Visuality, culture, methods: exploring visual cultures, when you can't really trust your eyes

Tallinn, May , 2024

Organizers	Tallinn University, Estonia Utrecht University, The Netherlands Tampere University, Finland Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Austria The University of Oxford, UK This PhD school represents the fourth edition of the international *Visuality, Culture, Method PhD Summer School*, launched in 2012 by Annette Markham. This year's edition is a joint collaboration with the international Trust and Visuality in Everyday Digital Practice research project (TRAVIS, supported by the Estonian Research Council, Academy of Finland, Austrian Science Fund, FWF, Economic and Social Research Council under CHANSE ERA-NET Co-fund programme, which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under Grant Agreement no 101004509).
Lecturers:	Confirmed lecturers include: **Katrin Tiidenberg** Professor of Participatory Culture Tallinn University **Annette Markham,** Professor of Media Literacy and Public Engagement Utrecht University **Maria Schreiber,** Postdoctoral Researcher Paris Lodron University of Salzburg **Asko Lehmuskallio** Professor of Visual Studies Tampere University **Gillian Rose,** Professor of Human Geography University of Oxford, UK

ECTS:	3 ECTS,
Time/Date:	May 6-10, 2024 (begins 10:30 a.m. Monday and ends 3:00 p.m. Friday)
Place:	Tallinn University Tallinn Estonia
Deadline for expression of interest:	Submit expression of interest: before end of day December 15 , 2023 Notice of acceptance: January 5, 2024 Registration: January 5 - March 1, 2024 To be considered, participants should submit all three elements of the expression of interest, using THIS FORM 1) A statement of personal interest in the course (400 word maximum); 2) project description (500 words maximum), and 3) a specific description and list of methodological questions and concerns (400 words maximum). Up to 24 applicants will be accepted. Seats will be granted on a rolling basis after the first deadline of Dec 15, 2023. [in case seats remain, applications will be accepted until March 30, 2024]. For organizational questions about the course, please contact patience.gombe@tlu.ee
Practicalities	The course fee is 295 Euro (a limited number of needs-based fee waivers are available. The form will ask for details if you request a fee waiver. This fee covers two dinners, four lunches, and ample coffee and tea breaks during the sessions. Accommodation is not included. Participants are required to self-organize.
Max. no. of participants:	24

Description:

How do we study visual cultures, phenomena and visuality at this particular juncture, when everyday life continues to be platformed and networked, online experiences are increasingly multimodal and visual, and generative AI adds more complexity to already-sophisticated photo and video editing capabilities? As the world shifts further away from the supposed sanctity of visual realism, or the idea that photos are proof of real events, how might visual studies also shift? What happens to questions of information, legitimacy, trust, authenticity and intimacy?

The course considers the conceptual premises for visual and multimodal sensemaking in digitally saturated or platform-based contexts and focuses on approaches for analysis and interpretation that challenge text-centric approaches. Participants are encouraged to approach research both creatively and pragmatically. World class visual studies and methodology experts illustrate what that might look like in practice.

The course focuses on creative, yet pragmatic approaches to analysis and interpretation of visual cultures and multimodal practices. Together, we will examine, discuss, and experiment with qualitative techniques and reflexive interpretive epistemologies with a particular focus on enactments and experiences of trust with and within the visual. Following ignite lectures and examples from the instructors, teams are assembled to explore a particular context. In addition, participants will have space to share key concerns around their own research projects and receive direct feedback from experts as well as their peers. At the end of the week, teams will showcase their work.

The course is suitable for any level of researcher, particularly targeting PhD candidates and postdocs (under special circumstances, advanced masters level students will be considered). It is particularly suitable for researchers in the fields of anthropology, sociology, media studies, visual studies, cultural studies, communication studies, art history, information studies, digital or participatory design, or related disciplines who study visual practices and cultures in different contexts. Leading scholars within visual ethnography, interpretive methods, digital culture, visual studies, and geography will take part in the course by giving talks, offering feedback for participants, and leading exercises to improve the participants' empirical and analytical approaches and ideas.

Course content:

The course will include presentations by the instructors on core concepts and debates underlying a visual culture approach, different ways of conducting research within this framework, and exemplar projects. Prior to the in-person meetings, participants will engage in self-guided learning through readings and assignments. Participants will participate in hands-on exercises and present specific methodological issues related to their research projects for feedback.

A part of the course focuses on how trust and authenticity are practices in online social contexts. More information and a comprehensive reading list will be provided in upcoming months.

Purpose of the course:
Significant exposure to new ways of looking at visual culture; focus on playing with and practicing methods, useful and direct feedback from experts and peers. An opportunity to get feedback, input and inspiration for one's own research project.

Format:
The course offers talks, conceptual discussions, elaboration of interpretive and reflexive modes of study and "hands-on" exercises both individually and in teams. The topics are useful for any stage of the research project, but primarily targeted at early stage project design.