

ANT 372: Visualizing Shanghai
Fall 2012, Th 1:30- 4:20pm, 2123

Prof. Shen Yifei and Eriberto P. Lozada Jr.
Office: Chambers B12
Office Hours: M, W, F 9:30 – 10:30 am
T, Th 10:00 – 11:15 am or by appointment

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This seminar introduces students to the theory and methods necessary for making documentary films. Throughout the semester, students will conduct fieldwork in Shanghai and make short films on some aspect of everyday social practice, demonstrating its wider social, political, and economic significance. Emphasis is placed on developing the critical skills needed for resolving some of the ethical, technical and aesthetic problems that may emerge during the documentation of social and cultural behavior.

Because of the significant amount of time and skill necessary in producing an ethnographic film, projects will be done within groups. While individuals within a group may specialize in a particular aspect of the project, I will expect everyone to have a strong working knowledge of all the various aspects of research and production. Much of the work for this course will be conducted outside the class and not during seminar meetings, especially in the latter half of the semester. We will loan to students in the class the equipment necessary to produce high-quality videos.

Course Readings

Pink, Sarah 2006. *The Future of Visual Anthropology: Engaging the Senses*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0415357659.
Ginsburg, Faye D., Lila Abu-Lughod, and Brian Larkin, eds. 2002. *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 0520232313.
Berry, Chris, Lu Xinyu, and Lisa Rofel, eds. 2010 *The New Chinese Documentary Film Movement: For the Public Record*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Additional articles will be available from the instructor.

Course Requirements

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each seminar meeting; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Because this is a laboratory class, being prepared also means **having mastered the software or technical skills** expected for the meeting. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. Your engagement with the material and mastery of the software and equipment is vital for the success of this learning experience.

Seminar Participation: (10%) Students are expected to attend all classes, do the readings and computer exercises prior to class, and **discuss the implications of the issues** in the classroom. Part of this grade will be determined from a self-examination conducted by the group.

Discussion Board: (10%) Each week, students will write a brief reaction towards a film that was reviewed, a reading, or a reflection of an incident from the filmmaking process. You should feel free to write whatever you feel is relevant. They are due prior to the start of each seminar meeting. I expect you to have also reviewed you're your peers have written – you may respond to what they have written, but I expect all exchanges to be as civil as if they were said in person during the seminar meeting. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Film Proposals (10%): The goal of this seminar is to produce at least 3 high quality digital shorts, revolving around a particular theme. For example, if the group's interest is urban development, the project may focus on the renovation of a particular neighborhood. One short film could be based on residents' perspective on the project, another could focus on the workers in the construction company, and a third could film the development company's management. Access to informants/film interviewees is therefore an important part of the process of documentary film. This assignment is based on preliminary fieldwork observations and library research. The writing of this proposal will indicate to the instructors that you have obtained permission from the participants. In order to write this proposal the research team must have observed the site on at least two different occasions. Below are the requirements for this exercise:

- A concise statement of the research project and a justification for this research project.
- Describe the research site.
- List the dates the site was visited and the length of each observation period.
- Provide a demographic profile of the participants you observed.
- Describe the types of activities the group plans to videotape.
- Indicate cultural beliefs underlying the social behavior to be videotaped.
- Indicate major challenges or obstacles this project will present and suggest measures to counteract them.
- Critic two videos that deal with similar or related topic and indicate how your study differs. (We may help you find such documentaries.)
- Briefly summarize scholarly articles that deal with the same or a related topic and indicate how this literature influences your ideas.

Photo Essay (10%): This is your opportunity to begin using images to tell a story. Using no more than ten pictures, create a narrative about a particular place, event, or person. Limit the amount of staging and interference in the actual occurrence. You may not use text or audio to explain the scene – as much as possible, let your images (and your sequencing) tell the story.

Short Video: Editing Exercise (10%): Each person in the class will be given a set of video clips that you will individual edit to create a short video. The goal of this project will be to create a narrative based on the limited available footage. Do not add voice-overs to your video. You will also present your video to the class on the day that it is due.

Short Video: Filming and Editing Exercise (10%): More on this project will be made available later during the seminar. This is a “timed exercise,” simulating a journalist's assignment. You will be given a particular subject and will have 48 hours to produce a digital short.

Literature Review (10%) : The literature review is a more thorough examination and analysis of existing studies that are similar to your research interest. This review should include:
An examination of the major theoretical and or methodological concerns within the literature.

Discussion that outlines your theoretical concerns and how they either support or differ from existing studies. See the handout, available on Blackboard.

Ethnographic Film Project: (30%) This is the group ethnographic film, which will have at least three short films. The film will be evaluated in terms of how successful it is in: portraying the ethnographic subject; the effectiveness of the narrative in exploring the social or cultural issue; the aesthetics of the filming and editing. The film will be submitted as a DVD, and will be accompanied by a group paper (film narrative), incorporating elements from the proposal and literature review.

While we will work together on various issues and projects, your papers are your own individual work. All work is subject to the rules and regulations of Fudan University. If there are individual accommodations for special needs, please let me know and authorize the Dean of Students to contact me so that we can work something out.

Course Schedule (subject to modification)

13 Sep 2012	<p style="text-align: right;">Introduction to Visual Analysis and Visual Anthropology</p> <p>Reading: Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (from instructor) Jean Rouch, “Our Totemic Ancestors and Crazy Masters” (from instructor) Faye Ginsburg, “Screen Memories: Resignifying the Traditional in Indigenous Media” (from Media Worlds) Laboratory Exercise: introduction to video and audio equipment. Framing images: rule of thirds, lighting.</p>
20 Sep 2012	<p style="text-align: right;">Documentary Film in Anthropology</p> <p>Reading: Sarah Pink, Part 1: Situating Visual Anthropology (from Future) Sarah Pink, Part 2: Visual anthropology and the mainstream (from Future) Jay Ruby, “The Last 20 years of visual anthropology: a critical review” (from instructor) David MacDougall, “The Visual in Anthropology” (from instructor) Laboratory Work: Working with Audio and Photography Using Adobe Premiere (video editing software). Introduction to pecha-kucha. Introduction to Storyboarding. Assignment: Discussion Post; View Ken Burns effect (on moodle)</p>
27 Sep 2012	<p style="text-align: right;">Media in China and other places</p> <p>Reading: Lila Abu-Lughod, “Egyptian Melodrama – Technology of the Modern Subject?” (from Media Worlds) Mayfair Yang, “Mass Media and Transnational Subjectivity in Shanghai: Notes on (Re)Cosmopolitanism in a Chinese Metropolis” (from Media Worlds) Louisa Schein, “Mapping Hmong Media in Diasporic Space” (from Media Worlds) Laboratory Work: Presentation/critique of Photo Essay; Lighting; filming specific shots.</p>

	Assignment: Photo Essay due; Discussion Board Post
4 Oct 2012	Methodological Approaches Reading: Sarah Pink, Part 3: Engaging with the real world (from Future) Sarah Pink, Part 4: Visual anthropology and digital technologies. (from Future) Rachel Hurdley, “Focal points: framing material culture and visual data” (from instructors). Laboratory Work: Review Footage; editing, logging, capturing. Using Photoshop. Assignment: Proposal due
11 Oct 2012	More on the Impact of Media Reading: Purnima Mankekar, “Epic Contests: Television and Religious Identity in India” (from Media Worlds) Tejaswini Ganti, “ ‘And Yet My Heart is Still Indian’: The Bombay Film Industry and the (H)Indianization of Hollywood” (from Media Worlds) Annette Hamilton, “Thai Media and Cultural Identity” (from Media Worlds) Laboratory Work: More editing (audio), rendering, and burning Assignment: Short Video Project Due
18 Oct 2012	Producing Media Reading: Barry Dornfield, “Putting American Public Television Documentary in Its Places” (from Media Worlds) Arlene Davila, “Culture in the Ad World: Producing the Latin Look” (from Media Worlds) Jeff D. Himpele, “Arrival Scenes: Complicity and Media Ethnography in the Bolivian Public Sphere” (from Media Worlds) Laboratory Work: Photoshop practice; Assignment: Discussion Board (film critique)
25 Oct 2012	Reading: Chan and Yung, “Chinese Entertainment, Ethnicity, and Pleasure” (from instructors) Michael Fitzhenry, “China Art by Phone: Mobile Movies” (from instructors) Stephen Yiu-Wai Chu, “Brand Hong Kong: Asia’s World City Method?” (from instructors) Assignment: Second Video Project Due
1 Nov 2012	Reading: Berry, Rofel, and Lin: Part 1, Historical Overview Laboratory Work: Presentation of Second Video Project
8 Nov 2012	Reading: Berry, Rofel, and Lin: Part II: Documenting Marginalization, or Identities New and Old Assignment: Literature Review Due
15 Nov 2012	Reading: Berry, Rofel, and Lin: Part III: Publics, Counter-Publics, and Alternative Publics
22 Nov 2012	Reading: Berry, Rofel, and Lin: Part IV: Between Filmmaker and Subject: Re-creating Realism

29 Nov 2012	Group Consultation: schedule group meetings during class period.
6 Dec 2012	Group Consultation: schedule group meetings during class period.
13 Dec 2012	Presentation of Final Projects
20 Dec 2012	Presentation of Final Projects
27 Dec 2012	Assignment: Final Project Due Film Narrative Due