GENERAL INFORMATION

Class Meetings

T 9 - 12 PM Communications 113 (Studio D)
Tech Lab  T 2-4 Communications 113 (Studio D)
Th 9 - 12 PM Social Sciences 1 414
additional optional group screening time TBD

Instructors

Irene Lusztig
Communications 111
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Winter Office Hours:
Tues 12:00 PM - 2 PM, and by appointment

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Social Science 1 308
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Winter Office Hours:
Thursday 12 PM - 2 PM, and by appointment

Prerequisite

No prior experience with video production or ethnographic theory is required. The optional lab sessions for this class will cover all basic technical skills of shooting and editing video, and sound recording.
COURSE OVERVIEW

How do we come to know the world? And how do we convey that knowledge to others? And how do technologies – from the book to film to new media – change both of these processes? These questions are motivations for thinking through the overlapping projects of documentary film and anthropological ethnography, both of which take as their goal the capture and curatorial framing of social worlds. These questions and efforts in turn lead to deeper questions – about objectivity, accuracy, analysis and aesthetics. In this course, we approach these questions from the perspective of practice, asking students to conduct ethnographic fieldwork as well as produce documentary film.

Film and ethnography developed in tandem. Both find their origins in the 19th century and, although they haven’t always been in direct contact, there are many meeting points throughout the 20th and into the 21st century. In this course, we follow this history of film and ethnography, media and methodology, into the birth of cinema and anthropology in the early 20th century. This is succeeded by attention to a series of methodological problems and experimentations – around time, space, bodies, objects, language, non-humans – that captivate theory and practice. How experimentation with content changes expectations of form, and how experimentation with form alters content have impacts both on the production of anthropological knowledge and texts and documentary film; we consider some of these changes with attentions to particular texts and aesthetic movements in anthropology and filmmaking.

This course is also designed as an intensive, hands-on, production lab course for graduate students to create sound and moving image work that is grounded in sensory observation of the real world. Students will learn technical and critical skills required for fieldwork-based ethnographic video and audio media production. Working both individually and collaboratively, students will create a series of three short media projects focused around specific critical / cultural questions and production skills. In the final weeks of the course, students work with a production partner in stages through the creation and completion of a fully realized short audiovisual ethnography project.

To these ends, this course is a designed as a double course, with one half spent thinking through theories of representation and media and the other half spent in the lab, making and critiquing audiovisual / moving image work. Students are required to attend both halves of class and complete all assignments for each section.

This course emphasizes exploration, formal experimentation, materiality, process, and exhibition context. It is open to a wide range of modes and forms of work, including installation, new media, and performance.
REQUIRED TEXTS

Barthes, Roland

Crary, Jonathan

Favret-Saada, Jeanne

Fischer, Michael

Garfinkel, Harold

Hui, Alexandra

Kittler, Friedrich

MacDougall, David

Marcus, George and Fernando Mascarenhas

McLuhan, Marshall

Moore, Rachel

Rheinberger, Hans-Jorg

Serres, Michel

Shaviro, Steven

Stewart, Kathleen

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL TEXT
especially recommended for those students who are new to filmmaking technique

Ascher, Steven and Pincus, Edward
COURSE VIEWING

Required films will be shown either in class or during the outside screening time (to be decided by class). Most but not all of these films can be viewed at the McHenry Library Media Center.

Sweetgrass (Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Castaing-Taylor, 2009)
Our Daily Bread (Nikolaus Geyrhalter, 2005)
Les Maîtres Fous (Jean Rouch, 1955)
Chronicle of a Summer (Jean Rouch, 1961)
Sound Safari, Bath Maine (Sharon Lockhart and Sensory Ethnography Lab, 2008)*
Wedding of Silence (Pavel Medvedev, 2004)
Singapore Gaga (Tan Pinpin, 2005)
The Phantom of the Operator (Caroline Martel, 66 min, 2004)
The Tailenders (Adele Horne, 72 min., 2006)
Trypps series #3, #6, and #7 (Ben Russell, 32 min., 2007-2010)
The Good Woman of Bangkok (Dennis O’Rourke, 1991)
The Love Tapes - excerpts (Wendy Clarke, 1981)
How to Fix the World (Jacqueline Goss, 28 min., 2004)
Poto and Cabengo (Jean Pierre Gorin, 73 min., 1980)
Bear 71 (Leanne Allison and Jeremy Mendes, 2012)**
John and Jane Toll Free (Ashim Ahluwalia, 2005)
Mala Leche (Naomi Uman, 47 min. 2003)
South of Ten (Liza Johnson, 10 min, 2006)
In the Air (Liza Johnson, 22 min, 2009)
White Sky (Susanna Helke, 54 min., 1998)
Naked (Pawel Wojtasik, 10 min., 2007)
Nascentes Morimur (Paweł Wojtasik, 19 min. 2012)
Leviathan (Véréna Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor, 2012)

*online at https://soundcloud.com/sensoryethnographylab/sound-safari-bath-maine
**online at http://bear71.nfb.ca/
GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance, Participation & Presentation (30%) – Students are expected to attend all classes with the required material having been read and films watched. One absence is allowed; each absence beyond the first will reduce the student’s final grade by 5%. Students are required to post a discussion question on the course website 24 hours before our class meeting. These discussion questions must be synthetic and bring together concerns between disparate texts. Each week’s worth of discussion questions is worth 3%.

Class Project (10%) – As determined by the students enrolled in the class, a collaborative class project relating to the themes of the course will be developed and submitted by the end of the term. This might be a collaboratively written summary of the course, a series of thematically-arranged audio cut-ups from the course, or something else entirely – any medium is fine, but it must relate in some way to the course content. All students are required to participate, and will be expected to submit a 2-page reflection on the process and their involvement in the collaboration. Time to work on this project will be provided in class on Thursdays, although students may need to arrange for additional meetings outside of class time.

Short Media Projects (20%) – You may choose any three project prompts from the short media project list for your short projects (each worth 6%). Each short project is designed to be a conceptual exercise in focusing on one or two specific formal strategies or theoretical frames, ideally in conversation with course readings, seminar discussions, and screenings. Due dates for short projects will be assigned on an individual basis at the beginning of the quarter such that several people will have work to screen at each class meeting. It is your responsibility to pace yourself with the short pieces to ensure that they are ready to screen on the due dates assigned to you. The short projects are to be thought of as sketches or explorations that are made relatively quickly, in 1-2 weeks. In addition, the whole class will work on a single collaborative audio ethnography / field recording project to be completed during class (worth 2%).

Final Film (20%) – This is to be a stand-alone, short, audiovisual ethnography, no longer than ten minutes. Students must work collaboratively with a partner, on research, production (alternate between camera and sound; all shoots should use a separate sound recordist), and postproduction. The subject can be whatever you wish, including a development of one of your earlier projects. There should be a minimum of four substantial and productive shoots. It is crucial to develop your idea and make practical arrangements early in the quarter. This will allow sufficient time for all necessary reshooting, careful editing and revision, and sound editing. Be guided by the production schedule outlined in the syllabus. Students must keep a written journal of their filmmaking process and turn it in along with their film.

Writing Prompts (20% total; 5% each) – Students must complete the listed Writing Prompts and turn them in on the date specified in the syllabus. Each prompt should be 4-5 pages long (double spaced, in Times New Roman, with 1” margins).

Lab Fee and Materials
A NOTE ON AUDITING

If you are enrolled in ANTH 262 but not FILM 232:

Your participation grade depends on you attending meetings of FILM 232 and the screenings, in addition to your full participation in ANTH 262.

The 40% of your grade which would be comprised of the Media Prompts and Final Film will instead be made up for with a Final Paper (worth a total of 40%). The Final Paper must rework the content of the Writing Prompts into a 25-30 page research paper (excluding bibliography), which is prepared as if being submitted to a journal (i.e. it must include an abstract, key words, a cover letter, recommended reviewers, etc.).

If you are enrolled in FILM 232 but not ANTH 262:

Your participation grade depends on you completing the assigned readings and attending meetings of ANTH 262, in addition to your full participation in FILM 232. You will still be expected to participate in the collaborative class project, and the 20% of your grade that would be comprised by the writing prompts will be redistributed so that the Film Film will be worth 40% of your final grade.

POLICIES

Late Work: No late work will be accepted for credit. All assignments must be turned in to receive a passing grade in the course.

Watching the Films: A weekly communal viewing time will be established at the first meeting; films will also be placed on reserve at McHenry Library for students to consult on their on time. It is expected that students will have recently watched the required film for each week.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated. Evidence of plagiarism will result in an immediate failing grade in the course and actions as dictated by university policy regarding academic integrity on graduate students. Please see <http://library.ucsc.edu/science/instruction/CitingSources.pdf> if you have any questions about what qualifies as plagiarism and strategies for avoiding such. For a description of the plagiarism review process, see <http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/graduate_students/>.

Style Matters: All submitted written work should follow the guidelines set forth in the American Anthropological Association’s style guide (available at aaanet.org) – except as outlined above. All papers should be double-spaced, 12 point font, in Times New Roman, with 1 inch margins on all sides, and page numbers. Failure to meet these standards will result in a reduced grade.

All media work should be brought to class as Quicktime files for class screenings.
**EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS**

You are responsible for providing your own media storage, including backup media storage for tapeless media in case of primary hard drive failure. For tapeless flash-based video production, you are strongly encouraged to maintain two identical hard drives. Please view Slugfilm recommendations for specs ([http://slugfilm.ucsc.edu/production_support/?page_id=2167](http://slugfilm.ucsc.edu/production_support/?page_id=2167)).

Film + Digital Media PhD students will have access to the F+DM PhD student equipment pool. Other students may check out Sony EX-1 cameras from the film department checkout lab after completing a short equipment orientation.

**LAB PERIODS**

The lab periods will be used differently week by week (or not used at all) based on individual and class needs. Some labs are designated for the teaching of basic technical skills in production, and are optional for students who are already experienced with audiovisual production. Later labs may cover more advanced topics in postproduction, such as color correction and sound editing. Other labs periods may only be used on an as-needed basis.
COURSE SCHEDULE

1 Introduction & The Powers of Observation

T January 7
Introduction to class; syllabus overview
In class screening: Sweetgrass (Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Castaing-Taylor, 101 min., 2009)

Outside Screening: Our Daily Bread (Nikolaus Geyrhalter, 92 min., 2009)

Th January 9
Crary, Jonathan
Serres, Michel

2 Anthropology & Cinema

T January 14
Screening and critique of short projects #1

Lab (optional): Camera lab, Sony EX1

Outside Screening:
Les Maîtres Fous / The Mad Masters (Jean Rouch, 25 min. 1955)
Chronicle of a Summer (Jean Rouch, 90 min. 1961)

Th January 16
MacDougall, David
2005 The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Introduction, Parts One and Four; Parts Two and Three are optional.]

Moore, Rachel

DUE: Writing Prompt #1: The Elaboration of a Problem

3 Experiments with Sound
**January 21**

Hui, Alexandra  

*In Class Listening:* Sound Safari, Bath Maine (Sharon Lockhart and Sensory Ethnography Lab, 50 min., 2008)

*Lab (optional):* Sound recording and microphones

*Outside Screening:*  
Wedding of Silence (Pavel Medvedev, 29 min., 2004)  
Singapore Gaga (Tan Pinpin, 55 min., 2005)

**January 23**

Audioscape (recording field trip and group project, location to be decided by class)

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**January 28**

Screening and critique of short projects #2

*Lab (optional):* Editing, Introduction to Final Cut Pro; Coverage, cutaways, and shooting to edit

*Outside Screening:*  
The Phantom of the Operator (Caroline Martel, 66 min, 2004)  
The Tailenders (Adele Horne, 72 min., 2006)

**January 30**

Kittler, Friedrich  

*DUE:* Writing Prompt #2: Sensory Engagements
5  Social Science, Hot and Cold

T   February 4
Screening and critique of short projects #3

DUE: Final Film written proposal

Lab (optional): TBD (optional based on any tech needs that arise)

Outside Screening:
Trypps series #3, #6, and #7 (Ben Russell, 32 min., 2007-2010)
The Good Woman of Bangkok (Dennis O’Rourke, 82 min., 1991)

Th   February 6
In-class screening: How to Live in the FRG (Harun Farocki, 78 min., 1990)

Favret-Saada, Jeanne
       University Press. [Parts One and Two; as much of Part Three as possible.]

McLuhan, Marshall
              MA: MIT Press. [Part One and Chapters 28-31]

6  Experiments with Everyday Life

T   February 11
Screening and critique of short projects #4
Shooting for Final Film should be underway

Lab (optional): TBD (optional based on any tech needs that arise)

Outside Screening:
The Love Tapes - excerpts (Wendy Clarke, 1981)
How to Fix the World (Jacqueline Goss, 28 min., 2004)
Poto and Cabengo (Jean Pierre Gorin, 73 min., 1980)

Th   February 13
Garfinkel, Harold
             Two, THEN One, Three and Five – and Eight if possible.]
Experimental Forms, Part 1

February 18
Screening and critique of Final Film rushes

Lab (optional): Color Correction

Outside Screening:
Bear 71 (Leanne Allison and Jeremy Mendes, 20 min., 2012)
John and Jane Toll Free (Ashim Ahluwalia, 79 min., 2008)

February 20
Marcus, George and Fernando Mascarenhas
Shaviro, Steven

DUE: Writing Prompt #3: Presentation of Evidence 1

Experimental Forms, Part 2

February 25
Screening and critique of Final Film, edited selects and scenes

Lab: Sound editing

Outside Screening:
South of Ten (Liza Johnson, 10 min, 2006)
In the Air (Liza Johnson, 22 min, 2009)
White Sky (Susanna Helke, 54 min., 1998)

February 27
In Class Screening: Mala Leche (Naomi Uman, 47 min. 2003)

Barthes, Roland
Stewart, Kathleen
9  Experimental Systems

T  March 4
Screening and critique of Final Film rough cuts

Lab (optional): editing lab TBD based on student need

Outside Screening:
Naked (Paweł Wojtasik, 10 min., 2007)
Nascentes Morimur (Paweł Wojtasik, 19 min. 2012)
Leviathan (Véréna Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor, 87 minutes, 2012)

Th  March 6
Fischer, Michael.
   2009    Anthropological Futures. Durham: Duke University Press. [Chapters Three through Five, and Conclusion]
Rheinberger, Hans-Jorg

DUE: Writing Prompt: #4 – Presentation of Evidence 2

10  Horizons of Experimentation

T  March 11
Individual editing meetings; no class

Th  March 13
Final screening and critique; finished projects due; final papers due (for FILM 232 auditors)

DUE: Class Project and Final Film
APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING PROMPTS

Your reports must be 4-5 pages long, double-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman font, and with 1” margins on each side. They must also include page numbers, and following the AAA style guide.

Prompt 1: Elaboration of a Problem
Describe an empirical case – this might be an event, a person, a place, or something more abstract. How do you know of the case, and what is your relation to it? Consider Serres’ discussion of the parasite; how does it apply to the situational relation of you to the case? How are there parasites within the case itself? Consider also the frame of the case; who frames the situation and its actors? How does the case relate to a specific problem? This might be a social or personal crisis or a problem of knowledge production; or it may pose problems of a number of different kinds. If the problem is a challenge to knowledge production, how might it be overcome, particularly through the use of technology?

Prompt 2: Sensory Engagements
Use the technology at your disposal to record a series of sensory experiments, particularly audio and video; it may be helpful to try and collect the same kind of data through multiple means (e.g. use audio, but also try touch, smell, etc.). (It might be helpful to listen to this episode of This American Life to spur ideas.) You might consider describing a space, a process, a person, a conversation, or an interview. Once you have collected the data, write it up in 1-2 pages; in the succeeding pages, answer the following questions: how do different approaches to the same empirical object result in different kinds of data?, how do different approaches influence narrative form?, what approach seems to work the best?

Prompt 3: Presentation of Evidence 1
Collect a series of images related to your case; also describe key spaces and material objects (which you’ve also taken pictures of). How do these spaces and objects shape the actions of individuals; how are they focal points for relations between individuals?, how do they influence individuals in their relationships with their social and environmental contexts?, reflecting on Barthes and Stewart, how do photographic and written descriptions differ in their powers of representation?

Prompt 4: Presentation of Evidence 2
Conduct a life history interview; it should be no less than four hours in length (although it may be broken up into two sections), and should be recorded (textual, audio or video). Transcribe key portions of the interview, and construe them into a narrative centering around a process, an object, an ethical decision, or a crisis. Reflecting on Marcus & Mascarenhas, how do media influence how individuals represent themselves?, how do media constrain how individuals can be represented?
APPENDIX B: SHORT MEDIA PROJECTS

You are expected to spend 1-2 weeks working on each short media project: think of these short projects as well-developed and articulate sketches that “work” as complete stand-alone pieces. Some of these projects are explicitly in dialogue with the writing exercises, and you may wish to develop a media project in tandem / around the same materials as one of the writing prompts, using video and audio in parallel with writing to think across a common set of themes and engagements.

You may select three projects of your choice from this list:

1. Sensory Engagements (you may wish to create this project in tandem with writing prompt #1): make a short piece that represents one thing or experience through three discrete processes of sensory engagement. Each engagement is limited to one of the five senses.

2. Material evidence (you may wish to create this project in tandem with writing prompt #3): create a collection or display of five objects or pieces of material evidence that are used to explore a site of ethnographic exploration. Is the evidence truthful or deceptive? What are the limitations of your material evidence? What is the potential for your collection to open up a space of speculative inquiry?

3. Interview (you may wish to create this project in tandem with writing prompt #4): create an interview that foregrounds the power dynamics of the interview / the act of interviewing.

4. Translation / Mistranslation: make a piece that foregrounds issues of language and (mis)translation. What do we understand and what do we not understand? Who is the privileged listener? How can that dynamic shift over time? What are possible roles of subtitles?

5. Mediations: make a project that foregrounds the technological mediations necessary to interact with / record your subject.

6. Observer Positions: make a study of one visual process from two different observational stances / positions. The process can be anything that has a discrete beginning and end, ideally one that repeats over time so that it can be filmed in several ways. What changes?

7. Embodiment: make a project about immersion / embodiment

8. Foreignness: make a project about being an outsider to the situation or site that you are filming. How do you negotiate representing a place where you don’t belong?

9. Study of a System: how can you represent a complex system through visual parts?

10. Ethnographies of the Familiar: make an autoethnography or an ethnography of a space that is deeply familiar.

11. Affect: What is the feeling of being there? How can you show us?