

VISUALITY AND CULTURE
ANTH 130b

Prof. Ellen Schattschneider
Tuesday/Friday, 10:40-12:00
Olin-sang 212

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AIMS OF COURSE: This course explores interpretive approaches to visuality, visual experience, and other sensory engagements in contemporary social and cultural theory. Why has the problem of vision and visual imagery become so central in recent critiques of knowledge and power? Are the ‘insights’ of these critiques largely limited to western industrial and post industrial societies, or can they legitimately be extended to non western small scale societies and civilizations? To what extent are “tables turned” by recent critical practices, including indigenous media productions?

The course aims to combine analytic readings with practical engagements with the challenges of representation; all students will produce ethnographic multimedia projects during the semester, and critically reflect upon processes of revision and production.

The following books are available for purchase in the bookstore:

- Roland Barthes. Camera Lucida
- Marianne Hirsch. Family Frames
- David Freedberg. The Power of Images
- Diane Eck. Darshan
- Dubbini, Renzo Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe. Translated by Lydia G. Cochran.
- Anne Friedberg. Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern

Required work:

Short *imovie* on a set of family photographs, either from your own family or from a family that you know. I would prefer this work to incorporate still images with voiced narration. The piece should deepen the viewer's understanding the image or visual field in question. Approximately three minutes long. (Due Feb. 9) 15%

Short paper (5-7 pages) on family photography. (Due Feb. 16) 15%

Final multimedia project. *Imovie* or other project (with approval of instructor) about 5 minutes long--on the same topic as the research paper. (Due May 8) 30%

Research Paper (12-15 pages). On a topic to be approved by instructor. (Due May 12) 30%

Class participation. 10%

All papers (hard copy only) must be typed, double spaced, and in 10 or 12 point. Please use internal citations (Allison 1991:196). Append a bibliography indicating all sources (including internet) used in any way during the writing of the essay. Each essay and examination must demonstrate mature, thoughtful engagement with all the various readings for the relevant section of the course.

The final multimedia project and research paper (12-15 pages) should be on topic to be agreed upon by the professor and student; please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss this.

Attendance, on time, is required. For each 3 unexcused absences, the final grade may be reduced by one letter grade.

Readings must be done by the assigned date. Except for the two books, all readings are available in electronic form on JSTOR, though Academic Search Premiere or through the class WebCT site. (Please see the reading list at the end of the syllabus for the on-line location of each article). Students are expected to bring hard copies of the readings to class, along with their readings notes.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. You may only submit your own original work in this course; this includes quizzes, exams, response essays, written papers, and other media. Please be careful to cite precisely and properly the sources of all authors and persons you have drawn upon in your written work. Plagiarism (from published or internet sources) is a serious violation of academic integrity and of the relationship of trust between student and instructor. Please take special care to indicate the precise source of all materials found on the web, indicating the correct URL address of any material you have quoted or in any way drawn upon. Remember, you must indicate through quotations, indentation and citation when quoting from any outside source (internet or print).

Late work will only be accepted under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the instructor, and if accepted, will be penalized.

Accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

This class is a **cell phone free environment**. Please turn off all mobiles, pagers, etc.

COURSE OUTLINE

Tuesday, January 16

Introduction

Family Photography

(Please Note: Thursday, January 18th, 7:00 p.m., Wasserman Cinemateque, International Business School. Screening of film, "God Grew Tired of Us" followed by discussion.)

Friday, January 19

Roland Barthes. Camera Lucida.

Tuesday, January 23

Marianne Hirsch. Family Frames (pages 7-112)

Friday, January 26

Marianne Hirsch. Family Frames (pages 113-268)

Tuesday, January 30

Annette Kuhn. "The Little Girl." Chapter Two, Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination. (pages 24-46) (WebCT)

Michael Haldrup and Jonas Larsen. "The Family Gaze." Tourist Studies, Vol. 3, No. 1, 23-46 (2003) (WebCT)

Friday, February 2

Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." (WebCT)

Tuesday, February 6

Class session on Family Photography *imovies*.

Student Presentations of multimedia files. (Please post your imovie files, on WebCT)

Ritual Images: Visions of the Other World

Friday, February 9

Visiting speaker Professor Ian Condry (MIT), on anime.

***Final version of short imovie due (submitted on WebCT by 10:00am).*

**Screen film: Spirited Away (Miyazaki Hayao) Time and place to be announced.*

Tuesday, February 13: Photography and Death

Schattschneider, Ellen. "Family Resemblances. Memorial Images and the Face of Kinship." Japanese Journal of Religious Studies.

<http://www.ic.nanzan-u.ac.jp/SHUBUNKEN/publications/jjrs/pdf/677.pdf>

Friday, February 16: Seeing the Divine

Diana Eck. Darshan: Seeing the Divine Image in India.

***Paper one (5-7 pages) due. Drawing on the conceptual models we have encountered (especially Barthes, Benjamin and Hirsch) propose an interpretation of three student multimedia presentations on family photography (one of these may be your own).*

**Screen film on Thangka paintings, Mystic Visions, Sacred Art (1996) (Time and place to be announced.)*

Tuesday, February 27

David Freedberg. The Power of Images. (early chapters)

**Screen film on Indian scroll paintings, Singing Pictures (2005). (Time and place to be announced.)*

Friday, March 2

David Freedberg. The Power of Images. (selected chapters)

Historicizing Vision and Landscape in the West

Tuesday, March 6:

Dubbini, Renzo. Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe. Chapters 1-4. (pages 1-134)

Friday, March 9

No class; Greater Boston Anthropology consortium student conference at Tufts University. Please try to attend some of the conference.

Tuesday, March 13

Dubbini. Geography of the Gaze. (pages 135-209)

Vision and Modernity

Friday, March 16

Heidegger. "The Age of the World Picture." In The Question of Technology and other Essays. (WebCT)

Tuesday, March 20: The Hegemony of Vision

Martin Jay, "The Noblest of the Senses" (Chapter One of Downcast Eyes) (WebCT)

W.T.J. Mitchell, "What is an Image?" (Chapter One of Iconology) (WebCT)

Cinema and Modernity: The Optical Unconscious

Friday, March 23

Anne Friedberg. Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern. (begin)

Tuesday, March 27

Anne Friedberg. Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern. (conclude)

Screen film: Man with the Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov, 1929)

Ethnographic Film

Friday, March 30

View and discuss film: Taking Pictures. (Les McLaren and Annie Stiven, 2001)

Tuesday, April 3: No class—University vacation.

Friday, April 6: No class: University vacation.

Tuesday, April 10: The Politics of Indigenous Media

Discuss: Ginsburg, Faye. "Indigenous Media: Faustian Contract or Global Village?" Cultural Anthropology, 94-11 (1991)

Weatherford, Elizabeth. "Native Visions: The Growth of Indigenous Media." Aperture, No. 119: 58-61 (1990)

Friday, April 13

View and discuss film *Photo Wallahs*

Tuesday, April 17

Turner, Terence. "Visual Media, Cultural Politics, and Anthropological Practice: Some Implications of Recent Uses of Film and Video Among the Kayapo of Brazil." Visual Anthropology Review, (Spring) pgs. 8-13.

*****Special class session with Prof. Turner, to be announced (probably Thursday, April 19th)***

Friday, April 20

Student Multimedia presentations

Tuesday, April 24

Student Multimedia presentations

Friday, April 27

Student Multimedia presentations

Tuesday, May 1

Student Multimedia presentations (Last class)

*****Tuesday, May 8: Final Research paper due.***

*****Friday, May 12: Final multimedia project due.***