Visual Representation and Marginality:
Opening New Conversations

Barbie Zelizer to headline ICA pre-conference on 21 May, 2019, at the Gold Coast, Australia. Extended abstracts due by 1 Feb., 2020, for presentation consideration.

Physical traces of visual representation have existed since the dawn of human civilization and, along with their more recent digital counterparts, continue to play integral roles in information dissemination, entertainment, beautification, education, and shared memory. In 2020, ICA travels to the antipodes in Australia, home of the world's oldest continuous civilization, and, in doing so, presents a unique opportunity to understand how visual representation at the margins has been understood by different groups, for different purposes, and in different ways over time.

The visual representation of marginalized groups has tended to be shaped by dominant groups. Because images are so powerful, memorable and emotionally charged, such representations have historically worked to perpetuate hierarchies, stereotypes and barriers to full participation in the public sphere. De-marginalizing communities, therefore, requires that we investigate the role of visual communication in oppression and liberation. Before pathways can be opened for improved communication, it is necessary to understand the obstacles of the past. In the digital age, participation in the visual public sphere is as critical as ever to the human condition.

The notions of visuality and visibility, too, and the interplay between them, are other key considerations this pre-conference hopes to encourage discussion on, as the struggle for visibility often involves images politics and is inherently connected to marginality, counter-hegemony, resistance, and advocacy. These phenomena can take visual form as images but can also transcend them and manifest more broadly as material culture, performativity, bodily expressions of identity, etc.

As such, we invite extended abstracts (no more than 1,000) words on, but not limited to, the following topics:
    1. **Marginalized communities and identities** (including Indigenous communities, migrants and refugees, LGBTQ and gender-diverse people, disabled individuals, religious minorities, people of color, and first-generation groups, etc.)
    2. **Marginalized practices, places, and objects** (online dating, hookup culture, non-traditional parenting, non-traditional relationships, de-colonizing processes, non-Western practices, etc.)
    3. **Key challenges in and ways of conceptualizing "the visual" in research projects and the potentials and limitations of using participatory/collaborative (visual) research methods (community-based research, citizen science) in studying marginality**

We have partnered with the Visual Communication Quarterly journal's editorial team to dedicate a special issue of the journal to this pre-conference's theme of "Visual Representation and Marginality" and the top submissions will be eligible for inclusion in this special issue, guest edited by VCS Division Vice Chair Dr. Mary Angela Bock (University of Texas).

TO PARTICIPATE: Submit an extended abstract of no more than 1,000 words via form at bit.ly/ICA2020 by 1 Feb. 2020. Outcomes will be communicated by 1 March, 2020. Full-length manuscripts (for discussants to provide feedback on) are due to tj.thomson@qut.edu.au by 1 May, 2020. Submit full-length manuscripts (of no more than 8,000 words) to tj.thomson@qut.edu.au by 15 June, 2020, for publication consideration in the special issue of Visual Communication Quarterly.

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