

CRINI

International Workshop

May 20, 2016



Call for Papers

Censorship: Creative contemporary constraints and dynamics in the representation of the British and American nations

Key words

Images/nations/censorship

The series of international workshops overlapping photography, gender and culture studies, visual studies, art and history organized by the CRINI since 2013 have explored in part the possibilities of photography to define or re-examine the notions of artistic and national identity, particularly British and American. The 2016 edition will take on the notion of censorship. With photography as its starting point, this edition aims to extend the debate to include the contemporary image on the whole. It is interested in the intermedial forays of other artistic forms in the practice of photographers (art installations, video and/or audio productions, performance, urban art practices, text/image interactions). How does the very artistic form/medium become in itself a means of expression and commitment when confronted with censorship, a means to create unity against censorship, a tool for identity expression of a group or of a minority, to circumvent constraints, or thrive upon these limits and generate creative impetus from them?

Censorship questions the notion of democracy and power. It implies that authority or authorities establish norms to be respected, which in turn could hinder the artist's freedom of expression thus questioning the limits of artistic discourse. How far can an artist push the limits and make them visible? How does artistic creation occur in the artist's workshop? We will question how censorship reinforces norms while the artist defies them through means of deviation resulting from opposition or non-conformism.

The new channels of circulation of images and new technologies have an impact on the notion of censorship allowing authorities to see everything or, on the contrary, held in check by a less controllable means of dissemination: buzz, going viral on

Internet, amateur images and the (re)appropriation of images lead to a type of citizen journalism by the disseminated image that constitutes a new source of information beyond the bounds of the traditional media.

If Internet resists censorship, other spaces are empowered by different means. The street may be transformed into political space where images are displayed, recycled, repeated or modulated. Central to private and public spaces of artistic expression (museums, outdoors, galleries, press, books, Internet), artists flirt with the limits of what is considered acceptable to show in art and where it is acceptable to be shown. Today, political and cultural censorship appears to be increasingly heavy-handed, subject to various obligations (legal, financial, religious, social, institutional, military or technical) or a consensus; nevertheless, certain spaces are committed to freeing themselves from such pressure.

Consequently, what contract is established between the artist and the spectator? What are the repercussions of censorship on the public eye, on the multiple interpretations and readings that a work is subject to (whether it be popular or *high* art), on the desire to see or not to see? Whereas restrictions are multiplying in the United States, the notion of censorship has evolved over time: what was not considered viewable may be now. There often seems to remain an irreconcilable gap between the artist's intention and the editorial policy of a newspaper, a museum's political trend, etc. Censorship may arouse artists' strategies to circumvent, disobey or, conversely, a process of self-censorship implying the moral consciousness of the artist. Some artists choose to work under the burden of censorship, direct or indirect, which may take the form of a commissioned work of art, in which expectations of the end product may conflict with the artist's intents, affecting the construction of meaning by the image.

The suggested theme may be approached from the angle of monographs or censorship in specific photographic genres: documentary, war photography, photojournalism, the esthetics of paparazzi photography, fashion photography, advertising images, portraiture, album covers, etc. Attention should focus on how censorship has an impact on the representation of national identities in images. If pertinent, emphasis could be placed on demonstrating the common characteristics between American and British images and proposals could take up the themes previously examined over the last three years: censorship and photographs of women or works by women photographers; censorship and landscape photography; censorship and the power of the image or representations of power.

Non-exhaustive list of possibilities:

Artistic form as a means to counter censorship

Divergence from norms: censorship, democracy, power

Censorship and the circulation of images: means of diffusion and control

Spaces of censorship: where and how images are given to be viewed?

Reception of censorship: artist/spectator junction or breach

Sources of power and genres affected by censorship

Self-censorship

Proposals of approximately 300 words may be submitted to julie.morere@univ-nantes.fr and jane.bayly@univ-nantes.fr, along with a short biographical note before February 15, 2016.

Scientific committee response: March 2016

Members of the Scientific committee:

Jean Kempf, President, Professor of American Studies, Université de Lyon 2 – Triangle

Emmanuelle Chérel, Instructor and researcher in Art History, Ecole Supérieure des Beaux Arts de Nantes Métropole.

Dennis DeHart, Associate Professor, Photography Coordinator, Washington State University

Melanie Friend, Reader in Photography, Senior Lecturer in Media and Film, University of Sussex

Julie Jones, PhD in Contemporary Art History, Centre Pompidou, Cabinet de la Photographie

Valérie Morisson, Senior Lecturer, Centre Interlangues : texte, image, langage

Webpage of the event

http://www.crimi.univ-nantes.fr/1445503093377/0/fiche_actuallite/&RH=1214467812585