

SOAN/MVCS 347
Visual Ethnography
A May Term Seminar

Instructor: Jim Spickard
Office: Larsen 232
M, T, W: 9:00am-12:30pm
Th: all day field trips
F: 9:00am-noon

x8713, jim_spickard@redlands.edu
Office Hours: Tues & Wed 2-4pm
Duke 108
(see below for locations)
Jones Center Rm 104

FILM FESTIVAL – 4 Tuesdays 7-9pm, Gregory 161

PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF OUR DISNEYLAND WORK
Wednesday, May 25th, 7:00-9:00pm, Gregory 161

This May Term seminar explores the use of visual media in ethnography. The course includes in-class analysis of ethnographic photography and film, ethnographic field trips to local sites, digital lab work, and the completion of an ethnographic project using still photography. Course topics will include:

- Cultural differences in visual perception, especially variability in culturally standard ways of seeing
- Photography as an ethnographic research tool
- Photography as a means of ethnographic presentation, especially the shifting standards of what counts as ‘ethnography’ and the differences between ethnographic photography and photography used for other ends.
- Practical experience documenting and presenting cultural scenes.

Prerequisites:

- SOAN 102 or MVC(VMS) 101 or permission

Readings:

- Dianne Hagaman: How I Learned Not To Be a Photojournalist (1996, Kentucky: ISBN: 978-0813108704) **Available online at:** <http://www.diannehagaman.com/books/pj2/pj2-title.html>
- Catherine Lutz & Jane Collins: Reading National Geographic (1993, Chicago; ISBN: 978-0226497242)
- Spickard, James V. *et al*: Personal Knowledge and Beyond (2002, NYU; ISBN: 978-0814798034)
- Articles and book chapters on Library Reserve

Required Materials & Expenses:

- Each student must provide her or his own still camera (ideally a digital SRL) and should be familiar with its use.
 - If the camera is not digital, you will have to cover the cost of film and developing, and you must scan and adjust slides/prints before each relevant class. (I can provide instruction.)
- CDs or USB drives to save work.
- One-day admission to Disneyland for May 19th field trip (**less \$15-\$20 SOAN Dept subsidy**).

Course Elements:

- Attendance at all classes and field trips *absolutely required; no exceptions*
- Attendance at evening Film Festival shows *three of four; also open to the public*
- Camera & Topic Assignments (4: checklists or forms) *so you know what you're doing*
- In-class presentations from our first two photo shoots *Mondays: May 13, 20*
- Focusing assignments (9: some written: 1-2 pages) *focusing & discussion starters*
- Report on an ethnographic film (oral & written)
- Public Ethnographic Presentation, based on our third field trip (Disneyland)
- Final Exam *covering the course's intellectual content*

Course Schedule

- Class meets 9am to 12:30pm M, T, & W and 9am-noon on F. I'll plan to fill three hours of this (counting a break), so we'll likely get out early. On the other hand, I need the flexibility to run over, when needed.
- Save each Thursday for a required field shoot. I've listed the sites below.
- Besides regular class meetings, there will be an **Ethnographic Film Festival on 4 Tuesday evening** from 7-9pm in Gregory 161. **You must attend 3 of the 4 sessions.** The festival will be open to the public. (*Bring your friends!*)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Films</u>	<u>Read</u> (before class)	<u>Due</u>
<u>Week One</u>				
2 May	Intro to Visual Ethnography	Film: <u>Dead Birds</u>		
3 May	The Early History: From Voyeurism to Positivism	Films: <u>Nanook of the North</u> ;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hagaman (whole book) • Spickard: "Disciplinary Conflicts ..." (<i>recommended</i>) 	Camera/Topic #1 Focusing #1
FILM FESTIVAL – 7-9pm				
Filming the !Kung (John Marshall's films about Kalahari life.)				
4 May	Cameras, Aesthetics, and the Representational Process	Films: <u>The Village</u> ; <u>Reading an Image</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McCarty: "McCarty's Law..." • Hagaman: "Joy of Victory..." • Spickard <i>et al</i>: ch 8 	Camera/Topic #2 Focusing #2
5 May	FIELD TRIP #1: State Street Day, State Street Night 10:30am-12:30pm; 6-8pm			Camera/Topic #3
6 May	Lab Work – Basic Techniques			
<u>Week Two</u>				
9 May	Film as a Research Tool	Films: <u>Preschool in 3 Culture</u> ; <u>Dance & Human History</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asch & Asch: "Film ..." • Lomax: "Audiovisual Tools" • Worth & Adair: "How Do ..." 	First Field Trip Presentation Focusing #3 Camera/Topic #4
FILM FESTIVAL – 7-9pm				
"Ten Canoes" (An Aboriginal film)				
10 May	Anthropology of Seeing (1)	Film: <u>National Geographic</u> ; <u>People of the Wind (or similar)</u> ;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lutz & Collins, chaps 1-3 	Focusing #4
11 May	Anthropology of Seeing (2)	Film: <u>Oh, What a Blow</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lutz & Collins, chaps 4-7 • Carpenter: "Terror"; 	Focusing #5
12 May	FIELD TRIP #2: FOREST FALLS (8:30am-1pm)			
13 May	Lab Work – Intermediate Techniques			

Week Three

16 May	Researching and Constructing a Story	Films: <u>Born Again</u>	• Spickard <i>et al</i> , Intro, chaps 1-3, 5-7, 13	Second Field Trip Presentation Focusing #6
17 May	Ethnographic Photography in a Reflexive Mode	Films: <u>Holy Ghost People</u> ; <u>Yo Soy Hechicero</u>	• Birckhead: "Reading Snake Handling" Orsi: "Snakes Alive"	Focusing #7
	FILM FESTIVAL – 7-9pm	Ethnography as Art (<i>The Films of Robert Gardner</i>)		
18 May	Inside and Outside	Films: <u>The Goddess and the Computer</u> ; <u>Framing the Other</u>	• Spickard <i>et al</i> , ch 10-12,14 • V Maanen: "Smile Factory" Van Maanen: "Displacing Disney ..." Baber & Spickard: "Crafting Culture ..."	Focusing #8
19 May	FIELD TRIP #3: Disneyland (9am-9pm or after)			
20 May	Lab Work -- Advanced			

Week Four

23 May	Ethnographic Photography in a Post-Modern World	Films: <u>Chichen Itza</u>	• Spickard: "Ritual, Symbol..." Nelson: "Maya Hackers ..." Young: "Observat'l Cinema"; MacDougall: "Beyond ..."	Focusing #9
24 May		FILM PRESENTATIONS – in class		
	FILM FESTIVAL – 7-9pm	"Trobriand Cricket: An Indigenous Response to Colonialism"		
25 May	"CULTURES OF DISNEYLAND" PRESENTATIONS – 7:30-9:30pm: Gregory 161			
26 May	FINAL EXAM (9-11am) – in class			

Articles on Library Reserve

Several of these are from the collection Principles of Visual Anthropology, edited by Paul Hockings. Mouton de Gruyter, 2003. There is a copy on Library Reserve.

- Asch, Timothy & Asch, Patsy: "Film in Ethnographic Research", from Principles.
- Baber, Katherine & James Spickard: "Crafting Culture: 'Tradition', Art, and Music in Disney's 'It's a Small World'", forthcoming in The Journal of Popular Culture.
- Birckhead, Jim: "Reading 'Snake Handling': Critical Reflections", pp 19-83 in Anthropology of Religion: A Handbook, edited by Stephen D. Glazer. Greenwood Press, 1997.
- Carpenter, Edmund: "The Tribal Terror of Self-Awareness", from Principles.
- Hagaman, Dianne: "The Joy of Victory, the Agony of Defeat: Stereotypes in Newspaper Sports Feature Photographs" (*available at <http://www.diannehagaman.com/articles/articles-joy.html>*)
- Lomax: "Audio-Visual Tools for Analyzing Cultural Style", from Principles.
- MacDougall, David: "Beyond Observational Cinema", from Principles.
- McCarty, Mark: "McCarty's Law and How to Break It", from Principles.
- Orsi, Robert: "Snakes Alive", pp. 177-239 in R. Orsi: Between Heaven & Earth. Princeton Univ Press, 2005.
- Nelson, Diane: "Maya Hackers and the Cyberspatialized Nation-State: Modernity, Ethnostalgia, and a Lizard Queen in Guatemala" (*note: this is my all-time favorite journal article title.*) Cultural Anthropology 11/3: 287-308, 1996.

- Sontag, Susan: "America, Seen Through Photographs, Darkly", pp 27-48 in S. Sontag: On Photography, Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux, 1990./
- Spickard, James: "Disciplinary Conflicts in the Study of Religions: Anthropology, Sociology, and 'Lines in the Sand'." Method and Theory in the Study of Religion 4/2: 141-169, 2002.
- _____. "Ritual, Symbol, and Experience: Understanding Catholic Worker House Masses." Sociology of Religion 66/1: 337-357, 2005.
- Van Maanen, John: "Displacing Disney: Some notes in the flow of culture." Qualitative Sociology 15/1: 5-35, 1992.
- _____. "The Smile Factory: Work at Disneyland," from Reframing Organizational Culture, edited by Peter J. Frost, et al., pp. 58–76. Sage, 1990 (available at several places on the Net, including: http://www.analytictech.com/mb709/cases/smile_factory.pdf)
- Worth, Sol and John Adair: "How Do People Structure Reality Through Film?" pp 11-20 in Through Navajo Eyes. Indiana University Press, 1972. (available online at: <http://isc.temple.edu/TNE/introduction.htm#Introduction>)
- Young, Colin: "Observational Cinema", from Principles.

GRADING

I am a relatively tough grader, largely because I take education seriously and want you to as well. I expect you to do upper-division college-level work in this course. That's what the 3xx in the course number means.

As for your actual grades, here is a typical rubric:

- A. You did everything I could possibly ask of you, and you did it extremely well. You worked very hard, learned a great deal, and showed conspicuous intelligence. The quality of your work was outstanding.
- B. You did all the work, and you did it well. You worked hard and learned a good deal. The quality of your work was good.
- C. You did all the work. It is clear that you learned a number of things, though those things may not hang together in a systematic and critical understanding of the course material. The quality of your work was adequate.
- D. You did most of the work, including all the major course requirements. You may have learned some things, but it is not clear that you learned anything important. The quality of your work was less than adequate.
- F. You have demonstrated an obstinate ignorance. You did not complete the course requirements. You have proved unwilling or unable to do college level work in this subject area.

Scoring: I use a point system rather than just letter grades. Starting at the top, 96-100 is an "A+", 91-95 is an "A", 86 to 90 is an "A-", etc. This means that you should not panic if you receive a "78" on a paper that you think ought to be a solid "B". This is a mid-level "B" in my point system. One consequence of this system is that bombing a single assignment will not kill your course grade. Though it is not terribly easy to earn an "A" in my courses, it is rather difficult to fail – if you pay attention and turn in your work.

Weights for the Various Course Elements:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Participation & Course Leadership | 10% |
| • Film Festival | 5% |
| • Camera & Topic Assignments | 5% |
| • In-class presentations from our first two photo shoots | 15% |
| • Focusing assignments | 15% |
| • Report on an ethnographic book or film (oral & written) | 10% |
| • Public Ethnographic Presentation | 20% |
| • Final Exam | 20% |

ASSIGNMENTS

Camera & Topic Assignments (Detailed instructions posted on Moodle)

1. Locate a camera, lenses, chips or film, tripod, and other equipment you will need for this course. Type a list of this equipment, with brand names and detailed descriptions, for my review. Use the form to report your work
2. Examine your camera, to discover which of these features your camera has and how you use each of them. Practice until you can do these things easily. Use the form to report your work.
3. Practice exercises on camera techniques. Use the form to report your work. (*This exercise will likely be modified.*)
4. Figure out which film you will review. Fill out the Report Form and turn it in.

Focusing Assignments

1. What 4 lessons did you learn from Hagaman? What agreed with you? What didn't? Why? (*Write up in 1-2 pages.*)
 - Advanced students: See if you can spot the point at which her own work moves from ethnography to art. What differences do you see between the two? (*An additional page max.*)
2. **SOAN students:** Locate some examples from the ethnographies you have read for your other classes of the issues raised in today's readings. Summarize the techniques those ethnographies use to portray others. **MVC students:** What does your discipline say about how to represent others? How do its issues connect (or not) with those in the readings?
3. Visual ethnography has two sides: the objective side and the subjective side. The first shows people's behavior – often behavior of which they are unaware. The second presents peoples internal ideas about what they are doing. How do today's articles demonstrate one or the other (or both) of these aspects of ethnographic work? (*Write up your thoughts in 1-2 pages*)
4. Compare some early issues of National Geographic with some more recent issues – ideally picking an issue from each of the last 5 decades. Note at least 4-6 ways that the magazine has changed over the years. (The Armacost library has copies going back to 1959; I have more recent issues that you can borrow.) (*Write up in 1-2 pages*)
5. Locate photos from back issues of National Geographic that illustrate – or contradict – the claims made in Lutz and Collins' chapters on NG aesthetics. (*Write up in 2=3 pages.*) Photocopy, scan, or photograph the images, so you can share them with the class.
6. **SOAN students:** Identify 3-4 ethnographic case studies (books or articles) – from your reading for your other sociology and anthropology courses – that raise issues treated in today's PK&B chapters. List these on a sheet of paper and write a long paragraph for each about how the issues are raised. Be ready to share your answers with the class. **MVC students:** How has your discipline framed similar issues? List these on a sheet of paper and write a long paragraph for each about how the issues are raised. Be ready to share your answers with the class
7. Write 2-3 pages about a social situation you experienced that shocked or horrified you, yet seemed normal to others. What did you find difficult or off-putting? How, specifically, did your emotional reactions color your interpretation of the event? What would it have taken for you to understand the event from the other participants' point of view?
8. Locate 3 good articles on Disneyland in reputable (**scholarly**) social science or critical media journals. Read those articles and summarize each of them in a long paragraph (250-300 words). Add 2-3 sentences explaining why the articles are good ones. **Bring enough copies of your summaries to class to distribute to the other students** (plus one for the course leader).
9. Prepare a short paper (500-750 words) applying Young's and MacDougall's insights to some of the films we've seen (in class and as part of the Film Festival). Add insights from Spickard and Nelson where possible.

Film Reports

You will review one ethnographic film/video, chosen from the *Ethnographic Video Online* collection, available through the Armacost Library (<http://library.redlands.edu/az.php>) will make a 6-minute-and-40-second oral illustrated PechaKucha presentation to the class and will also submit a review of 5-6 pages (1250-1500 words). In these reviews and presentations, you should:

1. Summarize the film/video, so that we know its topic and its general approach.
2. Identify the author and describe her or his apparent intention in making the piece.
3. Characterize the author's visual approach, showing how it does or does not support this apparent intention.
4. Identify the story that the author is telling.
5. Consider alternative approaches that the author might have used, both visual and narrative.
6. Describe any cultural assumptions and/or messages that you can identify in the work.
7. Determine whether the author is aware of these assumptions and, if so, how s/he has dealt with them.
8. Identify any reflexive elements you find in the piece. Describe how these shape the overall impact the film / video produces.

Field Trip & "Cultures of Disneyland" Presentations

You will each present a slide show after each of our three field trips. The rhythm is as follows.

- Thursdays, you'll shoot photos in the field. Each field trip will have a focus, but you should explore the field trip setting for a while, before deciding what you want to say about it.
- Fridays, we'll be in the photo lab, developing our pictures. You'll choose photos for your story, adjust and crop them, then construct a slide show.
- Mondays (for the first two trips) or Wednesday evening (for the third), you'll present your material.
 - Monday in-class presentations will use the meso-PechaKucha format (see below). You'll tell your story about what you observed in 5 minutes, using 15 slides.
 - The public "Cultures of Disneyland" presentation (Wednesday, May 25th) will be a full PechaKucha: 20 slides in 6 minutes and 40 seconds.

For all these events, you should focus on portraying the social scene and patterns you observed accurately and creatively.

PechaKucha Presentation Format

PechaKucha is a presentation style in which 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each (six minutes and 40 seconds in total); these slides auto-advance behind the speaker, who speaks directly to the audience. The format keeps presentations concise and fast-paced. It also engages the audience as few other presentation styles can.

Here are the rules for the full presentation version:

- Your presentation will last exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds.
- Your presentation will use PowerPoint, because Keynote and Google Presentations are harder to time accurately. Submit your slides in advance on Moodle, so we don't waste time loading them to the classroom desktop.
- You will use 20 slides plus a title slide. No more, no less. Period.
- Each slide except the title slide must be set to auto-advance after 20 seconds. No clickers, no exceptions.
- Your presentation must follow the 1/1/5 rule:

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- You must have at least one image per slide;
- You can use each exact image only once;
- You should add no more than five words per slide.

You will use images that you have taken yourself for the field trip presentations. You will use film stills – taken by screen capture – for the film reviews.

You should not attempt tell us everything that you might say in a written paper nor explain every nuance of your argument. Instead, you should be looking to give us an overview of the project and highlighting its particular strengths. When designing the presentation, think **SHORT, INFORMAL, and CREATIVE**.

The **“Cultures of Disneyland” Presentation** and the **Film Reports** will use the full PechaKucha format, above.

Our **First & Second Field Trip Reports** will use a Mesa-PechaKucha format. This allows you **15 slides** in place of 20; all other aspects of the format are the same.

TRAVEL RELEASE

I have registered for a University of Redlands course that includes excursions outside of the classroom. I am hereby releasing the University of Redlands and any cooperating university or agency, and their respective officers and agents, from any and all claims and causes of action arising out of any travel or activity conducted by or under the control of the University.

I am physically and mentally capable of participating in this excursion and I understand that I am responsible for arranging for any necessary medication(s) or vaccination(s).

I certify that I have such insurance as I deem relevant for my needs throughout the excursion and acknowledge the University and its agents have no responsibility to assume payment for care not covered. I understand it is my responsibility to determine the nature of my coverage and to secure supplemental coverage for sickness, accident, and trip cancellation as needed.

I hereby certify that I have received and understand completely all waiver issues submitted by the University and signed by me, and that I have received and understand completely all information including but not limited to particular issues of safety, safe conduct, and the laws and customs of the locations to which we will travel.

Name (please print)

ID Number

Signature

Date

SOAN/MVC 347

Course Number

J. Spickard

Professor

LOCATIONS:

May 5th 2016: Downtown Redlands, California
May 12th 2016: Forest Falls, California
May 19nd 2016: Disneyland, Anaheim, California