

Victor Burgin:

'Something About Photography Theory'

This article concerns questions of photography theory and education and their reciprocal relationship. It is possible to use different kinds of theoretical tools to approach photography, say, psychology, semiology or a sociology but photography theory has no methodology peculiarly its own. Photography theory therefore is not, nor it is ever destined to be, an autonomous discipline. "It is rather an *emphasis* within a general history and theory of representations", Burgin writes.

Burgin also states that there are no discourses which are free from theoretical assumptions. Therefore, it is artificial to bluntly set 'theory' and common sense discourses against each other. "All discourses are 'theoretical', the discourses we *call* theoretical are self-consciously so", Burgin states.

Originally the article is a lecture given by Burgin in Toronto at the School of Communication of the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in 1983.

Don Slater:

Domestic Photography and Digital Culture

The author considers the changing place of the popular snapshot and the family album in the context of digital culture and its flow of images. The popular snapshot is relatively untouched by technological change. However, its domestic role and function have changed amidst new picture-based technological innovations: video, computer interfaces and games or the Internet. Hence family snaps – pictures of ourselves – need to be understood in relation to an enormous flow of images programmed into leisure commodities.

Commodity-based leisure activities might marginalize domestic self-representations because snapshots do not have ready-made leisure practices which involve them. On the other hand, domestic photography could provide the means for critical self-representation and empowerment. By making critically conscious pictures (self-representations) people might come to criticise the public and dominant representations of themselves and others in the media.

Kalle Toiskallio:

Words and pictures on the social scene of car advertisements

The starting point of the article is the relationship between word and image. To elaborate the problem theoretically the author draws from the writings of Roland Barthes and Gunther Kress & Theo van Leeuwen. The relationship is studied in the context of Finnish car advertisements, which are analysed with the concepts of social scene and mortise, the visual element which combines verbal text and images very tightly.

The social scene of the advertisement comprises three different aspects: the product itself and its uses, the interaction between the participants in the advertisement and, finally, the reader's or observer's reception of the advertisement.

In the advertisements analysed pictures propagate individualism and verbal elements – for their part – invite the reader to participate in the social scene and interaction.

Lev Manovich:

The Paradoxes of Digital Photography

Is an image, mediated by computer and electronic technology, radically different from an image obtained through a photographic lens and embodied in film? If we describe film-based images using such categories as depth of field, zoom, a shot or montage, what categories should be used to describe digital images? In my paper I will refrain from taking an extreme position of either fully accepting or fully denying the notion of a digital imaging revolution. Rather, I will present the logic of the digital image as one of paradox; radically breaking with older modes of visual representation while at the same time reinforcing these modes. I will demonstrate this paradoxical logic by looking at the alleged physical differences between digital and film-based representation of photographs.

Ulla Karttunen:

How to read Pierre Bourdieu's *Photography?*

The writer's doctoral study pertains to the formation of the field of photographic art and the occupation of photographic artist in Finland. Thus one would presume Pierre Bourdieu's *Un Art moyen* (1965) to be its cornerstone. It has however been difficult for the writer to get a grip of this work, and other students of photography have had similar experiences. In this article she aims to explain what makes this work so hard to decipher. She tries to disentangle the setting by placing the work as part of Bourdieu's production and the cultural circumstances of its genesis.

It is essential to the story that the writer became originally acquainted with *Art moyen* through its English edition of

1990. Here she urges to show that a major part of the problems in reception derive from what has been happening between the publications of the original work and *Photography* not only in photography but also in the surrounding society. Special attention is also paid to the effects of translation. The building of a bridge between the English edition and the original work is laborious but succeeds in raising questions that are fruitful for the study of Finnish photographic art today.

Pia Sivenius:

Trompe-l'oeil

I do not claim, that one can find a specific theory of images in the works of Michel Foucault, Jean-Luc Nancy or Jacques Lacan, but each of them has written interesting things about the relationship between space and image. They have not only analysed the representations that can be presented on a flat canvas, but also what remains on the threshold of the picture: the observer and his/her place. In my essay, I focus on Lacan's discussion on Hans Holbein's painting, *The Ambassadors*, which uses both the perspective laws and the technique of anamorphosis. I claim that it is important that the observer must move away from one point in order to see the picture, but this displacement does not mean that there are two optional pictures to be seen: the displacement itself makes something appear. Thus I disagree with Martin Jay who opposes the "image in the phallic eye of the geometricalized subject" to the anamorphic skull and confuses the latter with the impersonal and diffuse gaze as such. To understand more about the gaze we have to get hold of something which is beyond the image: what one looks at is what cannot be seen. It is something that cannot be represented, but some images are made so that they

carry with them a fantasy inscribed in their technique. This makes an event possible, which Nancy tries to capture with his concept access and Lacan with his concepts *tuché*, *fascinum* and *screen*.

Sami Noponen:

The photograph and discursive formations

The article concentrates on analysing discursive formations in a photograph published in the daily Helsingin Sanomat. The focus is on sexual and racial relationships between the different subjects, and how these are produced by the general positioning of those being photographed. In connection with this the visual representational theory is also discussed and a semiotic model constructed that tries to take into account the textual news material that surrounds the picture. The final analysis tries to resolve the puzzling question of how it is possible to support different kinds of arguments using the same press photograph in various printed media.