**U69 Anthro 3004 – Second Sight: Topics in Visual Anthropology**

**Instructor: Dick Powis (he/him)**

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Fall 2020

Thursdays, 5:30pm – 8:00pm

***Course Summary***

Visual anthropology is as old as the camera and, like North Atlantic anthropology, shares a long history with colonial exploitation and expansion. This course examines the history of both ethnographic film and photography and considers the ethics of visual anthropology in the 21st century. This survey of ethnographic film and photography aims to familiarize students with the concepts of visual anthropology and introduce a variety of ethnographic and media studies concepts, theories, methods, and ethical considerations. Drawing from a broad spectrum of materials, we will focus on analyzing film and photography in class, discuss ethics, challenge the boundaries of ethnographic conventions, and invite filmmakers and photographers into conversation via Zoom.

***Objectives***

1. Students will better understand the use of photography and film in the production and circulation of anthropological knowledge
2. Students will consider ethics of visual ethnography, such as the choices involved in making anthropological photographs and films, as well as the political dimensions of ethnographic representation.
3. Students will better understand the relevance of visual anthropology to broader contemporary theoretical debates in anthropology.

***Evaluation Criteria***

**Weekly Discussion (10%):** Class session will consist of discussions based on assigned readings and media for the corresponding class date. Articles and films (or links to them) will be available on Canvas. The course is designed around thinking deeply with the assigned material, so while there isn’t always lot to read for each class, you will be expected to demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the materials and about the films in class.

**Weekly Response (10%):** One half-page response (150-300 words) to the assigned materials. I want to know what you think about the materials and how (or if) you can related them to previous discussions. Please include two questions you’d like to ask or discuss in class.

**Weekly Photovoice (10%):** Every week, you’ll be given a prompt. Before the next class meeting, you’ll need to go out a take one photograph inspired by the prompt. Tweet your photo using the course hashtag (#\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) before the beginning of class and be ready to discuss the photo in relation to the prompt during the next class. (In lieu of Twitter, we may use Canvas.)

**Midterm Exam (20%)**: The midterm exam is an online, written exam consisting of short answer questions, short essays, and one long essay based on the topics, readings, and films we’ve discussed up until the middle of the semester. It’s open-everything and you’ll have a week to take it.

**Photographer Presentation (10%):** In Week 7, after the midterm, you will be asked to present a short 10-minute PowerPoint about two photographers. The photographers do not need to be anthropologists, but they should have a substantial body of ethnographic work. You will need to present one historical photographer and one contemporary photographer. Please tell us about the photographer, where they are from, what their work is about, and show us at least five of their images (and high-res if possible). If the photographer is alive, I encourage you to reach out to them personally. Possible photographers could be, but are not limited to:

* Anderson, Ryan
* Burtynsky, Ed
* Curtis, Edward
* Diop, Omar Victor
* Genovese, Taylor
* Hoffman, Daniel
* Keita, Seydou
* Luvaas, Brent
* Malinowski, Bronislaw
* Poolaw, Horace
* Schonberg, Jeffrey
* Sidibe, Malick
* Wilbur, Matika

**Final Project (40%):** The final project is your choice between an in-class photo presentation and a magazine-style photo essay. We will discuss this project after the midterm.

***Course Books:***

* Pink, “Doing Visual Ethnography”
* Hoffman, “Monrovia Modern”
* Causey, “Drawn to See”
* Hamdy, “Lissa”

***Possible Course Films (pending a class discussion about access):***

* 37 Uses for a Dead Sheep
* Atlantics (Netflix)
* Chasing Ice
* Honeyland (Hulu)
* Manakamana (Amazon Prime)
* Please Don’t Beat Me, Sir!
* Sent Away Boys (YouTube)
* Sweetgrass (Amazon Prime)

***Attendance:*** If you come to class and participate in the discussion, you have a better chance of getting a good grade. I also understand that life (and non-life, like viruses) can get in the way and that everyone has different situations. If you need to miss class, please come talk to me so we can schedule supplementary one-on-one discussions, if possible. In addition to institutionally recognized holidays, absences are excused for all other religious or political holidays.

***Accommodations:*** This course is intended for all Washington University students, including those with mental, physical, or cognitive disabilities, illness, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that tends to negatively affect one’s equal access to education. If, at any point in the term, you find yourself not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are welcome (and not required) to contact me by email, phone, or during office hours to discuss your specific needs. I also encourage you to contact Disability Resources (<https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>). If you have a diagnosis, they can help you document your needs and create an accommodation plan. By making a plan with them, you can ensure appropriate accommodations without disclosing your condition or diagnosis to course instructors.

***Academic Integrity:*** All students are expected to adhere to standards of academic integrity listed on the Academic Integrity Policy website (<https://wustl.edu/about/compliance-policies/academic-policies/undergraduate-student-academic-integrity-policy/>). Just don’t cheat.

***Children*** are always welcome in class and I’m always happy to hold babies. Lactating parents may take breaks to feed their infant or express milk as needed, either in the classroom or elsewhere. WUSTL offers private lactation rooms across campus, which are listed here: <https://hr.wustl.edu/places/infant-nursing-rooms/>

***Basic Needs and Security:*** Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Division of Student Affairs (<https://studentaffairs.wustl.edu/>) for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

***Course Agenda (readings subject to change)***

**Week 1 (September 17) – Introduction, Syllabus Review, and Course Overview**

* Heider, Chapters 1-2 (49pp)
* Ginsburg, “The Parallax Effect” (13pp)
* Ingold, “That’s enough about ethnography!” (13pp)
* Film: Sent Away Boys – [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtGf9Hs6v54) (40m)

**Week 2 (September 24)**

* Pink, Intro and Part 1 (69pp)
* Delaplace, “More than Corpses, Less than Ghost” (13pp)
* Oyate – Kanopy (73m)

**Week 3 (October 1)**

* Pink, Part 2 (90pp)
* The Garden – Kanopy (81m)

**Week 4 (October 8) – Representation, Ethics, Decolonization**

* Pink, Part 3 (54pp)
* Docot, “Taking the Long Route” (22pp)
* Film: Performing Naturalness – [Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/4452050) (3m)
* Film: Christmas in our Hearts (Reloaded) – [Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/196708085) (3m) [original: [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yK9SAdfNrkE&ab_channel=JKLfan2006)]
* Film: HindiOke 2: Maligaya Sana Ang Pasko (Christmas Would Be Joyful) – [FB](https://www.facebook.com/artistsresbak/videos/839490152900498/) (5m)
* In-class conversation with Prof. Dada Docot

**Week 5 (October 15) – What is “ethnographic?”**

* Heider, Chapter 3 (60pp)
* Melly, “Titanic Tales of Missing Men” (16pp)
* Film: Atlantics – Netflix (107m)

**Week 6 (October 22) – MIDTERM EXAM**

**Week 7 (October 29) – History of Photography**

* Landau, “Empires of the Visual” (31pp)
* In-class PowerPoint presentation on photographers

**Week 8 (November 5) – Photographic Ethnography**

* Hoffman, “Monrovia Modern” (182pp)
* Bourgois, “Lumpen Abuse” (11pp)
* Shankar, “Toward a Critical Visual Pedagogy” (17pp)

**Week 9 (November 12) – (Photo)ethnography or (Photo)journalism?**

* Kobré, “Photo Story” (45pp)
* Boryga and Blesner, “From Boys to Men in the South Bronx” – [NYT, Lens](https://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2017/11/24/from-boys-to-men-in-the-south-bronx)
* Docot, “Urban Clutter” (16pp)
* Roth, “Beneath Ebola Ruins” (9pp)
* Sutherland, “The Photo Essay” (7pp)
* Yates-Doerr, “SICK” (19pp)
* Sean Tucker, “Law and Ethics in Street Photography” – [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1vCiZUHKVc) (23m)

**Week 10 (November 19) – Photography as Research Method**

* Harper D., “Talking about Pictures” (15pp)
* Gubrium and Harper K., “Photovoice Research” (32pp)
* Shankar, “Auteurship and Imagemaking” (10pp)
* Smith, “Repeat Photography as a Method” (24pp)
* Klett, “Repeat Photography in Landscape Research” (25pp)
* Film: Chasing Ice
* In-class conversation with Prof. Ryan Anderson

**Week 11 (November 26) – NO CLASS**

**Week 12 (December 3) – Anthropology, Illustrated**

* Causey, “Drawn to See” (176pp)
* Hamdy, “Lissa” (304pp)
* Film: David Graeber on the Value of Work – [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpoJIkqEXYo) (4m)

**Week 13 (December 10) – Multimodal Ethnography**

* Jurgenson, “The Social Photo” (117pp)
* (Recommended) Collins et al, “Multimodal Anthropology” (5pp)
* (Recommended) Powis, “Heartened by Iconoclasm” (1p)
* (Recommended) Genovese, “Going Gonzo” (15pp)
* In-class conversation with Taylor Genovese

**Week 14 (December 17) – FINAL PRESENTATIONS**