
MEDIA AND ETHNOGRAPHY in Fall 2018 (AN3049)

Course Code	AN3049	Professor(s)	Noemie Oxley
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-305
Class Schedule	MR: 12:10-13:30 in PL-1	Office Hours	Mon-Thurs 15:30-17:00, and by appointment
Credits	4	Email	noxley@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2018	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

The course is a cross cultural and ethnographic study of media cross cultures. It will engage the students in an anthropological critique of how mass media, from cinema to television and Internet, has been/is employed in representing and constructing both the West and the non-West. It addresses the role of media in the construction of the “other” and the imagining of culture, and questions these matters in the context of the digital revolution. It explores how social contexts determine what pictures are taken, what one listens to on the radio and how video production is organized and structured to produce meaning. Students will explore the opportunities and limitations of indigenous media through a historical analysis of representation/self representation. The course raises the issue of how media texts shape attitudes, ideas and social structure and how members of society engage with these texts. Students will reflect especially on the impact of social media and, to a larger extent, Internet, on the construction of identity and representations of self and others.

The course is structured around 6 different themes.

1. The introduction to the course takes up some of the fundamental texts that have formed media ethnography especially the relationship between technology and mediation. It also introduces students to visual anthropology and how media was initially used within anthropology.
2. The second theme “Representing the other through media” discusses and brings up the topic of the Western gaze and the imperial imagery which have left their mark on our understanding and interpretation of the “Other.” We will view an old classic ethnographic movie and discuss how this and other ways of imagining the other have contributed to the colonial project.
3. The third theme takes up how communities have used and adopted media for self-representation, specifically in order to claim their indigenous rights or advocate for their own media channels.
4. The fourth theme discusses the importance of recognizing the audience as an active participant in the creation and production of meaning. It discusses the role of reception studies and how ethnography have been essential to understanding mediation, as well as addressing the transformation of the role and function of the "audience" in the context of social media.

5. In the fifth section media is discussed in relation to the project of nation building and the creation of imagined communities. It is also linked to the transnational circulation of goods and people through the use of media and the role of Internet in the globalization of culture and the internationalization of communication.

6. In the sixth section the course raises the importance of ethnographically studying the sites of media production. Reading case studies from different geographical areas and focusing on different types of media and new media, media is studied as a technology and an artefact that carry the meaning.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to analyze the meaning that people attribute to mass mediated images and aural media (reception studies).

Students will learn to critically apply the theories from the readings to contemporary issues of representation and self representation

Students will gain an understanding of how historical and contemporary ideologies, national politics and economic interests are embedded in the mediascapes/media representations that surround us.

Students will learn to collect ethnographic data on media practices and critically analyze the material while reflecting on the ethical aspects of conducting research.

Students will be able to provide cross cultural examples of how media is produced and consumed in different parts of the world

Students will learn to tell compelling stories, and produce quality “podcasts” on a theme linked to Media Ethnography.

General Education

[PLEASE EDIT OR REMOVE THE FOLLOWING TEXT AS APPLICABLE]

The general education program at AUP consists of four requirements: Speaking the World, Modeling the World, Mapping the World, and Comparing Worlds Past and Present.

This course can be used to fulfill the [INDICATE THE REQUIREMENT(S) FULFILLED BY THE COURSE] requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

[INDICATE THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES]

Course Outline

CLASS SCHEDULE:

(This Schedule might be subjected to changes.)

September:

Week I – 10th -14th: Introduction to the course

Monday 10th - Session I

TOPICS: An Introduction to the discipline

Thursday 13th - Session II

TOPICS: The value of ethnography

READINGS: Didier Fassin. “Why Ethnography Matters: On Anthropology and Its Publics” (Av. On BB).

September 16th – last day to drop/add courses online

Week II - 17th - 21th : Defining the field and classic texts I

Monday 17th - Session I

TOPICS: THE MEDIUM AND TECHNOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF MEDIA

READING: *The Anthropology of Media, A Reader*, Ch. 1. McLuhan, “The Medium is the Message”, and Ch. 2, Williams, “The Technology and the Society”.

Thursday 20th - Session II

TOPICS: EARLY USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN ANTHROPOLOGY

READINGS: *The Anthropology of Media, A Reader*, Ch. 3 Mead and Bateson, “On the use of the Camera in Anthropology” and Ch. Berger, “The Ambiguity of the Photograph”.

Week III - 24th – 28nd: Defining the field and classic texts II

Monday 24th - Session I

TOPICS: VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY EMERGES AS A DISCIPLINE.

READINGS: Marcus Banks, Howard Morphy (eds.). *Rethinking Visual Anthropology*. “Introduction”.

Thursday 27th - Session II

TOPICS: WHO’S STORY IS IT?

READINGS: Peter Ian Crawford and David Turton, *Film as Ethnography* Ch. 1: Kirsten Harstrup. “Anthropological Visions: some Notes on Visual and Textual Authority”; OR Marcus Banks and Jay Ruby (eds.). *Made to Be seen* Ch. 7: Jay Ruby and Matthew Durlington. “Ethnographic Film” (Both BB)

October

Week IV – 1st - 5th : Representing the “Other” through media I

Monday 1st - Session I

TOPICS: WHOSE STORY IS IT (continuation and conclusion)

READINGS: Film Screening: Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Veronal Varanel, *Leviathan*, 2012.

Thursday 4th - Session II

TOPICS: THE GAZE OF WESTERN HUMANISM

READINGS: *The Anthropology of Media*. Ch. 6: James Faris. “The Gaze of Western Humanism.”

Week V – 8nd - 12th: Representing the “Other through Media II

Monday 8th - Session I

TOPICS: NANOOK OF THE NORTH AND THE ROMANTIC QUEST OF THE EXPLORER

READINGS: Anna Grimshaw. *The Ethnographer’s Eye. Ways of Seeing in Anthropology*. Ch. “The Innocent Eye: Flaherty, Malinowski and the romantic quest”.

Thursday 11th - Session II

TOPICS: IMPERIAL IMAGERY AND THE OTHER

READINGS: *The Anthropology of Media*. Ch. 8 Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. “The Imperial Imagery”; Excerpts from Cynthia Levine-Rasky. *Whiteness Fractured*.

Week VI - 15th - 19th Representing Selves

Monday 15th - Session I

TOPICS: INDIGENOUS MEDIA

READINGS: Jay Ruby and Marcus Banks. *Made to Be Seen*. Ch 9: Faye Ginsburg. “A Short History of Debates on Indigenous Media and Ethnographic Film”; Or *Media World*. Harald E.L. Prins. “Visual Media and the Primitivist Perplex: Colonial Fantasies, Indigenous Imagination, and Advocacy in North America.

Thursday 18th - Session II

TOPICS: INDIGENOUS APPROPRIATION OF THE MEDIUM AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

READINGS: Faye Ginsburg. “Indigenous Media from U-Matic to YouTube: Media Sovereignty in the Digital Age.” Case Study: The Wakiponi Mobile Project, NFB, Canada: <http://www.wapikoni.ca/home>

Week VII – 22nd – 26th Active Audiences/Active users? Old Media New Media I

Monday 22nd - Session I

TOPICS MID-TERM EXAM

Thursday 25th - Session II

TOPICS: GOING TO THE MOVIE

READINGS: *Anthropology of the Media*. Ch. 16 or Ch. 18

October 26th, Mid-semester grades due

Week VIII – 29th – Nov.2nd: Active Audiences/Active users? Old Media New Media I

Monday 29th - Session I

TOPICS DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY: A METHODS

READINGS: Boellstorf and al. *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds*. “Then Myth About Ethnography”; John Postill and al. “Ethnography in a Digital World”.

October 31ST - November 2nd, (included) fall break, No classes

November

Week IX – 5th – 9th: Active Audiences/Active users? Old Media New Media II

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Monday 5th - Session I

TOPICS: DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND EVERYDAY LIFE

READINGS: Edgar Gómez Cruz and Asko Lehmuskallio. *Digital Photography and Everyday Life*. Chap: Sara Pargana Mota: “‘Today I dressed like this’: selling clothes and playing for celebrity. Self-representation and consumption on Facebook”

Thursday 8th - Session II

TOPICS: TROLLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

READINGS: Phillips, “LOLing at Tragedy: Facebook Trolls, Memorial Pages and Resistance to Grief Online.”

November 9th – last day to withdraw from a course/no credit option

Week X - 12th -16th: The Politics of Nation States and Transnational Communities I

Monday 12th - Session I

TOPICS: THE MODERN SUBJECT

READINGS: Media Worlds. Ch. Lila Abu-Lughod, “Egyptian Melodrama – Technology of the Modern Subject”.

Thursday 15th - Session II

TOPICS MEDIA AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

READINGS: Media Worlds. Ch. 6 Mankekar. “Epic Contests, Television and Religious Identity in India

Week XI -19th – 23rd The Politics of Nation States and Transnational Communities II

Monday 19th - Session I

TOPICS TRANSNATIONAL CIRCUITS

READINGS: Reading: Media Worlds, Ch. Mei-hui Yang: “Mass Media and Transnational Subjectivity in Shanghai”

Thursday 22nd - Session II

TOPICS: COUNTER CULTURE AND CONTRA-FLOW: JAPANESE HIP-HOP SCENE

READINGS: Ian Condry. *Hip Hop Japan*. “Introduction”

Week XII -26th - 30th: The Social Sites of Production and Social Life of Technology I

Monday 26th - Session I

TOPICS: THE AD WORLD AND FILM INDUSTRY - ABROAD

READINGS: *Media Worlds*. Ch. 13 “Culture in the Ad World: Producing the Latin Look”; Ch. 14 “And yet my Heart is still Indian”

Thursday 29th - Session II

TOPICS: THE MATERIALITY OF SOUND AND FILM THEATRES

READINGS: Jonathan Sterne. “Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space”

December

Week XIII – 3rd – 7th: Mobile communications and social life of Technology after the Digital Revolution.

Monday 3rd - Session I

TOPICS: MOBILE COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

READINGS: Janet D. Kwami. “Development from the Margins? Mobile Technologies, Transnational Mobilities, and Livelihood Practices Among Ghanaian Woman Traders; or Sebastian Ureta, “Mobilising Poverty?: Mobile Phone Use and Everyday Spatial Mobility Among Low-Income Families in Santiago, Chile”.

Thursday 6th - Session II

TOPICS: ETHNOGRAPHY OF HACKING

READINGS: Gabriela Coleman. “Anonymous: From the Lulz to Collective Action.”:

Week XIV - 10th - 14th

Monday 10th - Session I

TOPICS PARTICIPATORY CULTURE IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

READINGS: Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green, “What Constitutes Meaningful Participation?”. <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/tne/pieces/anonymous-lulz-collective-action>

December 12th, Last day of classes, December 13th -16th, Reading days

December 17th – 21st Final exams

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
Media Worlds - Antrhopology on New Terrain	Ginsburg, Abu- Lughod & Larkin (editors)	California	9780520232310	Yes
The Anthropology of Media: A Reader	Askew, Kelly et al.	Blackwell	9780631220947	Yes

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

GRADING GUIDELINES

Your grading relies on the following characteristics:

Content:

1. Relevance to the course
2. Wide reading
3. Development of argument
4. Accurate citation of references (including adequate bibliography)

Presentation

5. Clarity of expression
6. Explicit structure
7. Consistency of purpose
8. Clear conclusion

Critical Judgement

9. Depth of interpretation
10. Imaginativeness
11. Critical appraisal
12. Thoroughness of analysis

Grade A range is for outstanding work that achieves all that could reasonably be expected of a university BA student, and demonstrates at least 7 of the 12 characteristics above in relation to the argument presented. It includes 5 elements cited above: 1. Key question; 2. Argument; 3. Evidence; 4. Intellectual importance; 5. Contribution to this field of study.

You must achieve these goals:

- Not just repeat what the book says, but try to have a “dialogue” (e.g. question why? What else?)
- Not apply the theory blindly or dutifully, but try to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses (e.g. based on the society where you come from) and gain a nuanced, contextualized understanding of the theory/knowledge

Grade B range is for work that demonstrates an integration of some (at least 5) of the 12 characteristics above but **presents an argument that could be developed further**. It includes 4 of 5 elements cited above: 1. Key question; 2. Argument; 3. Evidence; 4. Intellectual importance; 5. Contribution to this field of study.

Grade C range is for work that adopts some (at least 3) of the 12 characteristics above but does **presents a too weak argument**. It includes at least 3 of 5 elements cited above: 1. Key question; 2. Argument; 3. Evidence; 4. Intellectual importance; 5. Contribution to this field of study.

Fail is one in which the course learning goals are not properly understood, key issues are not identified, the essay is badly organized, and requires an adequate range of reading and attention to the above characteristics.

Other

Conduct/classroom policy

–Please be courteous and respectful at all times. You may disagree with someone, but please do so politely (a good way to start is by saying “I can see your point”). Make sure you attempt

to understand each other before you contribute to the discussion.

–Please use restroom **before class**, except in an emergency (routine departures in the middle of the class are unacceptable). Frequent departures and arrivals *distract* the flow of class each time they happen. That said, of course emergencies happen.

–**Avoid conversations with people sitting around you.** They are distracting to all those around you.

–**You must check your AUP email once per day for important announcements.**

–**NO CELL PHONES ALLOWED DURING CLASS.**

–**Laptops and other electronic devices are allowed but strictly limited to note-taking.** As I explained at the beginning of this class, I may ask you to stop bringing your computer if I see that you are not exclusively taking notes and following the course. FYI, research says that electronic devices (including laptops) in the classroom often impede learning. So why not taking notes on paper??

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hot-thought/201007/banning-laptops-in-classrooms-0>

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/take-notes-by-hand-for-better-long-term-comprehension.html>