

## **New Approaches in Visual Art and Culture**

Contemporary Arts 823

Section: G100

Term: 2013 Fall

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Discussion Topics: For art history, which is traditionally concerned with the interpretation of art objects, the artists who make them and the interests of patrons, the interdisciplinary field of visual culture has opened up new ways of thinking about images of all kinds. In an era in which the production and dissemination of images is growing exponentially, it has never been more necessary to pay attention to how images work and what they do. Since the end of the 20th century, literature on visual culture has burgeoned in art history, cultural studies, critical theory, philosophy and anthropology, and recently it has taken on a performative turn.

For W.J.T. Mitchell, pictures have lives and loves. Instead of seeing images as inert objects that convey meaning, he urges us to see them as animated beings with desires, needs, appetites, demands, and drives of their own. Engaging with the social lives of images allows for a reconsideration of concepts such as agency, migration, appropriation, resistance, and publics. Scholarship on art objects has tended to locate intentionality in the artist or patron; instead this seminar seeks to bring forward the intentions in the image; how, for example, formal material characteristics, modes of circulation and use, visual vocabularies, referentiality and repetition solicit certain kinds of responses; how, in other words, images prompt us to act.

Grading: TBA

Required Texts: on reserve at Belzberg Library or available online.

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies:

Prerequisite/Corequisite:

Notes:

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