

ANT 372: Visualizing Anthropology
Fall 2009, F 1:30- 4:20pm, Chambers B263

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Office: Chambers B12

Office Hours: M, W, F 9:30 – 10:30 am

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This seminar introduces students to the tools necessary for making anthropological films. Students will conduct fieldwork and make a film on some aspects of the social and cultural behavior under investigation. 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. At the end of the semester the class will host an anthropological film and present them to the larger academic community.

Because of the vast amount of time and skill necessary in producing an ethnographic film, projects will be done within a group. 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 Connolly Media Lab and not during seminar meetings, especially in the latter half of the semester.

Course Readings

Pink, Sarah 2007. *Doing Visual Ethnography*. Sage. ISBN:1412923484.

Hampe, Barry 2007. *Making Documentary Films and Videos*, 2nd edition. Holt Paperbacks.
ISBN: 080508181X.

Additional articles will be available on Blackboard.

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 Proposal (10%): (due 18 Sep) 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 two cultural beliefs underlying the social behavior to be videotaped.
- Indicate two 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.
- Briefly summarize four scholarly articles that deal with the same or a related topic and indicate how this literature influences your ideas.

IRB Protocol: (due 18 September) This is part of the film proposal. Prior to conducting each film project student must obtain the approval of the Davidson College Institutional Research Board. The protocol form is listed on the website of the Office of Contracts and Grants. The protocol must be approved by course instructors prior to submission to the IRB.

Photo Essay (10%): (due 11 September) 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%): (due 25 September). 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%): (due 9 October). More on this project will be made available later during the seminar.

Literature Review (10%) : (due 23 October) 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. 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 first

draft of the film will be due on **13 November 2009**, while the final film will be due on **11 December 2009**. 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 Davidson College Honor Code as stated in the student handbook. 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)

28 Aug	Course Introduction Laboratory Work: Group Formation, Introduction to GL-2
4 Sep	Documentary Film in Anthropology Reading: Pink, Part 1: Thinking About Visual Research Hempe, Part 1: What is a Documentary? Benjamin essay (optional); Pinney essay (optional) Laboratory Work: Working with Audio and Photography Assignment: Discussion Board Post; View Ken Burns effect (on Blackboard)
11 Sep	Reading: Pink, Part 2: Producing Knowledge Hempe, Part 2: Planning your Documentary Laboratory Work: Presentation of Photo Essay; Lighting; filming specific shots Assignment: Photo Essay due; Discussion Board Post
18 Sep	Reading: Hempe, Part 4: Writing a Documentary Laboratory Work: Review Footage; editing, logging, capturing; Assignment: Proposal due; IRB due
25 Sep	Laboratory Work: More editing (audio), rendering, and burning Assignment: Short Video Project Due
2 Oct	Reading: View selected ethnographic film Laboratory Work: Photoshop practice; Assignment: Discussion Board (film critique)
9 Oct	Assignment: Second Video Project Due Group Consultation: Scheduled by group
16 Oct	Guest Speaker: Jack Walsh Laboratory Work: Presentation of Second Video Project
23 Oct	Group Consultation: Scheduled by group Assignment: Literature Review Due
30 Oct	Group Consultation: Scheduled by group
6 Nov	Group Consultation: Scheduled by group
13 Nov	Laboratory Work: Presentation of Final Project Assignment: Rough draft of final project due;
20 Nov	Group Consultation: Scheduled by group
27 Nov	Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class
4 Dec	Group Consultation: Scheduled by group
11 Dec	Assignment: Final Project Due Film Narrative Due