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Law, Culture and Visual Studies

Richard K. Sherwin
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Anne Wagner
Richard K. Sherwin *Editors*

Law, Culture and Visual Studies

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Anne Wagner • Richard K. Sherwin
Editors

Law, Culture and Visual Studies



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Advance Praise for *Law, Culture, and Visual Studies*

This diverse and exhilarating collection of essays explores the many facets both historical and contemporary of visual culture in the law. It opens a window onto the substantive, jurisdictional, disciplinary, and methodological diversity of current research. It is a cornucopia of materials that will enliven legal studies for those new to the field as well as for established scholars. It is a “must read” that will leave you wondering about the validity of the long-held obsession that reduces the law and legal studies to little more than a preoccupation with the word.

Leslie J. Moran, Professor of Law, Birkbeck College, University of London

Law, Culture and Visual Studies is a treasure trove of insights on the entwined roles of legality and visuality. From multiple interdisciplinary perspectives by scholars from around the world, these pieces reflect the fullness and complexities of our visual encounters with law and culture. From pictures to places to postage stamps, from forensics to film to folklore, this anthology is an exciting journey through the fertile field of law and visual culture as well as a testament that the field has come of age.

Naomi Mezey, Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC, USA

This highly interdisciplinary reference work brings together diverse fields including cultural studies, communication theory, rhetoric, law and film studies, legal and social history, and visual and legal theory, in order to document the various historical, cultural, representational, and theoretical links that bind together law and the visual. This book offers a breathtaking range of resources from both well-established and newer scholars who together cover the field of law's representation in, interrogation of, and dialogue with forms of visual rhetoric, practice, and discourse. Taken together, this scholarship presents state-of-the-art research into an important and developing dimension of contemporary legal and cultural inquiry. Above all, *Law Culture and Visual Studies* lays the groundwork for rethinking the nature of law in our densely visual culture: How are legal meanings produced, encoded, distributed,

and decoded? What critical and hermeneutic skills, new or old, familiar or unfamiliar, will be needed? Topical, diverse, and enlivening, *Law Culture and Visual Studies* is a vital research tool and an urgent invitation to further critical thinking in the areas so well laid out in this collection.

Desmond Manderson, Future Fellow, ANU College of Law/Research School of Humanities and the Arts, Australian National University, Australia

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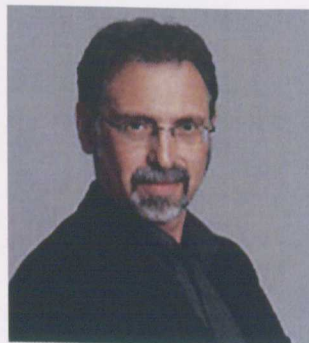
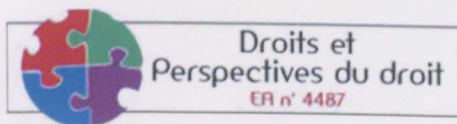


Anne Wagner is an Associate Professor at the Université Lille – Nord de France. She is a research member at the Université Lille – Nord de France (Centre de Recherche Droits et Perspectives du Droit, équipe René Demogue: <http://crdp.univ-lille2.fr/le-centre/>). She is a Research and Adjunct Professor at China University of Political Science and Law (Beijing). She is a permanent member of the *Istituto Subalpino per l'Analisi e l'Insegnamento del Diritto della Attività Transanzionali* (ISAIDAT with Prof. Rodolfo Sacco). She is the Editor in Chief of the *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* (<http://www.springer.com/law/journal/11196> – Springer) and the Series Editor of *Law, Language and Communication* (<http://www.ashgate.com/default.aspx?page=3916> – Ashgate). She is President of the *International Roundtables for the Semiotics of Law* and Vice President of the *Multicultural Association of Law and Language* (Hong Kong).

She has lectured in Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America. She has extensively published research papers in the area of law and semiotics, law and criminology, legal discourse analyses, law and culture, and legal translation. She is the Editor of *Images in Law* (2006, Ashgate); *Legal Language and the Search for Clarity*

(2006, Peter Lang); *Interpretation, Law and the Construction of Meaning* (2006, Springer); *Obscurity and Clarity in the Law* (2008, Ashgate); *Diversity and Tolerance in Socio-Legal Context* (2009, Ashgate); *Prospects of Legal Semiotics* (2010, Springer); and *Exploring Courtroom Discourse* (2011, Ashgate). She is the author of *La Langue de la Common Law* (2002, L'Harmattan). She also has many editorial appointments as Guest Editor for *Meta – Journal des traducteurs* (2013) and *Semiotica* (2013).

In 2009, Anne Wagner began investigating *Visual Studies* with a close connection to visual semiotics and the way empty spaces, shapes, and garments can either subjugate or disrupt the public sphere and lead to disobedience, incivilities, and crimes: *Nation, Identity and Multiculturalism* (Guest Editor – *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law*, vol.25/2: 2012); *French Urban Space Management – A Visual Semiotic Approach behind Power and Control* (A. Wagner, *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law*, vol.24/2, 2011); and *The Muslim Veil in France: Between Power and Silence, between Visibility and Invisibility* (*Hermes* 46, 2011).



Richard K. Sherwin is Professor of Law and Director of the Visual Persuasion Project at New York Law School. He is the author of *Visualizing Law in the Age of the Digital Baroque: Arabesques & Entanglements* (Routledge: 2011) and *When Law Goes Pop: The Vanishing Line between Law and Popular Culture* (University of Chicago Press: 2000 [2002]). He has written numerous chapters and articles on topics ranging from the interrelationship between law and culture, law and rhetoric, discourse theory, political legitimacy, and the emerging field of visual legal studies. Recent publications include "Law's Life on the Screen," in Sara Steinert-Borella and Caroline Wiedmer, eds., *Intersections of Law and Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan: 2012); "Constitutional Purgatory: Shades and Presences Inside the Courtroom," in

Leif Dahlberg, ed., *Visualizing Law and Authority* (Walter de Gruyter: 2012); "Visual Jurisprudence," in the New York Law School Law Review Symposium Issue on "Visualizing Law in the Digital Age" (Fall 2012); "Law's Screen Life," in A. Sarat, ed., *Imagining Legality* (Alabama: 2011); and "Imagining Law as Film: Representation without Reference?" in Austin Sarat, et. al., *Introduction to Law and the Humanities*, (Cambridge University Press: 2010). He edited and also contributed to *Popular Culture and Law* (Ashgate: 2006).

In 2001, Professor Sherwin debuted Visual Persuasion in the Law, the first course of its kind to teach law students about the role and efficacy (as well as the pitfalls) of using visual evidence and visual advocacy in contemporary legal practice. Student films are produced in New York Law School's digital media lab.

In 2005, Professor Sherwin launched the Visual Persuasion Project (http://www.nyls.edu/centers/projects/visual_persuasion). The project seeks to promote a better understanding of the practice, theory, and teaching of law through the cultivation of critical visual intelligence. The web site showcases "best practices" in visual persuasion inside the courtroom through a broad range of visual products, from 2-D and 3-D animations to accident reenactments, day-in-the-life documentaries, settlement brochures, montages, and other innovative visual products.

A frequent public speaker both in the United States and abroad, Professor Sherwin is a regular commentator for television, radio, and print media on the relationship between law, culture, film, and digital media. His appearances include NBC's Today Show, WNET, National Public Radio, RTE Radio 1 (National Public Radio in Ireland), and CKUT (Montreal, Canada).