



How to See the World: An Introduction to Images, from Self-Portraits to Selfies, Maps to Movies, and More

Nicholas Mirzoeff

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Every two minutes, Americans alone take more photographs than were printed in the entire nineteenth century; every minute, people from around the world upload over 300 hours of video to YouTube; and in 2014, we took over one trillion photographs. From the funny memes that we send to our friends to the disturbing photographs we see in the news, we are consuming and producing images in quantities and ways that could never have been anticipated. In the process, we are producing a new worldview powered by changing demographics—one where the majority of people are young, urban, and globally connected.

In *How to See the World*, visual culture expert Nicholas Mirzoeff offers a sweeping look at history's most famous images—from Velázquez's *Las Meninas* to the iconic "Blue Marble"—to contextualize and make sense of today's visual world. Drawing on art history, sociology, semiotics, and everyday experience, he teaches us how to close read everything from astronaut selfies to Impressionist self-portraits, from Hitchcock films to videos taken by drones. Mirzoeff takes us on a journey through visual revolutions in the arts and sciences, from new mapping techniques in the seventeenth century to new painting styles in the eighteenth and the creation of film, photography, and x-rays in the nineteenth century. In today's networked world, mobile technology and social media enable us to exercise "visual activism"—the practice of producing and circulating images to drive political and social change. Whether we are looking at pictures showing the effects of climate change on natural and urban landscapes or an fMRI scan demonstrating neurological addiction, Mirzoeff helps us to find meaning in what we see.

A powerful and accessible introduction to this new visual culture, *How to See the World* reveals how images shape our lives, how we can harness their power for good, and why they matter to us all.

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