

Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture

By Marita Sturken, Lisa Cartwright

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Visual culture is central to how we communicate. Our lives are dominated by images and by visual technologies that allow for the local and global circulation of ideas, information, and politics. In this increasingly visual world, how can we best decipher and understand the many ways that our everyday lives are organized around looking practices and the many images we encounter each day? Now in a new edition, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* provides a comprehensive and engaging overview of how we understand a wide array of visual media and how we use images to express ourselves, to communicate, to play, and to learn. Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright--two leading scholars in the emergent and dynamic field of visual culture and communication--examine the diverse range of approaches to visual analysis and lead students through key theories and concepts.

Using clear, accessible language, vivid examples, and more than 250 full-color illustrations, the authors both explain and apply theory as they discuss how we see paintings, prints, photographs, film, television, video, advertisements, the news, the Internet, digital media, and visualization techniques in medicine and science. This truly interdisciplinary text bridges art history, film, media, and cultural studies to investigate how images carry meaning within and between different cultural arenas in everyday life, from art and commerce to science and the law. Sturken and Cartwright analyze images in relation to a wide spectrum of cultural and representational issues (desire, power, the gaze, bodies, sexuality, and ethnicity) and methodologies (semiotics, Marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, and postcolonial theory).

Thoroughly updated to incorporate cutting-edge theoretical research, the second edition examines the following new topics: the surge of new media technologies; the impact of globalization on the flow of information and media form and content; and how nationalism and security concerns have changed our looking practices in the aftermath of 9/11. Challenging yet accessible, *Practices of Looking* is ideal for courses across a range of disciplines, including media and film studies, communications, art history, and photography.

Beautifully designed and now in a larger format and in full color throughout, *Practices of Looking* is an invaluable guide to understanding the complexities, contradictions, and pleasures of the visual world.

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Editorial Review

Review
This is that rarest of textbooks clear enough for undergraduates and challenging enough to use with graduate students. Simply the best introduction we have to the most important issues in thinking about the visual from an interdisciplinary perspective. This textbook is a comprehensive survey of theoretical, historical, social, and legal issues in visual culture. Well written and well argued, this textbook is suited for an introductory or a more advanced undergraduate course in visual culture or communication... I've used Practices of Looking before and my students loved it. Marina Levina, University of California, Berkeley Practices of Looking makes the subject matter and critical apparatus of visual culture studies accessible and clear. As a text, it communicates the complex ideas that animate the field without falling into jargon and murky writing. This is a book that respects the intelligence of its audience, which ranges from undergraduates just discovering visual culture to graduate students refining their own approaches to the visual universe. Bernard Herman, University of Delaware

About the Author

Marita Sturken is Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University.

Lisa Cartwright is Professor of Communication and Science Studies at the University of California at San Diego.

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