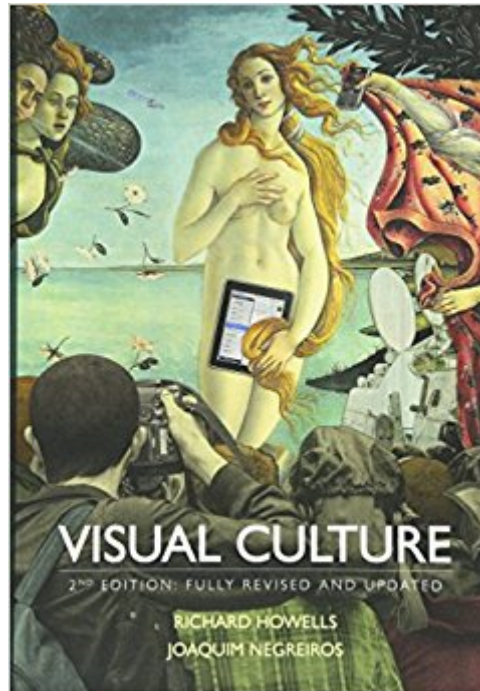




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Visual Culture



Synopsis

This is a revised, expanded, and updated edition of the highly successful Visual Culture. Like its predecessor, this new version is about visual literacy, exploring how meaning is both made and transmitted in an increasingly visual world. It is designed to introduce students and other interested readers to the analysis of all kinds of visual text, whether drawings, paintings, photographs, films, advertisements, television or new media forms. The book is illustrated with examples that range from medieval painting to contemporary advertising images, and is written in a lively and engaging style. The first part of the book takes the reader through differing theoretical approaches to visual analysis, and includes chapters on iconology, form, art history, ideology, semiotics and hermeneutics. The second part shifts from a theoretical to a medium-based approach and comprises chapters on fine art, photography, film, television and new media. These chapters are connected by an underlying theme about the complex relationship between visual culture and reality. New for the second edition are ten more theoretically advanced Key Debate sections, which conclude each chapter by provoking readers to set off and think for themselves. Prominent among the new provocateurs are Kant, Baudrillard, Althusser, Deleuze, Benjamin, and Foucault. New examples and illustrations have also been added, together with updated suggestions for further reading. The book draws together seemingly diverse approaches, while ultimately arguing for a polysemic approach to visual analysis. Building on the success of the first edition, this new edition continues to provide an ideal introduction for students taking courses in visual culture and communications in a wide range of disciplines, including media and cultural studies, sociology, art and design.

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Customer Reviews

"This second edition is a comprehensive, sophisticated, eminently readable analysis of what everyone sees but almost no one notices." John Stilgoe, Harvard University "Generous, wide-ranging, always helpful and clear, this second edition of Richard Howells' Visual Culture is a succinct and versatile guide to the different languages that images speak. For the literature student in particular, this is, I believe, the best general introduction available to the key ideas, the key questions and the key texts of visual culture." John Harvey, University of Cambridge "As a guide for the study of visual culture, this volume stands out for breadth, accessibility, and usefulness. The authors examine writers who have changed the way we think and see, the nature and experience of visual media, and leading conceptual tools on which the study of visual culture has relied. The result is a highly readable, deeply informed and richly illuminating book." David Morgan, Duke University "Visual Culture ranges across diverse disciplines and entertains multiple-sometimes opposing-perspectives on its subject. It provides a comprehensive introduction to media theory and a practical grounding in the analysis of multiple media, from fine arts to television, and from photography to new media." Paul K Eiss, Director of the Center for the Arts in Society, Carnegie Mellon University

This book accomplishes exactly what the authors state in the introduction. It is an accessible and synoptic overview of many different theories, but at the same time doesn't sacrifice in depth and intellectual content. Even though it is clearly divided between different fields of theory and different media, the authors successfully manage to weave them together and offer really lucid accounts of the comparisons and relationships between them. The key debate sections also offer short but extremely useful fields of discussion that depart from the subject of each chapter. Personally, I'm really impressed at how the large breadth of content is managed to be presented as a coherent whole (accomplished with an enjoyable language free of what could be considered "academic jargon"). I am new (self-taught) to visual and art studies, and this book provided me with a breath of fresh air after struggling with some of the texts that are mentioned and to which I can now return with more basic solid foundations. And, another (big) plus; it is really fun to read. The only minor complaint I have is a couple of spelling mistakes I detected: -Damien Hirst is spelled as "Damien Hurst" (only appears once throughout the book) -The book "The Reconfigured Eye" is attributed to

W.J.T Mitchell, while the author is actually William J. Mitchell. Small mistake, but could be a problem if the real Mitchell found out ;)

This book is definitely hard to follow, and is a technically challenging book. It does however seem thorough and digs deeply into the content they are attempting to teach. The authors simply have a hard time wrapping it all together, and the pacing seems quite off. Good for art majors in advanced stages of their development, however I wouldn't attempt this at a high school or an early college level without great difficulty.

I am an art student. I am not reading this book for a class but for a better understanding of our visual culture today. This book is a wonderful read and very enlightening! What is so wonderful is that the author has a gift of explaining abstract ideas and putting them into a concrete world. I have a much better understanding of what others are talking about and seeing and can begin to "see" for myself!

An excellent read interpreting and explaining those contributors who have made a difference to our visual culture. Impress your lecturers with your ability to talk 'Art'

Speaking as a lecturer of Visual Media, this book is indispensable. It is the perfect combination of theory (mostly Continental) and nuts-and-bolts formalist analysis of everything from Cézanne to Jailhouse Rock. And yet, the author never gets so far up his own arse that you can't follow the logic. Looking forward to making this my required classroom text book next year...

Perfect quality, the correct book advertised. Such a terrible book though, so dull.

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