

Rutgers University
Department of Anthropology
Spring 2019

Anthropology of Media and Culture

Instructor: Ms. Marlaina Martin
070:368 (3 credits)
M, Th: 10:55am-12:15pm
Hickman Hall 114

Instructor: Ms. Marlaina Martin
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Office Hours: Thursdays 1-3pm
Office Location: Biological Sciences Building 204C (Douglass Campus)

Course Description: Given the relatively greater affordability and accessibility of electronic and digital technologies in the late 20th century, media has become a ubiquitous part of daily routines (public and private) in numerous societies. From cell phones to radio to television to movies to on-line social networks, media's reaches are vast, which often leads people to take their presence for granted and to uncritically accept their role in processes of relation-building, identity formation, communicative practices, ontological experience, and economic exchange. However, media technologies are not mere props under human dominion, but a major means by and through which people make sense and meaning out of the publics, objects, and environments around them. This course examines the social lives, or 'cultures' of media- namely, the ways that people have adopted, adapted, and signified media as practice across the globe. Rejecting simplistic models of media consumption and production, students will closely examine politics and power structures that delineate who has access to media consumption and production apparatuses, and on what terms. Students will also confront the development of 'media anthropology' as a subfield by reading about media as an element of racial, gender and sexual expression; religious performance; war and intergroup conflict; advertising; nationalism and transnationalism; and marginalization in various other arenas. Together, we will embark on a journey to deconstruct media's pervasive, multiple, and at times concealed social lives.

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Define critical concepts, themes, and debates central to anthropology such as 'access,' and 'politics of representation,' and 'the Other' vis-a-vis media-related contexts and studies.
2. Understand media not only as a product but also a social 'process' - images and materials developed within a contingent web of actors, perspectives, and hierarchies.
3. Analyze media technologies as tools for self-representation, image management, and/or political intervention, especially in terms of categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and/or religion.

4. Discuss the ideologies and expectations that people attach to media forms, especially as they concern the relationships that people from different geographies and/or generations establish with 'old' and 'new' media.

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Define critical concepts, themes, and debates in media-oriented scholarships such as 'access,' 'politics of representation,' 'the gaze,' and 'the Other'.
- Understand media not only as a product but also a social 'process' - images and materials developed within a contingent web of actors, perspectives, and hierarchies.
- Analyze media technologies as tools for self-representation, image management, and/or political intervention in terms of categories including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, class, and religion.
- Discuss ideologies, emotions and expectations that people attach to media, especially concerning relationships people from different geographies and/or generations establish with 'old' and 'new' forms.

Assignments and Grading: To get the most from this course both as individual learners and a pedagogical community, all must commit to readings all required readings, actively screen all audiovisual materials, be fully present during every class, and engage with course themes and materials as well as one another in creative ways that engage but go beyond syllabus materials themselves. Grading will be based on:

- Class Attendance/Participation (20%)
- 3 Reading/Media Responses (15%)
- Midterm Exam/Paper(10%)
- Midterm Presentation (15%)
- Final Paper/Project Meeting with Instructor (10%)
- Final Paper (Project Optional) (30%)

Please note the following policies as well:

- Late submission is not accepted without prior permission of the instructor.
- Online Assignment Submission: For ease of reference and grading, include your name in the beginning of your document title when you submit on Sakai. For example: Smith Literature Review Proposal ANTH 368
- Incompletes will not be permitted, except under extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation.

Rutgers Policies: Please make yourself aware of the student code of conduct, especially the academic code of conduct. <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/university-code-of-student-conduct>

**** Plagiarism:** In preparing assignments a student often needs or is required to employ outside sources of information or opinion. All such sources should be listed in the bibliography. Citations and footnote references are required for all specific facts that are not common knowledge and about which there is not general agreement. New discoveries or debatable opinions must be credited to the source, with specific references to edition and page even when the student restates the matter in his or her own words. Word-for-word inclusion of any part of someone else's written or oral sentence, even if only a phrase or sentence, requires citation in quotation marks and use of the appropriate conventions for attribution. Please follow the American Anthropological Association style guide in the bibliography and in-text referencing. Paraphrasing or summarizing the contents of another's work is not dishonest if the source or sources are clearly identified (author, title, edition, and page), but such paraphrasing does not constitute independent work and may be rejected by the instructor. Students who have questions about accurate and proper citation methods are expected to consult Rutgers' policies on plagiarism.

Course Materials:

- Readings materials will be provided either on Sakai or via links to be looked up by students themselves.

Please note: This is an internet and laptop-free class. Please turn off or silence all electronic devices before entering the classroom. This goes for both lecture and recitations.

Week 1:
Introduction to Media and Culture

Thurs 1/24

Welcomes, overview, syllabus review, learning goals, and opening exercises.

Required Reading:

- Kelly Askew, 2002, "Introduction," In *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*. Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk (eds.) Pp. 1-13. London: Blackwell.
- John Postill and Mark A. Peterson (response), 2009, "What is the Point of Media Anthropology?," In *Social Anthropology* 17(3): 334-344.
<https://johnpostill.com/2009/07/31/now-online-what-is-the-point-of-media-anthropology/>

Week 2:
Anthropology of Media: Histories and Controversies

Mon 1/28*

*(Readings immediately below a date are due for class on that day)

Required Readings:

[In-class] Interview w/ John Jackson, Professor at University of Pennsylvania
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JueTlyZhOHc>>.

- Faye Ginsburg, 1994, "Culture/Media: A (Mild) Polemic," in *Anthropology Today* 10(2): pps. 5-15.
- Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, "On the Use of the Camera in Anthropology," pps. 265-271.

Thurs 1/31

Screening:

[In-class- Footage from anthropologist/novelist Zora Neale Hurston
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK7Pt9UQQoE>

Required Readings:

- John L. Jackson Jr., 2004, "An Ethnographic Filmflam: Giving Fits, Doing Research, and Videotaping the Native Subject/Object," *American Anthropologist* 106(1): 32-42.
- Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1993, "The Totalizing Quest of Meaning," In *Theorizing Documentary*, Michael Renov (ed.) New York: Routledge. Pps. 90-107.

Week 3:
'Indigenous' Video, International Audiences and Cross-Cultural Imaginaries

Mon 3/11

Screening:

[In-class] *Framing the Other*, 2011, Dirs. Ilja Kok and Willem Timmers, 25 minutes.

[In-class] *The Border Crossed Us*, 2005, Dir. Rachel Nez, 26 minutes, (CEFREC)

Required Readings:

- Faye Ginsburg, 2002, "The Parallax Effect,: The Impact of Aboriginal Media on Ethnographic Film," *Visual Anthropology Review* 11(2): 64-76.
- Turner Terence, 1992, "Defiant Images: The Kayapo Appropriation of Video," *Anthropology Today* 8(6): 5-16.

Thurs 3/14

- Lisa Nakamura, "Indigenous Circuits; Navajo Women and the Racialization of Early Electronic Manufacture," *American Quarterly* 66(4): 919-941.

Week 4:

Contemplating 'Other'ness: Ethno-racial Politics of Representation

Mon 2/4

Screening:

[In-class] Excerpts from Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions*

Required Readings:

- Deborah Poole, 2005, "An *Excess* of Description: Ethnography, Race, and Visual Technologies," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 34: 159-179.
- Listen to (W)Rap on Race podcast: <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1520-w-rap-on-race>

Thurs 2/7

[In-class] Screening:

The Hateful Eight, Quentin Tarantino (excerpt)

Required Reading:

- Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, "The Imperial Imaginary," in *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*. Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk (eds.) Pp. 117-147. Malden: Blackwell.

Week 5:

Enforcing the Nation(State): Media, Science, and Criteria for Belonging

Mon 2/11

Required Readings:

- Franz Boas, "Some Principles of Museum Administration," *Science* 25(650): 921-933.
- Yvette Abrahams, "Images of Sara Bartman: Sexuality, Race, and Gender in Early-Nineteenth-Century Britain," in *Nation, Empire, Colony: Historicizing Gender and Race*. Ruth Roach Pierson and Nupur Chaudhuri (eds.) Pps. 220-236.

Thurs 2/14

Required Readings:

- Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins, 1991, "The Photograph as an Intersection of Gazes: The Example of National Geographic," *Visual Anthropology Review* 7(1): 134-149.
- Brian Wallis, 1996, "Black Bodies, White Science: The Slave Daguerreotypes of Louis Agassiz," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 12: 102-106.

- The British Museum's Looting Problem, 2018, *New Republic*.
<https://newrepublic.com/article/150642/british-museums-looting-problem>

Week 6:

Beyond the Nation: Transnationalism, Global Flows, and Diasporic Media

Mon 2/18

Screening:

[In-class] *Detained*, 2015 (Sweden), Dirs. Sharon Chakraborty & Anna Persson, RåFILM Filmmakers Collective. (Excerpts)

Required Readings:

- Louisa Schein, 2002, "Mapping Hmong Media in Diasporic Space, in *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*. Faye D. Ginsburg, Lila Abu -Lughod and Brian Larkin (eds.) Pps. 229-244.
- Mirca Madainou and Daniel Miller, 2012, "Introduction," *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia*. Pp 1-15. New York: Routledge.

Thurs 2/21

Readings:

- Julie Peteet, "The Writing on the Walls: The Graffiti of the Intifada," *Cultural Anthropology* 11(2): 139-159.
- Arjun Appadurai, 1996, "Here and Now," *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Chapter 1. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Excerpt)

Week 7:

Midterm Presentations

Mon 2/25 Come prepared to present, and listen attentively to others' presentations

Thurs 2/28 Come prepared to present, and listen attentively to others' presentations

Week 8:

Reimagining Civics: Making Publics through Media Forms and Form-making

Mon 3/4

Screening: *Story of a Beautiful Country*, Dir. Khalo Matabane, 2004, A National Film Board of Canada Production, 73 minutes. OR

Photo Wallahs (1992), Dir. David and Judith MacDougall, TRT 60 min.

Readings:

- Peter Dahlgren, 2005, "The Public Sphere: Linking the Media and Civic Cultures," In *Media Anthropology*. Eric Rothenbuhler and Mihai Coman (eds.) Chapter 30. London and New York: SAGE.

Thurs 3/7

Required Readings:

- Alicia Blum-Ross, 2013, “‘It Made Our Eyes Get Bigger’: Youth Filmmaking and Place making in East London,” *Visual Anthropology Review* 29(2): 89-106.
- Adam Hodges, “A Theory of Propaganda for the Social Media Age,” April 9, 2018 <http://www.anthropology-news.org/index.php/2018/04/09/a-theory-of-propaganda-for-the-social-media-age/>

Week 9:

Materiality: Media, Space, and The Environment

Mon 4/15

Required Readings:

- Stefan Zimmerman, 2007, “Media Geographies: Always Part of the Game,” in *Aether* 1:59-62.
- John L. Jackson Jr., 1999, “Toward an Ethnography of a Quotation-Marked-Off Place,” *Souls*, Pps. 23-35.
- Listen to “Teresa Caldeira on Urban Practices and Ethnographic Intimacy” Podcast: <https://soundcloud.com/cultural-anthropology/teresa-caldeira-on-urban-practices-and-ethnographic-intimacy>

Thurs 4/18

Required Readings:

- Julie Peteet, “The Writing on the Walls: The Graffiti of the Intifada,” *Cultural Anthropology* 11(2): 139-159.
- Will Ellsworth-Jones, 2013, “The Story Behind Banksy,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, Pp. 1-3.

Week 10:

‘What constitutes violence, really?’: Mediations on Testimony, Journalism and Conflict

Mon 3/18

Screening:

[In-class] *A Film Unfinished*, 2010, Dir. Yael Hersonski, 89 minutes. (Excerpts)

Required Readings:

- Catherine Besteman, 2009, “Representing Violence and ‘Othering’ in Somalia,” *Cultural Anthropology* 11(1): 120-133.
- Dag Tuastad, “Neo-Orientalism and the new barbarism thesis: Aspects of symbolic violence in the Middle East conflict(s),” *Third World Quarterly*, 24(4): 591-599.

Thurs 3/21

Required Readings:

- Victor Alneng, 2002, “What the ‘Fuck’ is a Vietnam?” *Touristic Phantasms and the Popcolonization of (the) Vietnam (war)*, 461-489.

Week 11:
Spring Break!

Week 12:
Community Media: Activism, Social Change, and Political Video

Mon 3/25

Screening:

[In-class excerpts] *Black Is, Black Ain't*, 1994, (Dir. Marlon Riggs), 88 minutes.

Required Readings:

- DeeDee Halleck and Nathali Magnan, 2002 [1993], "Access for Others: Alter (Native) Media Practice," in *Visual Anthropology Review* 9(1): Pps. 154-163.
- Alexandra Juhasz, 1995. "Introduction," In *AIDS TV: Identity, Community, and Alternative Video*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. (excerpts)

Thurs 3/28

Required Readings:

- Michel Rolph-Trouillot, 2003, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness" (Excerpts), *Global Transformations*.
- Kennedy Odede, 9 August 2010. "Slumdog Tourism", *New York Times* (op-ed).
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/10/opinion/10odede.html>
- "Natasha Grant," "Utopia Now: Black Panther as a case for anticipatory anthropology," *The Anthropology of Black Panther*
<https://anthropologyofblackpanther.wordpress.com/2018/06/28/utopia-now-black-panther-as-a-case-for-anticipatory-anthropology/>

Week 13:
Advertising: Cultures of Capitalism, Commodities and the Market

Mon 4/1

Screening:

[In-class, excerpts] *The Creators of the Shopping Worlds* (2001) Dir. Harun Farocki, 75 minutes.

Required Reading:

- Raymond Williams. 1980. "Advertising: the Magic System," *Problems in Materialism and Culture*. Pp 170-195. London: Verso.

Thurs 4/4

Required Readings:

- L. Ayu Saraswati, 2010, "Cosmopolitan Whiteness: The Effects and Affects of Skin-Whitening Advertisements in Transnational Women's Magazine in Indonesia," *Meridians* 10(2): 15-41.

Week 14:

Virtual Personhood: Intersections of Technology, Self, and Society

Mon 4/8

Readings:

- Screening: *Love Child* (2014) Dir. Valerie Veatch, 80 minutes. (View in halves, or excerpts)
- Alex Golub, 2009, "Anthropology, 'Internet Addiction,' and Care," *Savage Minds*. <<http://savageminds.org/2009/09/08/anthropology-internet-addiction-and-care/>>.
- Tom Boellstorff, 2011, "Virtuality: Placing the Virtual Body: Avatar, Chora, Cypherg," in *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*. Frances Mascia-Lees (ed.) Pp. 504-520. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell.
- Robin M. Boylorn, 2013, "BlackGirl Blogs, Auto/ethnography, and Crunk Feminism," *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 9(2): 73-82.

Thurs 4/11

Required Readings:

- Kara Keeling, 2011, "I=Another: Digital Identity Politics," In *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*. Grace K. Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson. Pg. 53-75. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Sofia Woo, 2018, "Mukbang is Changing Digital Communications," *Anthropology News*, <http://www.anthropology-news.org/index.php/2018/11/30/mukbang-is-changing-digital-communications/>

Week 15:

'Women's Rights' Campaigns, Gendered Spectatorship and the Stakes of Feminist Media

Mon 4/22

Screening:

[In-class] selections from *Half the Sky* (2012) –halfthesky.org

Required Readings:

- Corinn Columpar, 2002, "The Gaze as Theoretical Touchstone: The Intersection of Film Studies, Feminist Theory, and Postcolonial Theory," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 30(1/2), *Looking Across the Lens: Women's Studies and Film*, pp. 25-44.

Thurs 4/25

[In-class] Screening:

Required Readings:

- Barbara Halpern Martineau, "Talking About our Lives and Experiences: Some Thoughts about Feminism, Documentary and 'Talking Heads.'" *Show Us Life: Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary*. Ed. Thomas Waugh. Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1984. 252-273.
- Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?: Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," *American Anthropologist* 104(3): 783-790.

Week 16:

Behind the Lens: Producing Subjectivities through Production and Distribution

Mon 4/29

Screening:

[In-class] *Passing Girl: Riverside – An Essay On Camera Work*. 1998, Kwame Braun, 24 minutes.

Required Readings:

- Jeffrey D. Himpele, 1996, "Film Distribution as Media: Mapping Difference in the Bolivian Cinemascope," *Visual Anthropology Review* 12(1): 47-66.
- David MacDougall, 2005, "Introduction: Meaning and Being," In *The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Thurs 5/2

Screening:

[In-class] *Interrogating Gender Politics and Black Power in Newark, New Jersey: An Interview with director Charles Bennett Brack*, 7 minutes.

<<http://vimeo.com/44132819>>.

Required Readings:

- Charles Townsend, 2012. "Interrogating Gender Politics and Black Power in Newark NJ: An Interview with Charles Bennett Brack, Producer of *Dreams Deferred: The Sakia Gunn Film Project*," *Transforming Anthropology* 20(20): 169-171.
- Moya Bailey. "Redefining Representation: Black Trans and Queer Women's Digital Media Production," *Screen Bodies* 1(1): 71-86.

Week 17:

Wrap-Up and Future Directions

Monday 5/6

- Hilda Llorens, "Imaging Disaster: Puerto Rico Through the Eye of Hurricane Maria," *Transforming Anthropology* Pp. 136-156.
- Zach Hines, "VR could be the next great tool in anthropology"
<https://killscreen.com/versions/vr-could-be-the-next-great-tool-in-anthropology/>

(Finals Period Slot TBD)

- Final presentations