1 VISUALITY (CARLYLE 1837)

- Visuality is...not a trendy theory-word meaning the totality of all visual images and devices, but it is in fact an early nineteenth-century term, meaning the visualization of history. (RTL, Cl. 474)

- "Thomas Carlyle coined both ‘visuality’ and the verb ‘visualizing’ in a series of writings between 1837 and 1841 designed to create a spiritual antidote to modernity that was nonetheless strongly supportive of imperialism. OV: 56)

- For Carlyle, history was far more than the accumulation of facts and historians themselves were often questionable...

- It is important to note that Carlyle was explicitly opposed to the new physiology of vision (Crary, 1988, 1991) in which seeing and understanding were the same process." (OV: 56)

- [For Carlyle]: Visuality, then, ordered and narrated the chaotic events of modern life in intelligible, visualized fashion. (OV 56)

- Visuality is very much to do with picturing and nothing to do with vision, if by vision we understand how an individual person registers visual sensory impressions. (OV, 67)

- This practice must be imaginary, rather than perceptual, because what is being visualized is too substantial for any one person to see and is created from information, images, and ideas. This ability to assemble a visualization manifests the authority of the visualizer. (RTL, Cl. 474)

2 VISUALIZING (CARLYLE 1837)

- Visualizing is the production of visuality, meaning the making of the processes of history perceptible to authority. This visualizing was the attribute of the Hero and him alone. (RTL, A: 475)

- "What is required of the ordinary person is not visuality but hero-worship, a proper submission to the quasi-divine authority of the hero." (OV 58)

3 AUTHORITY TO VISUALIZE (MIRZOEFF 2011)

- Authority can be said to be power over life, or biopower, foundationally rendered as authority over a “slave.”25 the commodity form of human life.

- However, this genealogy displaces the question, who or what empowers the person with authority to sell human beings? (RTL, Cl. 479)
VISUAL SUBJECT (MIRZOEFF 2006)

M. defines the visual subject as "a person who is both the agent of sight (regardless of biological ability to see) and the object of discourses of visuality." (OV 54)

"In many instances, the claim to visual subjectivity was part of a general claim to majoritarian status within Western nations for those like women, the enslaved and their free descendants, and people of alternative sexuality. (OV 54)

THREE HISTORICAL COMPLEXES OF VISUALITY (MIRZOEFF 2011)

![Complexes of Visuality Table]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Symbolic Figure</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantation Complex</td>
<td>Overseer</td>
<td>1660-1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Complex</td>
<td>Missionary</td>
<td>1857-1947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Industrial</td>
<td>Counterinsurgent</td>
<td>1945–present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 1. This schematic representation is subject to two provisos: each complex "intensifies" under pressure of resistance, and the dates here are indicative only of the broad moment of each complex's hegemony.

THREE TECHNIQUES OF VISIBILITITY (MIRZOEFF 2006)

- CLASSIFYING: includes naming, categorizing, defining (aka 'nomination of the visible' qua Foucault)

- SEPARATING: a visual segregation that forestalls organizing as subjects, workers, etc. Can also be physical separations like walls.

- AESTHETICS OF POWER: Where power is render as right and thus beauty, aka "aesthetics for the respect of the status quo" qua Fanon)
HISTORY 1 & HISTORY 2 (CHAKRABARTY 2000)

Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) has described two modes of history. History 1 is that history predicated by capital for itself ‘as a precondition’ to its own existence, whereas History 2 is that which cannot be written into the history of capital even as prefiguration and so has to be excluded (pp. 63–4).

VISUALITY 1 (MIRZOEFF 2006)

"Visuality 1 would be that narrative that concentrates on the formation of a coherent and intelligible picture of modernity that allowed for practical, even heroic, action. In this sense, photography, for example, contributed to Visuality 1 in the manner famously critiqued by Baudelaire as the tool of commerce, science and industry." (OV, 66)

VISUALITY 2 (MIRZOEFF 2006)

Visuality 2 would be that picturing of the self or collective that exceeds or precedes that incorporation into the commodification of vision by capital and empire. One version of this mode of visuality was that ‘irrational modernism . . . that escapes . . . appropriative logic’ (Jones, 2004: 24), such as certain forms of Dada. (OV, 66)

...this characterization does not necessarily imply that Visuality 2 is necessarily politically radical or progressive, only that it is not part of capital’s ‘life process’. (OV, 66)

The two modes of visuality are not opposed in a binary system but operate in deconstruction, as a relation of difference that is always deferred. (OV, 66)

VISUALITY INDUSTRIES (MIRZOEFF 2011)

"To adapt the tag of the Frankfurt school, the visual culture industry might be described as that process by which the excess of visuality in Visuality 2 is made available as part of the modernizing process to Visuality 1. Visuality, far from being a postmodern solution predicated by contemporary visual culture to the problems of medium-based visual disciplines, is then a problem of the conceptual scheme of modernity and representation that underlies it." (OV, 67)
THE RIGHT TO LOOK, AKA COUNTER-VISIBILITY (MIRZOEFF 2011)

- The right to look is not about merely seeing. It begins at a personal level with the look into someone else’s eyes to express friendship, solidarity, or love. (RTL, CI, 473)

- That look must be mutual, each inventing the other, or it fails. As such, it is unrepresentable. (RTL, CI, 473)

- The right to look claims autonomy, not individualism or voyeurism, but the claim to a political subjectivity and collectivity: “the right to look. The invention of the other.”(Derrida 2) (RTL, CI, 473)

- The right to look confronts the police who say to us, "move on, there’s nothing to see here." Only there is; we know it, and so do they. (RTL, CI, 473)

- The opposite of the right to look is not censorship, then, but visibility, that authority to tell us to move on and that exclusive claim to be able to look.5 (RTL, CI, 473)

RECKLESS EYEBALLING (MIRZOEFF 2011)

To pursue the example of slavery and sight, after the Haitian revolution and the dramas of abolition and Reconstruction, “reckless eyeballing,” a simple looking at a white person, especially a white woman or person in authority, was forbidden to those classified as “colored” under Jim Crow. Such looking was held to be both violent and sexualized in and of itself, a further intensification of the policing of visibility.
**TECHNIQUES OF COUNTER-VISIBILITY (M 2011, FROM RANCHIERE)**

- **EDUCATION:** "Classification was countered by education understood as emancipation, meaning "the act of an intelligence obeying only itself even while the will obeys another will." (RTL, CI, 485)

- **DEMOCRACY:** Separation was countered by democracy, meaning not simply representative elections but the place of (in Ranciere’s well-known phrase) “the part that has no part” in power. (RTL, CI, 485)

- **AESTHETICS OF BODY:** The aesthetics of power were matched by the aesthetics of the body not simply as form but also as affect and need. This aesthetic is not a classificatory scheme of the beautiful but ‘aesthetics’ at the core of politics...as the system of a priori forms determining what presents itself to sense experience. (RTL, CI, 485)

- “These countervisualities are not visual, you might say. I did not say they were. I claim that they are and were visualized as goals, strategies, and imagined forms of singularity and collectivity. If they do not seem realistic, that is the measure of the success of visuality, which has made vision and leadership into synonyms." (RTL, CI, 485)

**INVERSE VISUALITY (MIRZOEFF 2011)**

"Inverse visuality is any moment of visual experience in which the subjectivity of the viewer is called into question by the density or opacity of what he or she sees. These flickering, excessive, hyperreal, overlaid, pixelated, disjunctive and distracting moments are spectral dust in the eyes of visuality that cause it to blink and become momentarily unsighted." (OV: 70) Example: Sojourner Truth's question, "Ain't I a Woman?"

**VEILED VISUALITY (MIRZOEFF 2011)**

"Veiled visuality performs a similar function [to inverse visuality] by dividing visuality into two by means of the veil that is both visible and invisible at once." (OV: 70) Example: DuBois’s concept of "double consciousness," which imparted a veil that allowed for a better vision of reality (OV 75)
VISUALITY AS NETWORKED (MIRZOEFF 2006)

- Visuality is in this sense, to use current terminology, a time-based medium. This series of connected and dispersed lines, crossing time and space, is a network. (OV: 76)

- Clearly, the idea of a single hero or heroine as the agent of visuality, or even of an elite minority within a given group, is unsustainable in a networked context. (OV 76)

- Recast as the possibility of a politics of representation, negotiating the veiled lines of color, gender and sexuality that are both invisible and all too visible in our own time, visuality remains of central importance. (OV 76)

VISUALITY AS ANTI AND POST-PANOPTICON (MIRZOEFF 2006, 2011)

- Carlyle’s new language of visuality was explicitly opposed to the Benthamite theory of reform that has come to be epitomized in the visual technology of the panopticon (Foucault, 1977) (RTL, CI, 483)

- If the legacy of the plantation complex is the local surveillance of people by one authority figure, whether visible or not, imperial visuality was a centralized model for the control of remote populations. The imperial complex of visuality linked centralized authority to a hierarchy of civilization in which the “cultured” dominated the “primitive.” (RTL, CI, 483)

- the end of the cold war in 1989 might have been expected to create an era of postvisuality. Instead, the global Revolution in Military Affairs, usually considered to have commenced at roughly the same moment, has extended and transformed visuality using digital technology to pursue nineteenth century tactical goals, creating what Derek Gregory has called the “visual economy [of the] . . . American military imaginary.” (RTL, CI, 485)
 NEO-VISUALITY: THE CASE OF GLOBAL COUNTER INSURGENCY (GCOIN)

- Global CounterInsurgency (GCOIN) can simultaneously take the form of an imperial small war, a governance-building counterinsurgency, and a technology-driven means of containment. This last, which appears to be in the ascendant, suggests a final intensification of visuality into digitized, necropolitical form. (RTL, CI, 487)

- The strategy of clear, hold, and build, today’s military mantra of counterinsurgency, means to remove insurgents from a locality using lethal force, then to sustain that expulsion by physical means such as walls, and finally to build neoliberal governance in the resulting space of circulation. (RTL, CI, 487)

- Counterinsurgency thus classifies and separates by force to produce an imperial governance that is self-justifying because it is held to be right and hence aesthetic. (RTL, CI, 487)

- The strategy of clear, hold, and build, today’s military mantra of counterinsurgency, means to remove insurgents from a locality using lethal force, then to sustain that expulsion by physical means such as walls, and finally to build neoliberal governance in the resulting space of circulation. Counterinsurgency thus classifies and separates by force to produce an imperial governance that is self-justifying because it is held to be right and hence aesthetic. (RTL, CI, 487)

- Counterinsurgency’s goal is to produce a global array of weak or failing states requiring permanent counterinsurgency. Indeed, the mantra of the GCOIN strategists is the need to engage with the "global jihad," deriving from a newly "global Islam...a structureless, leaderless archipelago of communities whose energy is aroused by a nervous system based on communications technology.

- Counterinsurgency is being taught and experienced as the ultimate multiplayer immersion game.

- Military discussion, both official and unofficial, centers now on the way in which such visualization has in some sense become the mission itself. Today’s junior officers spend much of their time compiling PowerPoint presentations that digitally render their visualizations of the conflict.
COUNTER-INSURGENCY AS DOMESTIC GOVERNANCE (M 2011)

- Counterinsurgency is proliferating into one possible means of globalized governmentality.

- We see then-Governor of Louisiana Kathleen Blanco histrionically announcing the deployment of the National Guard into the city with the remark that they have just returned from Iraq and will shoot to kill.

- As early as 2005, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles were patrolling the US/Mexico border as part of the war on drugs, with three more aircraft set to be added in 2011 for a total of ten nationwide.

- In 2008, a junior high school principal in the South Bronx described his strategy for reviving the school as “textbook counterinsurgency,” rendering the teenage students into insurgents.

- In 2010, the Southern Poverty Law Center added a number of religious right groups to its hate watch list as a result of their anti-gay politics.

- In April 2010, an at-once-notorious state law was passed in Arizona, requiring police to pursue those who appeared to be illegal immigrants and criminalizing any immigrant at large without documentation.

NEO-VISIBILITY INVOLVES VISUAL INCOHERENCE AS POLICY

- Let us return to the axiomatic phrase, “move on, there’s nothing to see here.” Under conditions of insurgency, everyone knows that not to be the case.

- These imbrications of classic population management discourses with low-intensity, asymmetric urban warfare both produces, and is a product of, the intensification of visuality in the society of control.

The ultimate paradox of counterinsurgency is that the measure of its success is its permanent continuation.

- The more these paradoxes proliferate, however, the greater the uncertainty and hence the continued need for counterinsurgency.

- Far from being an accident, incoherence is a policy.
CAN WE CONSTRUCT A COUNTER-INSURGENCY?

- If counterinsurgency uses neovisuality as a strategy, can we construct a countervisuality to counterinsurgency? (RTL, CI, 496)

- In a period in which we are all suspects, provisionally guilty until proved otherwise, the need is first to assert the continuance of an everyday that does not require militarization. There (RTL, CI, 496))

- As the example of post-Katrina New Orleans shows, there is nothing banal or quotidian about this “new everyday.” At the same time the case of New Orleans shows that simple visibility or media coverage does not ensure any change in political practice.(RTL, CI, 496)

- Where once consumer and subcultural practices seemed to offer new modes of resistance, now themselves thoroughly commodified, the task now is more paradoxical.(RTL, CI, 496)

- What is this new everyday? (RTL, CI, 496)

- How will the violence of counterinsurgency mobilize against mobility? (RTL, CI, 496)

- What means of autonomy are still viable from the legacies of countervisuality? (RTL, CI, 496)

- Whose histories will count? (RTL, CI, 496)

- If democracy is the global means of COIN, when do I get to vote?(RTL, CI, 496)

- Several outcomes seem possible from this swirling situation: a new authoritarianism, a perpetual crisis, or, just possibly, a time in which my claim to the right to look is met by your willingness to be seen. And I reciprocate. (RTL, CI, 496)