student's assessment of visual communication and digital culture as an academic field.

We recommend that the portfolio's written products have a total range of 19.200 - 36.000 characters including spaces (8 - 15 normal pages) (official limits: 4.800 – 36.000).

The scope requirements include any front page, table of contents, bibliography, figures and other illustrations, but excluding any attachments.

The portfolio is handed in together (uploaded on exam.ruc.dk). Possible, continuous part delivery to the course teachers for feedback does not replace the total delivery.

The delivery date is published on study.ruc.dk.

An overall assessment of the portfolio is made by consideration of several criteria, including:

1. **Content** (variety, aptness, completeness and relevance of the portfolio products)
2. **Structure** (organization of sections, titles, introduction, main points, and conclusion)

3. **Theoretical and/or Methodological Rigor** (use of relevant analytical concepts, methods, theory, and literature)
4. **Critical Reflection** (self-assessment and conclusions about the learning outcomes)

The assignment must document that the student has a secure command of the English written language, including grammar and linguistic correctness.

Assessment: 7-step scale.