Ethnic Studies 189
Visual Regimes of Punishment

Winter 2011
Wednesday 5:00-7:50pm
Office Hours Wednesday 1:00-3:00pm

This course investigates the presence of visuality and the visual in contemporary culture and their sustained involvement in the long arc of modernity and the production of the racial subject. It will examine this presence on the terrains of spatialized domination that include colonialism, occupation, configurations of policing and imprisonment, and the topographies of population management. The course will map the modes of visuality that have shaped visual culture and its relationship to race and the practice of racial punishment. We will consider the visual’s resistance to disciplinary boundaries; its role in debates about the categories of the human, the non-human and now the post-human; its presence in global inquiry and histories of security and violence; and finally its vexed relation to truth claims and the knowledge/power relation.

The goal will be to consider how a complex historicization of these topics and disciplinary engagements can contribute to a more nuanced and powerful account of visual theories and practices. The readings will pursue these questions by examining several topics: pre-modern and early modern visuality, science and spectacle, the role of visual representation in slavery and empire, the ethics of the visual, the visual economies at work in global security and population management, and the tyranny of vision.

Requirements and Grading

Class Assignments and Participation: 20%
Project Presentation: 20%
Mid-Term: 30%
Final 30%

Learning Outcomes
Students who successfully complete the course will be able to demonstrate:

- advanced skills in the application of critical and interpretive vocabularies
- self-reflexivity as a research practitioner
- knowledge of a range of specific critical vocabularies, debates and concerns focused on visual communication, visual culture, media, cultural studies and ethnic studies.

This syllabus is subject to change during the quarter.
SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week One


Week Two


Week Three


Week Four


This syllabus is subject to change during the quarter.
Week Five


Week Six

Brigid Doherty, We are All Neurasthenics” or, The Trauma of Dada Montage” Critical Inquiry 24 (Autumn 1997)


Week Seven


Week Eight


Week Nine


Week Ten


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