

ANG 5395 Sect 3299 Visual Anthropology - Spring 2011
Classroom: Norman Hall G512
Days/Periods/Hours: Mondays (9-11) 4:05-7:05 PM
Exam Day/Time: No Final Exam But Final Presentation (TBA)
Instructor: marilyn m. thomas-houston, ph.d.
Office Hours: W 11:00 – 12 Noon, 1:00 – 2:30,
5:30 – 6 PM & By Appointment
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Listserv: SPRING-3299-L@lists.ufl.edu



COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course focuses on ethnography as a form of representation of cultures by analyzing and questioning the construction of cultures through old and new media such as film, video, photography, computers, and other digital technology. It takes a heuristic approach to learning. Students are introduced to the history of ethnographic film and contemporary changes that have widened the possibilities of Visual Anthropology as a recognized sub-field. The comparison of several visual ethnographers through their works provides a good overview of the variety of practices. Critical theory, methods, and ethical concerns are important to understanding the development of the field and as such these issues will be raised. Voices of indigenous populations have historically been problematic in all anthropology; therefore, particular attention is given to issues of cross-cultural representation, colonial and post-colonial representations, as well as feminist approaches to ethnography. Finally, the culture of social relations between media artists and community, and the processes of production will be discussed.

In addition to reading and writing exercises, the course has a practice (lab) feature in its content. Very few anthropologists go into the field without a camera. How to make use of the technology beyond the posed or out of context shots of cultural groups is an important portion of the class. Visual Anthropology has the unique ability to produce ethnographic data for research as well as for mass audiences. Therefore, understanding the technical and methodological approaches to producing ethnographic images for both research and public consumption are important skills to develop. Students are encouraged to use office hours. **Personal appointments must be requested through email.**

This course is only an introduction that focuses on incorporating anthropological understandings into photography, video, and the World Wide Web. While students will become familiar with ethnographic and other documentary approaches in multimedia, and will carry out projects with digital media, the course **will not offer in-depth training in the mechanics of photography, lighting, videography, or editing.** However, each student will have general understandings about the production process and working knowledge of Final Cut Pro by the end of the semester.

Objectives:

On completion of the course, students should be able to: 1) demonstrate a solid understanding of the history of ethnographic film, 2) explain a variety of theoretical approaches, 3) comprehend and compare the process of constructing media, and 4) critically analyze the forms of interaction and self-reflexivity involved in producing visual ethnographic products, 5) produce 10-12 minute videos of social significance for FLAVA Showcase.

Requirements and Evaluation:***

Class attendance and Lab participation is 100% mandatory and each unexcused absence will count as 3 missed class days **(10%)**. **Two page response papers*** for each week's reading, movie, and website assignment **(10%)**. Papers, due on assigned day, are to be both emailed by 8 AM to: thomas-houston@fmpp-inc.org and brought to class for the purpose of discussion on due dates. The papers should be critical responses to a specific issue you find important and would like to discuss in class. Students are required to keep a **Journal** that will be turned in at the end of the semester **(15%)**. All other written work must be turned in electronically through email. **Visual technique exercises** to be presented in class five individual exercises **(5%)** and five group exercises **(10%)**. Treat all visual technique exercises as formal presentations. All visual projects must be turned in on CD or DVD at the end of the semester. Each student and group will be assigned a Blog Site for communicating to the class and their group. Each group is expected to meet personally at least once a week either in person or through Skype. **Group final project, final presentation, and final evaluation (25%)**. This project consists of the submission of a complete IRB form and Consent Form (and any support materials) to the university's board, an in-class presentation of final project, and evaluation of all final projects based on sound anthropological and technological knowledge. **The final signed version of IRB (IRB02) protocol <http://irb.ufl.edu/> and accompanying Consent Form must be turned in to the IRB no later than Feb. 25th. One major formal paper**** about the production of your group project **(25%)**.

Equipment and Technology: Each student must own or have access to a digital still camera, digital video camera, and a computer with a CD/DVD burner and connected to the Internet. Email capable of sending and receiving large files (up to 10 mb) is necessary for communicating and a FTP Client such as Fetch and FileZilla are also needed for the class. **PLEASE DISCUSS ANY EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS/NEEDS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR EARLY IN THE SEMESTER.**

Reading Assignments will be placed in the on-line reserve of the university library system or emailed when necessary.

Course Outline (All dates are tentative and subject to change with advance notice.)

Week 1 – Introduction to Course and Anthropology for Non-Anthro Majors

1/10 – The Course: What to Expect, What you Need, and What you Do

Explore the Following Websites:

www.aaanet.org/

<http://societyforvisualanthropology.org/>

<http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/Code-of-Ethics.cfm>

<http://www.understandingrace.org/home.html>

Week 2 -- Introduction to Course Continued (Martin Luther King Holiday – No Class)

1/17– Introductions to Anthropology and Visual Anthropology

Assigned Readings: (CLASS DOES NOT MEET BUT FIRST 2-PAGE PAPER DUE 8AM ON 1/19/11)

Ruby, Jay (2000-2001) The Professionalize of Visual Anthropology: Anthropology in the United States: The 1960s and 1970s. *Visual Anthropology Review*. Vol 17. No. 2 pp. 5-12.

Ruby, Jay (1996) Anthropology. In *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*, David Levinson and Melvin Ember, editors. New York: Henry Holt and Company, vol. 4:1345-1351.

Week 3 – Origins, technology, and social significance

1/24 – History of Visual Anthropology (Group Assignments Made)

Groups Assigned (Check email after 8 PM)

de Heusch, Luc (2007)'Jean Rouch and the Birth of Visual Anthropology: A Brief History of the Comité international du film ethnographique', *Visual Anthropology*, 20: 5, 365 — 386

Farnell, Brenda (2003) Birdshistell, Hall, Lomax and the Origins of Visual Anthropology. *Visual Anthropology*, 16:43-55.

Marcus, Alan (2006)'Nanook of the North as Primal Drama', *Visual Anthropology*, 19: 3, 201 — 222

[View Online *Nanook of the North* and discuss](#)

Week 4 – The Politics of Visual Representation I

1/31 - **Style and Judging a Book by its Cover Due**

Assigned Readings:

Smith, Trudi (2007)'Repeat Photography as a Method in Visual Anthropology', *Visual Anthropology*, 20: 2, 179 — 200

Edwards, Elizabeth 1997 Beyond the Boundary: a consideration of the expressive in photography and anthropology. *In* Rethinking Visual Anthropology. M. Banks and H. Morphy, eds. London: Routledge. Pp. 53-80.

Stoller, Paul (1994) Ethnographies as Texts/Ethnographers as Griots. *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 21, Issue 2 (May, 1994), 353-366.

Week 5 – Ethical Concerns I

2/7 - **Final project idea & Autobiography - Due**

Assigned Readings:

Jordan, David K. (1981) The Ethnographic Enterprise and the Bureaucratization of Ethics: The Problem of Human Subjects Legislation. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Winter, 1981), pp. 415-419

Simeon W. Chilungu (1976) Issues in the Ethics of Research Method: An Interpretation of the Anglo-American Perspective. *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 17, No. 3. (Sep., 1976), pp. 457-481.

Ginsburg, Faye (1994) Culture/Media: A (Mild) Polemic. *Anthropology Today*, Volume 10, Issue 2 (Apr., 1994) 5-15.

[View Online *Magical Death* and discuss](#)

Week 6 – Clarifying Visual Technologies Theories I

2/14 - **Representing “The Other” – Due**

Assigned Readings:

Ruby, Jay (1991) Speaking For, Speaking About, Speaking With, or Speaking Alongside—An Anthropological and Documentary Dilemma. *Visual Anthropology Review* 7(2):50-67.

MacDougall, David (1998) Whose Story Is It? *In* Transcultural Cinema Pp:150-164.

Week 7 – Clarifying Visual Technologies Theories II

2/21 – **Anthropology in Cyberspace – Due**

Final Version of Consent Form and Draft of IRB (IRB02) - <http://irb.ufl.edu/> - Due

Week 7 Continued on next page.

Assigned Readings:

- Pink, Sarah 2003 Representing the sensory home: ethnographic experience and anthropological hypermedia. *Social analysis* — Adelaide 47(3): 46-63.
- Burnett President, Ron (2007)'Cultures in Webs', *Visual Anthropology*, 20:2, 259 — 260
- Pauwels, Luc (2006)'Ethical Issues of Online (Visual) Research', *Visual Anthropology*, 19: 3, 365 — 369
- Escobar, Arturo (1994) Welcome to Cyberia: Notes on the Anthropology of Cyberculture. *Current Anthropology*. Vol. 35, No. 3, (June 1994), 211-231.

[View Jaguar and discuss](#)

Week 8 – The Politics of Visual Representation II

2/28 - Lab Experimentation (Bring your external hard drives with sample footage and cameras) Final Cut

Tutorial - Different Editing Techniques - Interview Techniques

Assigned Readings:

- Sherwin, Richard K., Feigenson, Neal and Spiesel, Christina (2007)'What Is Visual Knowledge, and What Is It Good For? Potential Ethnographic Lessons from the Field of Legal Practice', *Visual Anthropology*, 20: 2, 143 — 178

Week 9 - SPRING BREAK

3/7 – HAVE A GREAT BREAK

Week 10 – Indigenous Media/Anthro in Reverse /Critiques

3/14 – **Cultural Preservation. – DUE**

- Ginsburg, Faye (1991) Indigenous Media: Faustian Contract or Global Village? *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 6, No. 1, (Feb 1991), pp. 92-112.

Michaels, Eric 1991 Aboriginal Content: Who's Got It—Who Needs It? *Visual Anthropology* 4:277-300.

[View Reassemblage and discuss](#)

Week 11 -- Autobiographical/Indigenous Ethnography

3/21 – **Messages through Movement. - Due**

Assigned Readings:

- Minh-ha, Trinh T. 1992 *Framer Framed* (excerpts). New York: Routledge.
- Turner, Terence (1992) Defiant Images: The Kayapo Appropriation of Video. *Anthropology Today*. Vol. 8, No. 6 (Dec., 1992), pp. 5-16
- Gracki, Katherine. 2001 True Lies. *Pacific Coast Philology* 36:48-63

[View Online N!ai the Story of a !Kung Woman and discuss.](#)

Week 12 -- Key Contemporary Issues I

3/28 – **Autobiographical/Indigenous Ethnography - Due**

Assigned Readings:

- Burrows, Inga (2005) The Experience and the Object: Making a Documentary Video Installation. *In Visualizing Anthropology*.
- Tiragallo, Felice (2007)'Embodiment of the Gaze: Vision, Planning, and Weaving between Filmic Ethnography and Cultural Technology', *Visual Anthropology*, 20:2, 201 — 219
- Deger, Jennifer (2007)'Seeing the Invisible: Yolngu Video as Revelatory Ritual', *Visual Anthropology*, 20: 2, 103 — 121

[View Online First Contact and discuss.](#)

Week 13 -- Key Contemporary Issues II

4/4 – **Interviews & Interaction (These exercises can be combined) - Due**

Assigned Readings:

- Barbash, Ilisa and Lucien Taylor (1997) Interviews. *In Cross-Cultural Filmmaking*. Berkeley: University of California Press Pp: 341-357.
- Grassilli, Mariagiulia (2007)'Anthropology and Cinema: Visual Representations of Human Rights, Displacement and Resistance in Come Back Africa, by Lionel Rogosin', *Visual Anthropology*, 20: 2, 221 — 232
- Nancy Christine Lutkehaus; Dennis O'Rourke (1989) "Excuse Me, Everything Is Not All Right": On Ethnography, Film, and Representation: An Interview with Filmmaker Dennis O'Rourke. *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 4, No. 4. (Nov., 1989), pp. 422-437

[View Cannibal Tours and discuss.](#)

Week 14 - Working with a Storyboard

4/11 – **Storyboard - Due**

Assigned Readings:

Storyboard Examples (No Paper Due)

[View Forest of Bliss and discuss.](#)

Week 15

4/18 – DEDICATED PRODUCTION HOURS

Final Project Presentations

FLAVA Exhibition Date TBA - Final Project: Visualizing Society and Culture

Project descriptions. All in-class presentations are to be considered formal presentations. (Note IRB and Consent are not counted as Lab Projects):

- 1. Judging a Book by its Cover (Ind. Lab):** Select the title of a paper presented for any class or conference and design a book cover that helps explain the content of the paper. Ask a class member to critique your work and revise the book cover incorporating the suggestions. Be prepared to explain your decisions.

Style (Ind. Lab): Go to the art/architecture library or look online and find a photographer whose style is interesting to you. Pay special attention to how she/he frames shots and what sort of equipment is used. Select 5 images that illustrate this style and present the photographer to the class.
– DUE WEEK 4
- 2. Autobiography (Ind. Lab):** Study your personal space and document in a written text the ways in which that physical environment visually symbolizes who you are. Next photograph that environment and construct a photo essay exhibit or web page (with no more than 10 images) that represents that understanding. Remember the medium is to be primarily visual; therefore, the visual project should “show” rather than “tell.”
– DUE WEEK 5
- 3. Representing “The Other” (Ind. Lab):** Find an individual whose social or cultural practices are different than your own. With permission capture a day-in-the-life of that person. The visuals should reveal activities as well as say something about the social/cultural life of the individual as well as capture personality. This project may be presented in either photos or video (with no more than 10 images or 2 minutes video). Each student is to write a two-page paper explaining at least one problem incurred in carrying out this project and suggest a solution. Framing is important to this exercise. Incorporate a variety of shots to add depth and understanding to your visuals. – DUE WEEK 6
- 4. Anthropology in Cyberspace (Ind. Lab):** Choose one of the two exercises described below. 1) Critique an existing website designed to develop social or cultural consciousness. Include in your critique suggestions for improvement. You should be able to link to the site in class and then combine your critique with the links. Visual creativity is expected in your presentation. 2) Choose an anthropological topic and design a web site for its content. The site does not have to be functional in terms of links therefore; you can use PhotoShop or other graphics programs to design the site. The site should include no more than 10 pages. – DUE WEEK 7
- 5. Group Exercise. Consent Form and First Draft of IRB (IRB02) <http://irb.ufl.edu/>.** (*ALL EXERCISES FROM THIS POINT ARE GROUP ASSIGNMENTS.*) Construct a consent form suitable for use with your group project. Visit the following web site, view several IRB formats, and construct first draft of IRB form, which will be submitted to the research committee for approval. <http://irb.ufl.edu/> Read the opening page then follow the link for IRB-02: UF Campus/Non-Medical. You will find links for copies of the UFIRB forms and sample Informed Consent documents. Your consent form should look more like a narrative than a formal contract. – DUE WEEK 8
- 6. Cultural Preservation (Group Lab):** Find a cultural practice or social phenomenon you believe will

soon disappear and document it as an example of the value of “salvage” ethnography. Try to reveal “why” the practice is disappearing. Be certain to capture the custom in a way that others may be able to understand it in the future when no former practitioners exist. This project should be presented in the most appropriate format for the activity. (i.e., photos, video, PowerPoint) – DUE WEEK 9

7. **Messages through Movement (Group Lab):** Anthropologists focus on social and cultural behavior. Find an activity that reveals cultural worldviews or ideologies and capture the actions that reflect either or both. This is a video exercise. This project should try to incorporate some element of your final project. It should be no longer than two minutes. – DUE WEEK 11
8. **Autobiographical/Indigenous Ethnography (Group Lab):** Ask a person in a profession outside of the university setting to take 10 photographs that reveal what it means to be a person involved in such an occupation. Analyze the pictures and share the group’s understanding with that individual. Be prepared to share what you have learned from the exercise in class. – DUE WEEK 12
9. **Interviews (Group Lab):** Conduct three interviews that will be used in your final project, either as background research or as footage. Be ready to show clips of the video and discuss what worked and did not work with the interviews in class.

Interaction (Group Lab): Anthropologists focus on social and cultural behavior. As part of your final project find an interaction that reveals cultural worldviews or ideologies within the area you are investigating for your final project and capture an exchange that reflects these interactions. The project should be no longer than three minutes or fifteen images. – DUE WEEK 13

10. **Storyboard (Group Lab):** Create a series of diagrams to depict the visual composition of your final video or website project. Each diagram should consist of: a sketch of the video or webpage image; a brief description of the visuals; notes for the camera operator/editor; the details of the desired audio that will accompany the visual; and an estimate of how long the segment will be. The storyboard should be placed in order to provide a foundation for capturing (additional) footage/photographs and for making the correct editing/web-design decisions. – DUE WEEK 14
11. **Final Project (Group Lab): Visualizing Society and Culture.** The final project can be a still museum-style instillation, video, or web-based presentation. Choose a social issue of which visuals will be able to advance anthropological theory and/or critique a social phenomenon. Video projects should be designed to be no longer than 12 minutes long. If the final project is a web project, it should have between 10-20 pages. The final project will be presented in class at the end of the semester, which is generally planned to be a public showing. Groups will have a total of 20 minutes to set up and present their project. This time limit includes a 5-minute Q & A section.

Each group member will write a 10 to 15-page formal essay. The author will choose the work of a particular ethnographic/visual anthropologist or methodological approach to production and compare/describe the work of the filmmaker or the approach to his or her own group production. Each author will include the anthropological concept, or issue that is the focus of the group project, the research methods incorporated, the working conditions of your group, as well as a guide for viewing the project and the overall socio-cultural-theoretical significance of the project. Be certain to include your citations. The paper counts for one half of the final project grade. – DUE FINAL PRESENTATION DAY (TBA)

Final Project Evaluation is the final activity of the course where each student gets the opportunity to reveal what he or she has learned in the class. Students are asked to evaluate each group project based on the readings, viewings, and discussions. The ratings of the projects are to be justified, thus giving each evaluator an opportunity to show what he or she knows. The grade for the evaluation will be based on how well the evaluator justifies the rating.

Final Project Presentation is related to participation in the Q & A period of the final projects. It relates both having relevant questions and comments as well as good responses.

***Two-page response papers format.** Minimum of two-pages (no more than three), double-spaced, one-inch margins and 12 pt Times normal font. All papers must be saved as .doc files. Papers should be saved in the following manner: YourLastName-FirstInitial_Week#-ItemDescription.doc Examples: Baker-L_Week#2-ResponsePaper, Baker-L_Week#7-IRBConsentForm

***“Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](#). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows: Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment, which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>) University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](#). Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.”

(Accessed Jan. 7, 2011 from <http://www.writing.ufl.edu/PolicyStatementsPlagiarism.html>)

All students are encouraged to join FlaVA, the visual anthropology student organization of the University of Florida.

***GRADING SYSTEM

Grade Points		Grade Scale
Two-page papers	10 pts.	A = 90 or above
Journal	15 pts.	A- = 87-89
Attendance	10 pts.	B+ = 84-86
Ind. Visual Techniques	5 pts.	B- = 77-79
Group Visual Techniques	10 pts.	C+ = 74-76
Final Project	10 pts.	C = 70-73
Final Project Evaluation	10 pts.	C- = 67-69
Final Project Presentation	5 pts.	D+ = 64-66
Final Paper	<u>25 pts.</u>	D = 60-63
TOTAL	100 pts.	D- = 57-59
		E = 56 or below