

Research for People Who
(Think They) Would Rather Create

INTRODUCTION ¶

You • can • skip • this introduction if you immediately want to start learning more about developing your own artistic research document – though I would suggest consulting at least the first two paragraphs of the final section of this introduction, titled “How to use this book”. Otherwise, please read on to find out about the motivations behind this publication. ¶

You may have already been introduced to this book in any number of ways. Perhaps you have heard about it from a friend or a tutor. Surely you will have been welcomed by graphic designer Robert Reinartz’s excellent cover design – in which case, not only did the colours and the typography play a part in informing you about the book’s contents; so did its dimensions and thickness. Or perhaps you were influenced by a person you happened to see holding it. My point here is: the introduction to any research document can take place in many ways, shapes and forms. ^[5] ¶

This book is a simple guide to help you develop your own artistic research document. At its heart, however, is a fundamental problem that is perhaps trickier to address: “Western culture has consistently privileged the spoken word as the highest form of intellectual practice and seen visual representations as second-rate illustrations of ideas”, wrote Nicholas Mirzoeff more than twenty (!) years ago – and the developments he signalled back then, which were beginning to contest this hegemony, have only increased ever since. ^[15] Visual literacy – the ability to “read” form as well as to “write” it – has become an important skill for anyone seeking to visually understand, represent and imagine the world. ¶

Which forms and which directions are currently available or suitable to art and design research within the boundaries of our institutions, our educational system, even our society? This book puts forward the idea that art and design can function not only as subjects or topics of research, but also as methods for conducting this same research, as well as tools and media for communicating its findings. ¶

One thing this book will **not** do, is tell you in a step-by-step way how to develop an artistic research document – although all of the important steps will certainly be discussed. And, even though this book also cannot tell you what exactly you should research, or how precisely you should conduct this research, it will cover all of the most important aspects of the process. The development of an art or design research document requires inventions on many levels: methodology, structure, form, and content. The main goal of this manual is to help establish a common and fertile ground for developing your own research. ¶

THE CONTEXT OF ART AND DESIGN RESEARCH ¶

Everyone • who • reaches • the graduation year of their studies, or who has comparable experience in the professional field of art and design, has proven themselves qualified to develop a proper artistic research document. However, this is not something that is ever easy for anyone – which is also what makes it such an exciting venture. If you are only a tiny bit like I was when I first started out as a student, you will not fully know what to expect from the process of conducting research. You will

have been trained in design and artistic processes. You will have read at least some academic works. But the goal of a research document may still largely elude you – as it once did me. Perhaps you think a research document is merely a formal obligation, some kind of report? You would not be completely wrong in thinking that, but not entirely right either. ¶

If we focus on an educational context, in the Netherlands, where this book is written and published, art education is a form of higher vocational education, and thus not on the same level as an academic university degree (as it is in many other countries) – even though it is currently becoming more “academic”, based on what is known as the Bologna Process (now allowing for three distinct “cycles” or levels of artistic research: bachelor, master, and PhD). The unique and changing position of Dutch art education thus allows us not only to focus more on research than was previously the case, but also to explore the many new opportunities provided by this research, as well as its relevance and connection to that of other academic disciplines. ¶

Research in the academic world is described as “the range of activities that support original and innovative work in the whole range of academic, professional and technological fields, including the humanities, and traditional, performing, and other creative arts. It is not used in any limited or restricted sense, or relating solely to a traditional ‘scientific method’.” [1] I take this to mean that we can consider research, in the context of art, as embracing a broad range of methodologies and combining different forms of knowing. Also, the ongoing transformation of art school curricula, in which Western science and subjectivity are no longer seen as providing the only acceptable model of knowledge, is constantly opening up towards other perspectives while also demonstrating a more pluralist approach. However, this way of thinking may cause some confusion, as it contrasts with how the term “research” is used in a more traditional, academic context – sometimes even completely subverting it (see also: *Non-Knowing*, p. 88, and, for further clarification, see: *Artistic Project I*, p. 110). ¶

RESEARCH FOR PEOPLE WHO (THINK THEY) WOULD RATHER CREATE ¶

The • title • of • this book is a paradox, one that is also at the heart of how art students often think about research: the widespread assumption that research is something alien to people who see themselves as creators, makers, artists, designers. This book can be seen as an attempt to unmask this paradox, and to show that, while research indeed calls for different skills and is a different process than creation, it is also and always an important component of this same process of creation. ¶

The endlessly diverse research methods applied by artists range from writing to visual, to performative and beyond. Research constantly generates knowledge of new perspectives and new information. And there are visual forms of knowledge production, of which the outcomes and conclusions can be communicated visually as well. Since current theories of visual argumentation remain inconclusive, I have instead chosen to consider art and design examples that are already out there. Traditional academic

protocol leaves little room for the variety and subtlety of other forms of knowing, but everywhere we look, an increasing amount of research is being shared through visual means – and this research is implemented just as rigorously as any scientific experiment, and is every bit as clear in its traceability. ¶

Research is not meant to remain only within the mind of the practitioner, or to be communicated solely between student and tutor. The goal of a research document is to share knowledge that has been developed through research. By sharing knowledge, you participate in and help build a community. This community is continuously in the making. ¶

In reality, not everyone will be able to conduct research that is of equal value to the learning community. Against a backdrop of growing numbers of art and design students, as well as an ever-more precarious working environment, it is a simple fact that not every graduating artist and designer will be able – or willing – to work as a professional artist or designer conducting research. Nevertheless, the process of developing a research document with that intention will transform every student, if not necessarily into a future artist or researcher, then surely into an individual better equipped to navigate the treacherous waters of the post-art school world. Student artistic researchers will have become better readers of texts and images, better judges of the concepts and ideas presented by others, better communicators of their own findings. And, since all students will want to find some work or other – in many cases at least related to their field of studies – this knowledge and experience will be of equally crucial importance. ^[8] ¶

In the roughly sixteen years during which I have been studying and teaching at various art academies, and working as an artist, writer, and advisor outside of academia, I have written documents such as grant applications, theses, essays and novels – and it is mainly the experience of the latter, of collecting and ordering my own literary research, that has allowed me to guide many others in their artistic research projects. I'm not bragging: all of my colleagues have at least a similar amount of experience. Working together with other tutors and advisors within a changing academic landscape has allowed all of us to collaboratively expand, enrich and diversify our own approaches to artistic research. Working with artists and scientists of various backgrounds has certainly played an important role in forming my ideas. The book you are now reading stems – among other things – from various course materials and course handbooks, which in turn were based on collective work and knowledge that was produced collectively by various colleagues: an ongoing process that has taken place over the past 20 years or more, at both the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague and the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam. The author of this book thus stands on the shoulders of giants. Very concretely, I should mention the syllabus written by Füsün Türetken and Max Bruinsma, ^[25] as well as the assignment handouts written by Merel Boers. ^[2] It was my co-teaching experience with historian, linguist and coach Merel Boers, and with artist, PhD professor, and member of the Forensic Architecture collective Füsün Türetken, that helped open up ways of thinking about artistic research. Their influences can be found throughout this book. Boers' educational materials on how to work inventively with abstracts, and on formulating starting questions

for students, were as formative as the mini-handbook co-produced by Boers, Türetken and myself (in turn based on the syllabus by Bruinsma and Türetken, which also featured materials from the beta version of this book). Füsün Türetken furthermore shared key insights and references from her rich background in art, architecture, performative research and design, visual culture, editing, publishing, and artistic research, which I was able to use in this book (for instance: Kanda and Hayashi's *X-Ray Portraits*, Studio Folder's *A Moving Border*, Harun Farocki's *Parallel I-IV*, and Metahaven's *Captives of the Cloud*; see also *Acknowledgements*, p. 6). During all these years, as a tutor and advisor, I have heard myself and others say the same things over and over again – and this guide is the result of collecting and ordering these remarks (for more on authorship within the context of artistic research, see: *Authorship, Referencing, Copyright*, p. 62). If it were up to me, a research advisor would be able to supervise only two researchers per week for a full year, but we do not have that luxury. The book you are now reading attempts to fill that gap at least a bit. ¶

9

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK ¶

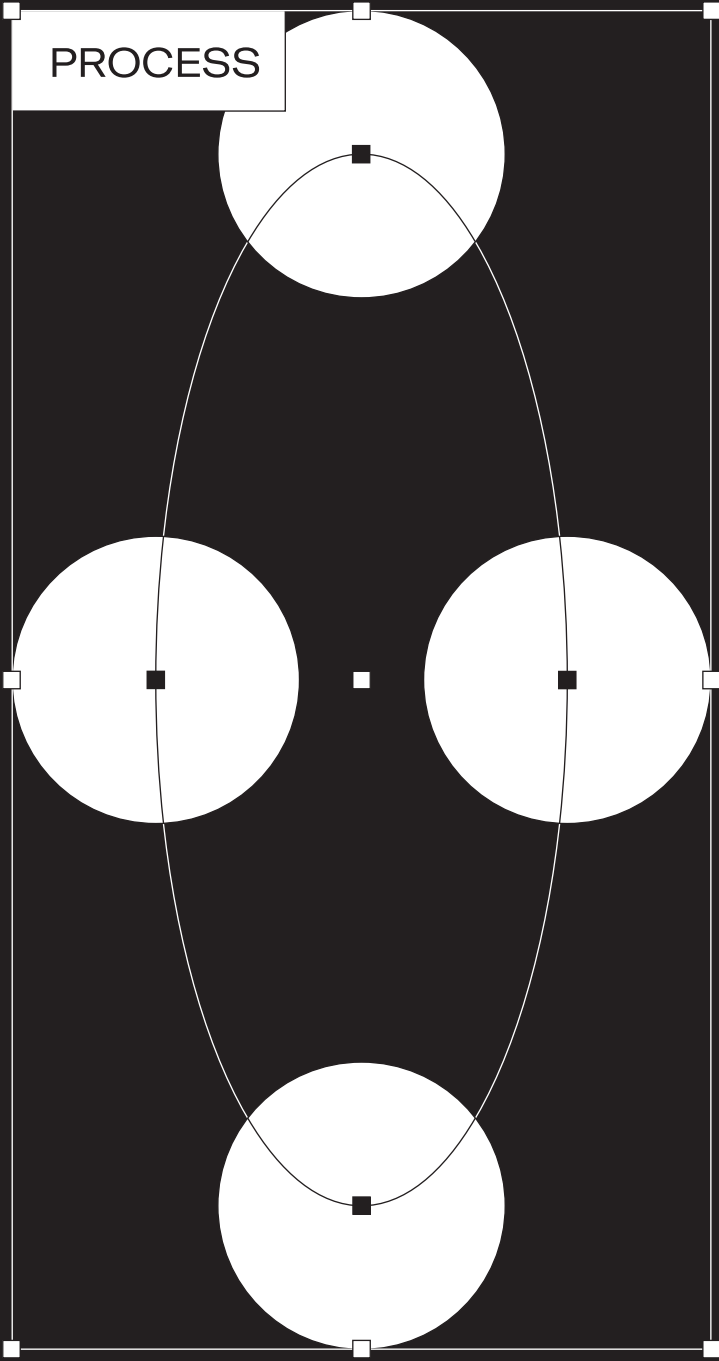
This • book • can • be opened on any page and read from any point. If you have a particular question pertaining to any of the topics covered here, you can open the book directly at the relevant page. ¶

Each aspect of the process of developing an artistic research document is addressed using an example from existing art and design practices. I could have chosen a completely different set of examples, because the list is of course near-infinite – but I chose these ones, because they come from my research community, because they have proven useful in a variety of settings, and because they strengthen the mostly implicit utopian strand that runs throughout this book. These examples of course do not aim to provide a complete picture, but rather a glimpse of the scope of the endlessly broad field of which they are a part. Their goal is to inspire, clarify, and open up new directions. Some examples purposely come from completely different times and/or disciplines, so as to surprise you – without luring you into attempting to follow them literally. ¶

The examples have been collected in collaboration with students, tutors, research staff and research professors of the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam, and with my colleagues at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague. The collection of examples thus has a strong regional footing within that particular research community. Some examples are famous, others obscure; some are obvious, others quaint. They have been drawn from a variety of fields such as art, design, performance, literature and academia – and could just as easily have included theatre and music. And, even though there is a fair amount of diversity in the backgrounds and forms chosen, it is also clear that many more varied forms of knowing, from different continents and cultures, are still lacking. This set of examples necessarily also captures the moment of its compilation, and can only provide a starting point in opening up towards other perspectives, while attempting to remain connected – in a critical way – to those perspectives that have formed us. ¶

PROCESS

Process



PLANNING

- ↳ *La historia de mis dientes (The Story of My Teeth)* – Valeria Luiselli
Media: novel, exhibition
Published: Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo; Coffee House Press
Year: 2013

DURATION

- ↳ *Drawing a Hypothesis: Figures of Thought* – Nikolaus Gansterer
Media: drawings, writing, book
Published: De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston, Edition Angewandte, 2nd corrected edition
Year: 2017

FROM READING TO MAKING

- ↳ *Funk Lessons* – Adrian Piper
Medium: group performance
Published: University of California at Berkeley
Photo credit: Photograph documenting the performance, courtesy of the University of California at Berkeley, collection of the Adrian Piper Research Archive (APRA) Foundation, Berlin. © APRA Foundation Berlin.
Year: 1982-1984

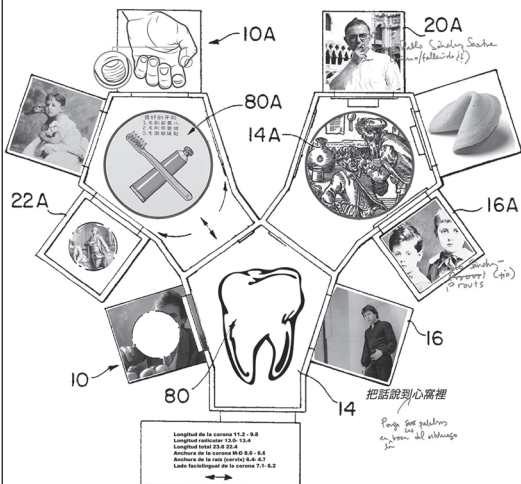
GUIDANCE & ASSISTANCE

- ↳ *X-Ray Portraits* – Saiko Kanda & Mayuka Hayashi
Medium: X-ray photography
Published: Musashino Art University
Year: 2013

La historia de mis dientes

VALERIA LUISELLI

narrativa/texto/120



Process

Planning

TO PLAN OR NOT TO PLAN

The process of developing a research document is usually divided into seven steps,^[9] and my only comment here is that these steps do not necessarily need to be followed in this particular order:

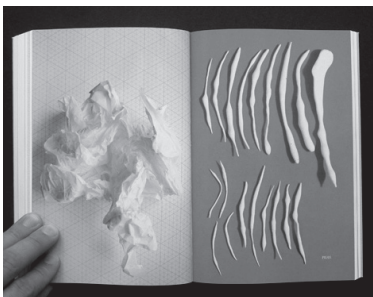
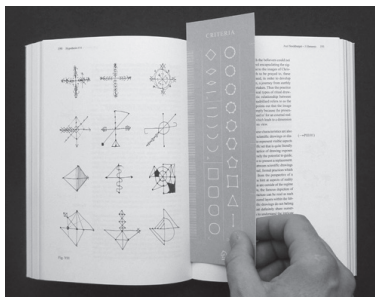
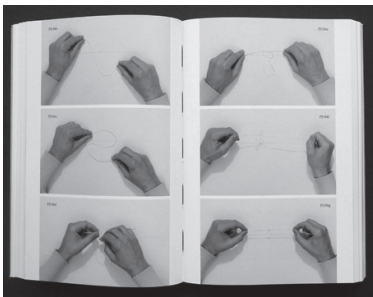
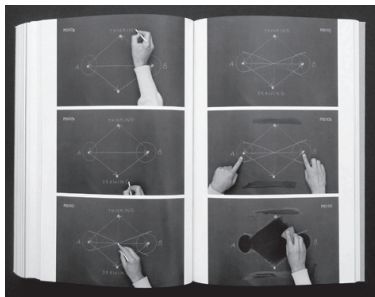
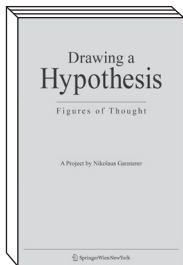
- ↳ Identify a precise topic;
- ↳ Collect or create documents on this topic;
- ↳ Structure these documents;
- ↳ Re-examine the topic in light of the collected or created documents;
- ↳ Organise all these materials into one organic form;
- ↳ Make sure your audience understands you;
- ↳ Provide documentation so that your audience may re-examine your topic through your sources.

The whole point of conducting research is to come up with new findings – if you already know where you want to end up, you are not developing a research document, but in fact doing something else. Planning to find out something you don't know yet can be achieved by leaving enough time open for surprises. You will find that your thoughts have a weird habit of also developing when you are not busy with them: in between work sessions, while you are doing the dishes or just walking around. It's much more efficient to work in many short bursts than to try to cram everything into the last month before the deadline. Perhaps most importantly, do not wait with writing or documenting until after you have digested all of your source materials, but start taking notes immediately, in any way, shape or form. Otherwise you may well keep collecting forever and never get started with ordering. ▶

▶ See: *From Reading to Making*, p. 46

The Story of My Teeth is a 2013 Spanish-language novel by **Valeria Luiselli** which she wrote in collaboration with workers at a juice factory in the city of Ecatepec, Mexico. Luiselli would submit chapters to be read by the factory workers, who would then send her a documentation of their discussions. Luiselli was able to conduct a number of such “tests” that allowed her to develop a new and highly specific approach to writing.

This kind of social experiment needs to be planned well in advance in order to leave you enough time to incorporate it into your research, to learn from the findings, and to embed it within any other research work. Real-world research activities such as trips, field work, and visiting libraries or art collections, all require extensive planning – but can also provide an extremely rewarding and valuable contrast to the inevitable “desk work”.^[3]



DIFFERENT USES OF THE DURATION OF THE PROCESS

▶ See the previous spread

▶ See: *Academia*, p. 76

◀ See also: *Artistic Project II*, p. 112

◀ See also: *From Reading to Making*, p. 46, and *Choosing Sources*, p. 94

We have already seen that you can use time to your advantage, [A] and this is even more the case when you use artistic techniques for analysis. A traditional thesis is built around a single process that is theorised in advance, [A] but ***Drawing a Hypothesis*** by **Nikolaus Gansterer** shows that other processes are possible too.

Gansterer made drawings of a number of diagrams he had collected, in an effort to better understand them. He then sent his drawings to different people “with a request for a written interpretation”, before again responding to their texts through a second series of diagrammatic drawings. This whole process was then repeated once again, resulting in a variety of new ideas and hypotheses.

Drawing can be used as a way of analysing art – and can thus become a research method in its own right. Gansterer: “[...] drawing can mediate between perception and reflection, it plays a constitutive role in the production and communication of knowledge.”

This type of process requires a specific attitude on the part of the researcher. [C] Done over a longer period of time, it demands an ability to shift back and forth between making and analysing. This is sometimes called “thinking by making”. It must always be followed by an additional step of verification, to see whether others are still able to follow your thinking. When done successfully this can fulfil, at least in part, the same purpose as an extensive bibliography. [D]

Whichever approach you choose, you should never use your research as an alibi for not working on other projects you’re engaged in – first of all, because nobody will believe you, and also because proper planning should enable you to do both. Ideally, you should start your research at the beginning of your graduation year. Ideally, you should complete the first full draft of your research document halfway through the process, leaving the second half for restructuring, editing and finalising.



HOW TO GO FROM READING TO MAKING OR VICE-VERSA

In a research document that is mainly historical or theoretical, there may not be any “making” activities involved besides the actual writing of the document – which, as any writer can tell you, is also a form of making. [►] Often, however, the term “making” is not meant to include writing.

► See also: *Ways of Writing*, p. 52

PROCESS

↳ FROM READING TO MAKING

▷ See also: *Duration*,
p. 44

◀ See also: *Forms of
Knowing*, p. 86

People conducting practice-based research that starts with a historical component may find it difficult to go from reading to making, while people conducting research that is first and foremost practice-based sometimes have trouble going from making to writing. This is unnecessary, though understandable, because reading and writing are often exclusively related to analysing, while making is related only to artistic creation. However, “poiesis” (from the Greek word for “to make”) is the act of bringing something – anything – into being that didn’t exist before: even a research document. Also, the etymology of the word “theory” invariably includes some version of “to see”, “to spectate”, “to contemplate”. Taking a step back and looking at what you’re making is the beginning of theory. Analysing and creating are two different processes which can’t be done at the same time, but at best in parallel, ^[12] and it’s a good idea to start this parallel approach from the very beginning – don’t wait with either – since each separate process influences the other.

Crucially, this doesn’t mean that writing and reading must always remain analytical, or that practice-based activities are necessarily creative. **Adrian Piper** in her 1980s work *Funk Lessons* ^[18] shared her findings on the intricacies of funk music during a series of participatory social events in which she taught a group of mixed-race participants about black funk and how to dance to it. Piper herself analysed the process as follows: “[funk] is a collective and participatory means of self-transcendence and social union in black culture along many dimensions, and so is often much more fully integrated into daily life. Thus it is based on a system of symbols, cultural meanings, attitudes and patterns of movement that one must directly experience in order to understand fully.” ^[19] One of Piper’s explicit aims in the teaching of theory as well as practice in this participatory manner was “to enable everyone present to GET DOWN AND PARTY. TOGETHER.” Piper also invited a discussion about the music’s cultural and historical background, its meanings, and the roles these play in black culture. “The aim was to transmit and share a physical language that everyone was then empowered to use.” This is also an excellent example of what can be described as sensory knowledge. ^[20]



Process

Guidance & Assistance

PROCESS

↳ GUIDANCE & ASSISTANCE

- ▶ See also:
Acknowledgements,
p. 6, and
Authorship,
Referencing,
Copyright, p. 62
- ▶ See also:
Collectivity, p. 74

- ↻ See also:
Transdisciplinarity
I & II, pp. 78 & 80

RESEARCH IS NEVER A PURELY INDIVIDUAL EFFORT [1]

Although it might seem like something you will have to do all by yourself, there are in fact many other parties involved in any research project, and some projects are almost entirely collaborative. [2] Within an institution, you will be working closely with your research tutor, advisor, or other contact person. Perhaps you have no direct choice in this regard – even then, however, your previous choice of study and/or career path has led you to a group of people with a specific kind of expertise. Also, librarians, workshop staff, former peers, teachers and others will often be able and willing to help you if you ask them nicely. But you might be surprised how much more help you will end up wanting and/or needing.

As you receive help from multiple reviewers that comment on your work as it progresses, it is your job to select those comments that will be fruitful for your process.

Researchers often manage to work together with partners outside of their own field. [3] The intimate ***X-Ray Portraits*** of couples by **Saiko Kanda and Mayuka Hayashi** were made using an MRI scanner, a machine that is by no means part of the standard equipment of an art school. The Japanese photographers who made these images for their graduation project were able to work closely together with the technicians operating the machine. This kind of cooperation demands a solid commitment over time, as you will have to build a relationship of trust with a party that might not share your goals.

CONTENT

Content



WRITING

↳ *Cat's Cradle* – Kurt Vonnegut

Media: science-fiction novel, book, master thesis in anthropology
Published: University of Chicago; Holt Rinehart & Winston
Year: 1963/1971

VISUALS I

↳ *Ways of Seeing* – John Berger & Mike Dibb

Media: television series, book
Published: BBC Two; Penguin
Year: 1972

VISUALS II

↳ *A Moving Border: Alpine Cartographies of Climate Change* –

Studio Folder (Marco Ferrari & Elisa Pasqual) with Andrea Bagnato
Media: book, data visualisation
Published: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City
Image credit: Photo by Delfino Sisto Legnani, courtesy Studio Folder
Year: 2019

61

TOOLS

↳ *A Cookbook of Invisible Writing* – Amy Suo Wu

Media: book, writing, design, drawing, workshops
Published: Onomatopoe
Year: 2019

QUOTING

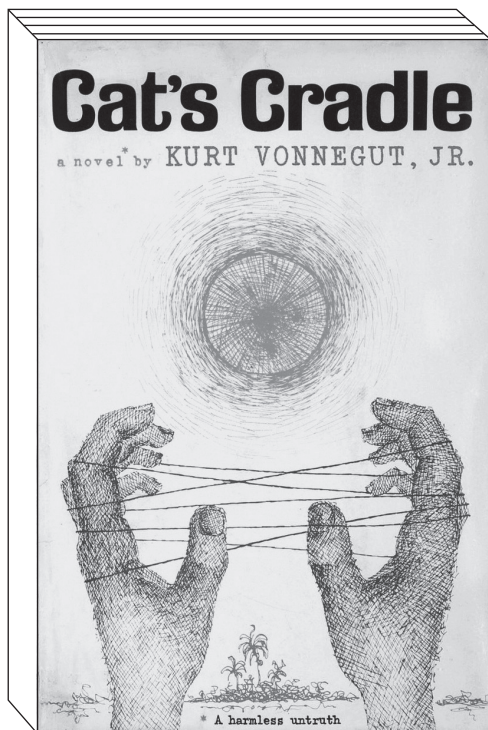
↳ *How Not to Be Seen: A Fucking Didactic Educational .MOV File* –

Hito Steyerl
Medium: 15'52" single-screen video
Published: Artforum
Images: Creative Commons 4.0, courtesy of the artist and
Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York
Year: 2013

AUTHORSHIP, REFERENCING, COPYRIGHT

↳ *This Is Not by Me / Legal Perspective* – Cornelia Sollfrank

Medium: installation
Published: *Anna Kournikova Deleted by Memeright Trusted System* (exhibition), HMKV, Dortmund, Germany
Photo: Christoph Irrgang
Year: 2008



WAYS OF WRITING

In 1971, the famous novelist **Kurt Vonnegut** successfully submitted his science-fiction novel ***Cat's Cradle*** as an anthropology master thesis – the thesis was accepted, presumably, because Vonnegut had found a way to write a story that included all of his original research findings.

In which way, in which style, in which mode should you write? A general rule is that the further you digress from the clearest possible way of writing, the more difficult you're making it for yourself and for others. The clearest way of writing is analytical, rigorous, condensed and conclusive [1] – and, although it can be widely diverse, difficult and dry at times, it never has to be boring.

► See: *Academia*, p. 76

Writing can also be done in many other modes: speculative, dramatic, lyrical, or creative, for instance – and still clearly convey your research findings. Literature can be a form of knowing in its own right. [2] Whichever style or modality you end up writing in, all criteria regarding the content remain

► See: *Forms of Knowing*, p. 86

every bit as valid. However, most research documents aren't pure poetry, the reason being that in poetry each individual reader – not the writer – at least partly gets to decide the meaning of a text, which is unhelpful if you're trying to convey something specific.

Writing fiction is also exceptionally hard to balance with clearly presenting your findings. This is why you shouldn't do it – unless you've decided there's really nothing else you can do. It will only cost you more time. Also, in general, don't start with a certain label or style in mind (speculative, fictional, poetic, etc.) – start only with your research topic and your findings, and just write. Leave it to others to label your work for you.

In rare cases, writing in a more artistic, fictional or poetic mode may turn out to be beneficial. Sometimes a fictional approach can be interspersed with analytical passages, in the same way as illustrations can be used to provide examples, context or clarification. One of my students once wrote a dialogue between three fictional entities, each providing precise descriptions and criticisms of artworks relevant to the student's research question. There's no need to consciously develop a specific writing style – except perhaps if this style is somehow related to your research or design question – instead, just let the style evolve naturally.

When using other ways of writing, don't explain what you're doing – just do it, as well as you can. You can reflect upon your writing in a separate text. ^[P] If the writing is done properly, everyone should understand. Though a more artistic mode of writing will also allow some room for interpretation, this should not have any effect on the clarity with which your research question, findings, sources, examples and conclusions are communicated.

↪ See: *Synopsis*, p.34, and *Abstract*, p. 36

↪ See also: *Further Reading*, p. 128, tag: *writing*

Some more general rules on writing include: ^[P]

- ↪ Start writing as soon as you start your research;
- ↪ Write everything that comes into your head in the first draft, or in plenty of notes, and be prepared to throw it all away again later;
- ↪ Writing is rewriting: though some people are able to write a good research document using just one or two versions and some editing, most people will have to rewrite everything at least three times. If you're writing fiction, be prepared to rewrite everything up to ten times;
- ↪ There's no point in trying to write in the style of what you are researching. Kurt Vonnegut was not researching science fiction.

Ways of Seeing

John Berger



Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak.

But there is also another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled.



The Surrealist painter Magritte commented on this always-present gap between words and seeing in a painting called *The Key of Dreams*.

The way we see things is affected by what we





The meaning of an image can be changed according to what you see beside it or what comes after it.

“WRITING” WITH IMAGES

You will often encounter the word “reading” in this book, more often than not in a broad sense that includes not only written language but also visual language – or any other kind of language, for that matter.

I could have chosen almost any of the examples described in this book as a demonstration of how people “write” with images – In the end, I settled for **John Berger**’s classic 1970s work ***Ways of Seeing***, simply because almost everybody knows it. And yet, although most people know very well that it consists of both a TV documentary and a book – and probably also because the TV series is so good – not everyone bothers to read the book. If you do read it, you’ll notice that, even though chapters 4 and 6 consist entirely of images, they are no less “readable” than the other chapters. This is a great example of how you can share research and present an argumentation in a purely visual form. You could argue that ***Ways of Seeing*** is an essay, not a research document – to which I would counter that, in this instance, what matters is the approach, and that this particular approach can just as well be applied in a research document.

“Reading” in the context of research is not the same as interpretation, because your intention is to arrive at an intersubjective reading between yourself, your advisors, your peers, and any other relevant audience. This means that any visuals you use must be contextualised and positioned so that your research can be “read” in a way that transcends any personal interpretation. In fact, you should approach visual materials exactly as you would approach text. [►] To make sure that your work comes across as intended, invite others to “read” it, and ask them for their commentary. [►]

► See: *Structuring II*, p. 98

► See also: *Further Reading*, p.128, tag: *visual argumentation*



Content



Visuals II

USING DIFFERENT KINDS OF IMAGES IN A VISUAL ARCHIVE

Visuals that are the result of your own efforts can be every bit as important for your narrative as visuals from existing archives – and all should be approached with the same degree of care and precision. Most images that are worth using cannot be simply searched online (Google Images is not a source). Instead, you should find sources from specific online publications, libraries, or websites such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, The Internet Archive, or Wikimedia Commons. Better still, go to on-site media libraries or research stations, visit artists' and designers' studios or archives – or make your own documentation of physical archive materials.

The device depicted in the image on the left, from the project **A Moving Border**, is part of a measurement system designed to track small changes in the border between Austria and Italy. Parts of this border follow the natural boundary of the Alpine watershed, crossing snowfields and glaciers which are now melting, resulting in shifts along the physical border. **Studio Folder** (Marco Ferrari and Elisa Pasqual, working together here with Andrea Bagnato) surveyed these changes in real time, demonstrating quite visibly the destabilising effects of climate change.

Studio Folder not only created their own visuals while tracking these changing borders, but travelled to the affected glaciers to actually see what was going on, documenting their observations through photography. They also included diagrams made by scientists showing how glaciers melt, as well as historical maps and charts from national and local archives – once drawn by previous researchers, who had determined the location of the border at a time when it was still relatively stable. Studio Folder's research was thus informed by a wide variety of visual materials.

It's important to note that carefully collecting images from existing archives can actually be more time-consuming than making your own. A visual archive can be a great tool for becoming well-acquainted with your subject in an intuitive way – keep in mind, however, that a collection of images does not constitute an archive until all the materials have been properly sorted and referenced. [►]

► See: *Structuring I*,
p. 96



a



b



c



d



e



f



g



h



i



j



k



l



m



n



o



p



q



r



s



t



u



v



w



x



y



z