

Visual Anthropology (Anthr 424/524)

Fall 2015

Thurs 2:00-4:50 PM, T B 121

Professors: Marko Zivkovic & Helen Vallianatos

Offices: Tory 13-28 & 13-22

Phone: (780) 492-5352 & (780) 492-0132

Email: zivkovic@ualberta.ca & vallianatos@ualberta.ca

Office Hours: MZ: Mondays 1:00-2:30PM or by appointment

HV: Thursdays 12:00-1:30 PM or by appointment

This seminar provides an intensive study of current issues in visual anthropology. Visual anthropology could be seen as either the discipline that takes the visual or the visible as its *object* – the anthropology **of** the visual; or as its *method* and *medium* – the **visualizing** anthropology. The anthropology **of** the visual would investigate both the cultural formation of the eye, and the way humans deal with the visual broadly construed. Such discipline would overlap and intersect with anthropology of art, art history, visual and film studies and other social science and humanities disciplines. Visual anthropology that takes the visual as its method and medium could be seen as merely the use of camera as a recording device in anthropology and presenting whatever it is that anthropologists do in a visual medium such as photography and film. Visualizing anthropology, however, could be much richer than that.

This course starts with situating the visual within a more comprehensive anthropology of the senses and will, in a selective way, try to encompass all the meanings of “visual anthropology.” It will be a largely hands-on course with a special focus on the visual (contextualized by other sensory modalities) as a mode of anthropological exploration. We will pay attention to how extensions to our bare vision, such as cameras, and the technical means of preserving the visual (photography, film/video) could be used not just for passive recording and subsequent analysis of (the visible) culture, but also to hone the perceptiveness, train ethnographic sensibility, and enhance the potentially mutually illuminating interactions in the field. Can the camera sharpen rather than dull the eye, and rather than steal the souls of those it records, can it be a medium for a gift exchange? How does writing about the visual and presenting it audio-visually relate to each other? How do we use fictional films as ethnographic resource? How to watch and make ethnographic films? These and other questions will be addressed through literature, watching photos and films, and through practical exercises in the art of visual exploration.

The goals of the class are:

1. to become knowledgeable of diverse ways the visual has been understood across time and space and how anthropologists have incorporated visual elements in data collection and dissemination;
2. to learn how to collect and analyze visual data;
3. to construct a short ethnographic film;
4. to build critical analysis skills.

This seminar is intensive, and students are expected to be active participants in the classroom. Discussions and presentations will be an important component of the class, and allow us to collectively reflect on class materials and challenges in conducting and presenting visual ethnographic work. There will be variation within the class, and that is what makes a discussion exciting! By contributing to class discussions and through feedback on our presentations and works-in-progress, we will all learn from each other. Please remember to be respectful and courteous when asking questions and interacting with each other in class.

Required readings:

1. These will be electronically available.

Course Policies:

1. Students are expected to actively engage in the learning process. You are expected to come prepared to class, having completed the assigned readings. This will help you get the most out of lectures and to participate in discussions. You are encouraged to ask questions, both in class or privately during office hours. Please remember to turn off cell phones in class!
2. All course requirements must be completed to pass the course. Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar. See the University Calendar sections 23.5.6 (1a) and 23.5.6 (2) for the midterm and final exams policies.
3. The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts, and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are referred to the Code of Student Behaviour, Sections 30.3.2(1), 30.3.2(2), 30.3.6(4), and 30.3.6(5).
4. If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let us know during the first week of the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. You are also advised to contact Specialized Support and Disability Services, 2-800 SUB (email: ssds.office@uss.ualberta.ca, phone: 492-3381 or TTY: 492-7269).
5. Recording of class lectures is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan. If permission is granted, the default is that the recording is solely for the personal use of the student to enhance their understanding of the lecture material. If a lecture is to be recorded, the instructor must notify the class that this is taking place. If the recorded lecture is intended for usage beyond individual study, the person making the recording may need to obtain the permission of all other individuals that appear in the recording. This should be verified beforehand by enquiring with the University's Information and Privacy Office.

Course Requirements:

NOTE: Late-work will not be accepted, unless there is a valid medical or family emergency.

Participation (10%) – This grade will be based on attendance and engagement in classroom discussions. Engagement will be assessed through participation in discussions and activities and in peer feedback opportunities.

Sensory Ethnographic Paper (10%) – As an introduction to the issues of text and sensory/visual ethnographies, you are asked to choose an everyday place, thing, bodily experience or behaviour and write a 4 page paper exploring the sensory aspects of your chosen everyday topic or experience. It is suggested that you limit your writing to one, at most two, sensory aspects. Creativity is highly encouraged. Note: If you would like to perform instead of submit a written text, please discuss with the professors.

Due Date: September 17

Photography project (20%) – Building on your chosen everyday experience or topic (although you are free to choose an alternate one), you will conduct a photo-voice project, which will be shared in class. Details on how to do this will be explained in class. This assignment will provide you with the knowledge on how to collect and share photo-voice data.

Due Date: October 1

Analysis of Feature Films (20%) – This assignment will teach you how to use feature films to assess cultural ideas. The feature film to be analyzed will be announced in class. For your analysis, focus on an everyday place, thing, bodily experience or behaviour and analyze how this sensory experience is portrayed on film.

Due Date: October 15

Ethnographic Film (40%) – For this assignment you will work in teams to produce a short ethnographic film. You may use your previously chosen everyday experience or topic—but are free to choose an alternate. Details of this assignment will be provided in a separate handout. You will present your films on the final day of class.
Due Date: December 3, in class

Grading Criteria:

The University of Alberta uses a letter grading system with a four-point scale of numerical equivalents for calculating grade point averages. Grades reflect judgments of student achievement made by instructors. These judgments are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class.

Letter Grade	Approximate Final Mark (%) in this Course	Work Description
A+	95-100	
A	90-94	Excellent
A-	85-89	
B+	80-84	
B	74-79	Good
B-	70-73	
C+	67-69	
C	63-66	Satisfactory
C-	60-62	
D+	56-59	Poor
D	50-55	Minimal Pass
F	0-49	Failure

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Complete readings and filmography will be available electronically, below is a snapshot of the schedule.

WEEK & DATES	TOPIC	READINGS & FILMOGRAPHY
1 – September 3	Introduction; Sensory Ethnography	Varda 2000; Howes 2008; Okely 2007; Stilgoe 1999
2 – September 10	History of Visual Anthropology	Rouch and MacDougall; maybe Stoller on Rouch in <i>Sensuous Scholarship</i>
3 – September 17	Photography	Wang & Burris 1997; Wang et al. 1996; McIntyre 2005
4 – September 24	Photography II	Pink 2008; Chavez et al. 2004
5 – October 1	Feature Film & Cinematography	Weakland; Bateson
6 – October 8	Feature Film Analysis	Zivkovic 2011 + clips from Yugoslav films Collins 2011; Hinkins 2007 + clips from children’s films
7 – October 15	Audio/Kinesthetics	Feld_ Waterfalls of Song; Surrounded by Soundscapes (YouTube) Samuels et al. 2010; Sutton 2006 + documentary <i>Our Daily Bread</i> (2005)
8 – October 29	Ethnographic Film Introduction	Hocking text selections TBA
9 – November 5	Guest Speakers—TBA	
10 – November 12	FALL READING WEEK – NO CLASS	
11 – November 19	Film Editing I – Guest Speaker	TBA
12 – November 26	Film Editing II	
13 – December 3	Film Presentations	

September 3 Introduction, Sensory Ethnography

- Varda, Agnes. 2000. *Gleaners and I*. Documentary film, 82 min.
- Howes, David. 2008. Can These Dry Bones Live? An Anthropological Approach to the History of the Senses. *The Journal of American History* 95 (2):442-451.
- Okely, Judith. 2007. Fieldwork embodied. *The Sociological Review* 55:65-79.
- Stilgoe, John R. 1999. *Outside Lies Magic: Regaining History and Awareness in Everyday Places*. New York: Walker and Company. Chapter 1, pp. 1-19.

September 10 History of Visual Anthropology

- Rouch, Jean. 2003. The Camera and Man. In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, edited by Paul Hockings. Berlin and New York: Mouton. pp. 79-98.
- MacDougall, David. 2003. Beyond Observational Cinema. In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, pp. 115-132.

September 17 Photography

- Wang, C., & Burris, M.A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education & Behavior*, 24, 369-387.
- Wang, C., Burris, M.A., & Xiang, Y. P. (1996). Chinese village women as visual anthropologists: A participatory approach to reaching policy makers. *Social Science and Medicine*, 42:1391-1400.
- McIntyre, A. (2003). Through the eyes of women: Photovoice and participatory research as tools for reimagining place. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 10(1), 47-66.

September 24 Photography II

- Pink, Sarah (2008). Mobilising Visual Ethnography: Making Routes, Making Place and Making Images. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum*
- Chávez, V., Israel, B., Allen, A.J., DeCarlo, M.F., Lichtenstein, R., Schulz, A., Bayer, I.S., & McGranaghan, R. (2004). A bridge between communities: Video-making using principles of community-based participatory research. *Health Promotion Practice*, 5, 395-403.

October 1 Feature Film & Cinematography

- Weakland, John H. 2003. Feature Films as Cultural Documents. In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, pp. 45-67.
- Bateson, Gregory. 2000. An Analysis of the Nazi Film Hitlerjunge Quex. In *The Study of Culture at a Distance*, edited by Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metreaux. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books. (Original edition, 1953). pp. 331-347.

October 8 Feature Film Analysis

- Collins, Rebecca L. 2011. Content Analysis of Gender Roles in Media: Where Are We Now and Where Should We Go? *Sex Roles* 64 (3-4):290-298.
- Hinkins, Jillian. 2007. 'Biting the Hand That Feeds': Consumerism, Ideology and Recent Animated Film for Children. *Papers: Explorations into Children's Literature* 17 (1):43-50.

Živković, Marko. 2011. Tender-hearted Criminals and the Reverse Pygmalion. In *Serbian Dreambook: National Imaginary in the Time of Milošević*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. pp. 94-114.

October 15 Audio/Kinesthetics

Feld, Steven. 1996. Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea. In *Senses of Place*, edited by Steven Feld and Keith Basso. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press. pp. 91-136.

Samuels, David W., et al. 2010. Soundscapes: Toward a Sounded Anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39 (1):329-345.

Sutton, David. 2006. Cooking Skill, the Senses, and Memory: The Fate of Practical Knowledge. In *Sensible objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture*, edited by Chris Gosden Elizabeth Edwards, Ruth Phillips. Oxford and New York: Berg. pp. 87-118.