

The Centre for Sensory Studies is pleased to present

THE WINTER SEMESTER SENSORY STUDIES RESEARCH SEMINAR

Picturing Aura: On Visual Media, Esoteric Vision, and the Representation of Radiant Bodies

**Speaker: Speaker: Dr. Jeremy Stolow, Associate Professor and
Program Director, PhD in Communication, Concordia University**

This presentation will provide an overview and interim report on Dr. Stolow's current research project, which surveys the range of optical instruments and visual media technologies used by psychic researchers, alternative health practitioners, and spiritual service providers, all of whom share an interest in trying to detect, visualize and pictorially represent mysterious spiritual forces: specifically, the "vital energy" that some claim radiates from our human bodies and is referred to as our "aura." From the "photographie des effluves" undertaken in the late nineteenth century, to the international spread of Kirlian photography in the Cold War period, to present-day applications of advanced digital imaging technologies to photo-document and interpret "human energy fields," evolving visual media technologies have served as instruments of scientific measurement and representation and at the same time as vehicles of extrasensory perception and supernatural vision. Referencing selected case studies, Dr. Stolow's project seeks to understand how such visual media have contributed to competing epistemological, aesthetic, and cosmological claims about the existence of invisible, radiant forces that extend beyond the human body. On that basis he mounts a critique of the ways scholars have conventionally (and quite artificially) approached the study of science, medicine, religion, and spirituality as disconnected domains of knowledge and practice.

When: Friday, January 30, 12:00-1:30

Where: Room H-1120, Hall Building, 1455 de Maisonneuve W.
(Metro Guy-Concordia)

Open to the public.

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