

## **CFP: 1st International Visual Methods Seminar: Observing and Visualizing Urban Culture**

**Date :** March 6, 2013

25th August - 3rd September 2013, Antwerp, Belgium

Applications can be submitted by completing the online registration form at [www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar](http://www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar) from January 1st 2013 until April 15th 2013.

### **CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**

The University of Antwerp announces a 10 day program of study and practice in visual methods research and teaching in the social and cultural sciences. The seminar will primarily focus on conducting visual studies in urban contexts but also will address a broad array of more general research and teaching issues. Seminar activities have been designed (and will be led) by four veteran scholars whose research, leadership and teaching have contributed substantially to the International Visual Sociology Association, the Society for Visual Anthropology, and the ISA Thematic Group on Visual Sociology.

Participants will be fully involved in an interactive learning process by taking part in focused introductions to selected issues and techniques and engagement in intensive group discussions. Additionally, participants will be encouraged to take the methods, techniques and concepts that are presented and discussed in the classroom and apply them in real life environments. While Antwerp as an urban environment will serve as the main field for the research exercises and activities, theory and practice will not be limited to any specific ecological or geographic location or time frame.

Participants will receive pre-seminar readings on key aspects of visual research and will be asked to relate their current work or research interests to this literature as a basis for discussion. In addition, they will be encouraged to carry out a simple visual assignment in their home town prior to attending the seminar which can then be used as a personal introduction to the group. During the seminar participants will also be encouraged and supported to pursue projects and seminar activities that are tied closely to their current and emerging interests.

Participants will need to bring a simple or more advanced digital camera and ideally, a laptop computer to the seminar to carry out a number of visual exercises and also to design and present the research findings of their final project.

### **Setting and Location**

The summer school will take place at the premises of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences located in the heart of Antwerp, only a ten minutes' walk from the central train station. Flying either to Brussels or Amsterdam is just a short and direct train ride to Antwerp Central Station, one of the

most beautiful railway stations in the world.

Antwerp is the largest city in Flanders and is situated in the northern part of Belgium. It is a historic town by the river Scheldt and a bustling trading, artistic and cultural center with an international atmosphere. Antwerp is known for its diamond trade and as a city of painters like Rubens, Van Dyck, Jordaens and Breughel, as well as contemporary artists like Panamarenko and Jan Fabre.

The international travel guide publisher Lonely Planet has added Antwerp to its prestigious [2009] list of the world's ten most interesting cities. 'Few places offer such an appealing mix of classic and modern features.' 'Eclectic art nouveau houses right next to neo-classic villas and medieval castles provide a fantastic backdrop to the many bars and pavement cafés.' Antwerp is a very walkable and culturally diverse city (hosting about 170 different nationalities!) so offering ample opportunity to study aspects of material culture or human behavior. Moreover, world cities like Paris, London, and Amsterdam are only a few hours away by train.

### Program Components and Objectives

The seminar will include morning and afternoon sessions consisting of a lively combination of informal lectures, demonstrations, structured observational exercises, break-out sessions, field trips, local exhibitions, mini-projects, individual and small group reviews, critiques and discussions. A key activity will be the step-by-step development of an individual visual project involving the production, processing and presentation of visual data and analysis.

The seminar will pursue these key questions:

- \* How can visual strategies and methods help illuminate the social organization of the city and processes of everyday urban life?
- \* What roles can 'found' images and researcher-generated images play within these strategies and methods?
- \* What special contributions can be made by visual studies that involve direct collaboration with research subjects and community members?
- \* How can scholars make more effective links between research questions, visual data, and different research reporting formats?

A detailed day-by-day program will be published on the dedicated website ([www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar](http://www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar)). It will be contingent on the specific needs and the level of expertise of the participants.

### Seminar Tutors

The 10-day program of study will be guided by four seasoned visual scholars:

Richard Chalfen is Senior Researcher at the Center on Media and Child Health at Boston Children's Hospital. He is also Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at Temple University, former Chair of their Department of Anthropology and Director of the MA Program in Visual Anthropology. His research combines interests in cultural anthropology and visual communication and, for the past 20 years, the visual culture of modern Japan. At the Center, he focuses on applying

participant media research methods to studies of childhood chronic illness and examining relationships of mobile telephonic media and young people. Publications include *Snapshot Version of Life* (1987), *Turning Leaves* (1991) and *Through Navajo Eyes* (co-author, 1997), and most recently, *Photogaffes-Family Snapshots and Social Dilemmas* (2012).

John Grady is the William I. Cole Professor of Sociology at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. He is a past president of the International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA). He is currently the New Media Editor for *Visual Studies*. His research and teaching interests include the study of cities, technology, and social organization. He has written extensively on visual sociology in general and on the use of the visual mass media as evidence for social and cultural analysis. He has produced numerous documentary films including *Mission Hill and the Miracle of Boston* (1979) and *Water and the Dream of the Engineers* (1983).

Luc Pauwels is a Professor of Visual Culture at the University of Antwerp (Department of Communication Studies), Belgium. He is head of the Visual Studies and Media Culture Research Centre (ViSMeC) at Antwerp, Vice-President of the International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA), and Board Member of the Visual Sociology Thematic Group of ISA. As a visual sociologist and communication scientist, he has written on visual research methodologies, family photography, urban culture, multimodal website analysis, and scientific visualization. Books include: *Visual Cultures of Science* (2006, UPNE), *The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods* (2011, together with Eric Margolis) and *Reframing Visual Sociology* (forthcoming, Cambridge University Press).

Jon Wagner is Professor Emeritus in the School of Education at the University of California, Davis. His research focuses on children's material culture, qualitative and visual research methods, school change, and the social and philosophical foundations of education. He is a past President of the International Visual Sociology Association and was the founding Image Editor of *Contexts*, the American Sociological Association's general interest publication. He authored *Misfits and Missionaries: a school for black dropouts* (1977), and also edited two volumes that focus on the intersection of visual studies and social research: *Images of Information: Still photography in the social sciences* (1979) and *Visual Sociology 14(1 & 2): Seeing Kids' Worlds* (1999).

### Who Should Attend?

This intensive program of study will be useful for students and faculty involved in teaching visual methods in sociology, anthropology, and communication as well as for scholars from urban studies, social and cultural geography, media and cultural studies, history, criminology, and arts related disciplines who want to complement their current research approaches with a more visual slant. Specific visual or sociological experience is not a pre-requisite though candidates should have a keen interest in learning more about the visual exploration of society and culture. The seminar will be conducted in English, so participants must have a sufficient command of English.

### Application Procedure

Applications can be submitted by completing the online registration form at [www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar](http://www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar) from January 1st 2013 until April 15th 2013. Participants will be asked to submit a concise motivation letter, and a short CV (indicating their prior experience and specific interest). Applicants will be notified soon after their application whether they have been accepted.

### Fees & Costs

Participants can choose for an 'all-in package' (tuition fee: including refreshments, lunches, course materials, receptions and social events, and basic lodging for 10 nights, breakfast included in student flats nearby= 1150 euro) or pick a hotel of their choice and just pay for the tuition (800 euro) (see our website for some suggestions).

### ECTS Accreditation

Upon successful completion of the seminar participants will obtain a course certificate that qualifies for 5 ECTS credit points.

### Additional Information?

For administrative and logistic matters, contact the seminar coordinator:

\* Piet De Vroede: [piet.devroede@ua.ac.be](mailto:piet.devroede@ua.ac.be) / tel: 0032(0)3 265 52 83

For questions about the content and format of the program, contact the seminar director:

\* Prof. dr. Luc Pauwels: [luc.pauwels@ua.ac.be](mailto:luc.pauwels@ua.ac.be)

Visit the conference website for regular updates: [www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar](http://www.ua.ac.be/VisualMethodsSeminar)