

Suspensions of Perception decisively relocates the problem of aesthetic contemplation within a broader collective encounter with the unstable nature of perception—in psychology, philosophy, neurology, early cinema, and photography.

MIT Press , As evidence, he cites the work of such figures as Henri Bergson, Wilhelm Dilthey, Thomas Edison, Wilhelm Wundt, and numerous others in the overlapping fields of optics, philosophy, physiology, psychology, and sociology. Crary is less concerned with attention, however, than with the notion of attentiveness, an entity comprising both attention and distraction. *Suspensions of Perception* situates this continuum within modern culture, a culture that in the pages of the book appears almost exclusively French, German, and Anglo-American and Freudian. As an example, he discusses the links between hypnotism both as a scientific phenomenon and as a form of popular entertainment and the notion of efficiency. The conceptual understanding of modern subjectivity, he maintains, reflected the management and social control of the industrial subject. The MIT Press, and several related essays. These described a shift in the European understanding of vision in the period between and , from a stable model exemplified by the camera obscura to a physiological conception, subjective and uncertain. *Suspensions of Perception* thus in some ways reads as a sequel to the earlier book, applying similar historical concerns to later material, mobilizing a stunning array of evidence, and more than doubling its precursor in size. While Crary presents treatments of attentiveness both in written texts and in the realm of scientific instruments, by his own account his study is anchored in the analyses of three paintings that exemplify his theme at three historical moments. Whereas paintings appeared only in passing in *Techniques*, three chapters of the present book are oriented, more or less, around three works of art. Given this historical claim, his book would seem to demand, How does one discuss visual representations—and, indeed, some of the canonical works of French modernism? Cyberspace editors permit only a cursory treatment of his achievements. Interpretations of particular works of art and analyses of the field of attentiveness frequently inform and enforce each other within the book, particularly in the chapter on Seurat, where Crary grounds his argument in a highly attentive formal analysis while engaging the histories of optics, philosophy, psychology, and art. *Parade de Cirque*, he writes, presents the prevailing late nineteenth-century response to modernity: A methodology of plethora, however, prompts questions about the criteria for inclusion. Additional references do not necessarily further his thesis, and the presence of some figures and disciplines evokes the absence of others. While Crary places philosophy, optics, and art within the history of vision, for example, he ignores parallel developments in the field of visual theory. Contemporary French thought, in turn, appears to function as proof of the truth value of earlier ideas. They appear like snapshots, detached from any discussion of the evolving relations between individual spectators and the group audience, shifting analyses of crowd psychology, and the development of the notion of distraction itself. Given the occasional absence of publication information in footnote citations, the inconsistent spelling of proper names poor Hugo von Hofmannsthal! But every distraction, as Crary might argue, is an attention paid somewhere else. The same holds true for *Suspensions of Perception*. Reviews and essays are licensed to the public under a under a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.

Chapter 2 : Suspensions of Perception - Jonathan Crary

"Suspensions of Perception" is a major historical study of human attention and its volatile role in modern Western culture. It argues that the ways in which we intently look at or listen to anything result from crucial changes in the nature of perception that can be traced back to the second half of.

Biography[edit] Crary attended high school at the Putney School in Vermont. He graduated from Columbia College where he was an art history major. In he received his Ph. D from Columbia as well. Crary also earned a B. In he began teaching at Columbia. Writing[edit] His Suspensions of Perception focuses on the period from about to , exploring the second half of the nineteenth century in which a new way of seeing was introduced. Crary describes this shift as an emergence of subjective vision. Therefore, this new way of seeing was thought of as unclear, unreliable, and always questioned among a large population of people. Techniques of the Observer was published in and translated into nine foreign languages. Crary has contributed to the Film Theory and Criticism anthology. Crary was co-editor of the volume Incorporations Zone Books. Today Crary continues to be a co-editor of Zone Books. Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep. London and New York: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture. Techniques of the Observer: Photographs by Joel Sternfeld , text by Crary. Virilio, Paul , and Jonathan Crary. The Aesthetics of Disappearance. MIT Press paperback ed.

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Levine From the Reviews: Similarly the illustrative quotes chosen here are merely those the complete review subjectively believes represent the tenor and judgment of the review as a whole. We acknowledge and remind and warn you that they may, in fact, be entirely unrepresentative of the actual reviews by any other measure. Each of them engaged in a singular confrontation with the disruptions, vacancies, and rifts within a perceptual field; each of them made unprecedented discoveries about the indeterminacy of an attentive perception but also how its instabilities could be the basis for a reinvention of perceptual experience and of representational practices. The focus on attention is a particularly useful one, examining the sense of perception and the new ways of considering it that arose at that time of history -- both from a physiological and psychological standpoint, as well as from a technological one. Three sections on the individual artists and specifically the three representative paintings then follow, each emphasizing successive different aspects of the "problem of attention". A brief final chapter, *Spellbound in Rome* offers a short conclusion in which Cray uses a letter from Freud written in Rome, describing a stay there to his family, disclosing "the transformed status of an observer" to reiterate his point. The writing and presentation are dense, and there is an enormous amount of varied material on a wide range of subjects. Cray tries to juggle many balls at the same time, and occasionally one loses track of one or several of them. His discussions of the art are interesting, though some of the explanations are heavily jargon laden. The many references footnotes are often useful and show the range of his ambition, but some of it bogs the text down, especially for the layman-reader. The wealth of explanations -- Cray leaves no stone unturned in his quest, and provides bases for his argument in everything from psychological books of the time to theories of vision to the latest technological advances -- can also be overwhelming. Some of the gadgetry of the time -- from shadow projections to tachistoscopes -- provides another useful means of illustrating his various points. Overall, however, he overwhelms the reader with his evidence. *Suspensions of Perception* is an impressive book, a detailed and careful analysis. Worthy of careful study -- there is a wealth of material here, and a fundamentally interesting point -- it is also not a welcoming read. Much of the writing can be daunting, especially with its many references. Cray tries to explain as much as possible, but there is, in fact, so much that is presented here that the reader likely still feels at sea. The volume is richly illustrated with diagrams, photographs, and reproductions of paintings and drawings. Disappointingly, there are no colour reproductions -- everything is in black and white, which somewhat lessens the value of the illustrations. Links to colour reproductions of the three central painting can be found below.

Chapter 4 : Editions of Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture by Jonathan

Suspensions of Perception is a major historical study of human attention and its volatile role in modern Western culture. It argues that the ways in which we intently look at or listen to anything result from crucial changes in the nature of perception that can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 5 : Jonathan Cray - Wikipedia

Suspensions of Perception is an impressive book, a detailed and careful analysis. Worthy of careful study -- there is a wealth of material here, and a fundamentally interesting point -- it is also not a welcoming read.

Chapter 6 : Suspensions of Perception | MIT CogNet

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encounter with the unstable nature of perception--in psychology, philosophy, neurology, early cinema, and photography.

Chapter 7 : Crary, Suspensions of Perception, annotation by Dan Knox

Suspensions of Perception Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture Jonathan Crary An OCTOBER Book The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England.

Chapter 8 : Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture by Jonathan Crary

Suspensions of Perception however is hardly art theory, nor is that its concern. Rather, these paintings become privileged sites through which Crary traces "how normative conceptions of attention intersected with problems of cognitive and perceptual synthesis" (79) in the late nineteenth century.

Chapter 9 : Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture - Jonathan Crary - Google

Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture by Jonathan Crary MIT Press, Jonathan Crary's Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Mod-ernity in the Nineteenth Century brought together an unconventionally wide range of cultural materials to unsettle the entrenched notion that European painting of the late nineteenth century inaugurated modernity's rupture.