

Video Ethnography: Culture, Technology & Interpretation



EDCP 510.031

University of British Columbia

Winter 1 2017 (M, 4.30-7.30)

Course Description:

This is an advanced methodology course balanced across the history, materiality, practice, and theory of videography and videoethnography. The course focuses on video data collection and analysis with assignments that accommodate students' research interests and projects. While photography, filmography, and videography have been central to ethnography since the nineteenth century, the course also addresses mobile media and technologies that introduce profound questions of ethics and protocols. This section of EDCP 510 emphasizes micro-video, micro-analysis, and a particular type of qualitative reasoning and empirical analysis informed by actor-network theory (ANT) and object-oriented ontology (OOO).

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Graduate Assistant: ?

Office Hours: By appointment

Valued Ends of the Course:

My intention is to help you develop a background and a depth of expertise—as a researcher—as an intellectual—for doing video ethnography @ culture, technology & interpretation.

Readings (Required):

1. *Readings in Video Ethnography (Culture, Technology & Interpretation)*. (Download all from <https://connect.ubc.ca>)
2. Pink, S. (2001/2014). *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Assessment (for details, see below):

1. Participation in Seminars (10%)
2. Seminar Leadership (20%)
3. 10 x 6 x 600 (Micro-video & analysis) (25%)
4. Proposal (10%)
5. 300 x 12 x 1200 (Video Ethnography) (35%)

Deadline:

Ongoing
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16 October
6 November
12 December

- **Academic Honesty and Standards, and Academic Freedom:** Please refer to *UBC Calendar*
- **Policies and Regulations (Selected):** <http://www.students.ubc.ca/calendar>
- **Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation should contact the Disability Resource Centre without delay (see UBC Policy #73 www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy73.pdf).

**EDCP Grading Guidelines
July 2008**

A level - Good to Excellent Work

- A+ (90-100%) A very high level of quality throughout every aspect of the work. It shows the individual (or group) has gone well beyond what has been provided and has extended the usual ways of thinking and/or performing. Outstanding comprehension of subject matter and use of existing literature and research. Consistently integrates critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. The work shows a very high degree of engagement with the topic.
- A (85-89%) Generally a high quality throughout the work. No problems of any significance, and evidence of attention given to each and every detail. Very good comprehension of subject and use of existing literature and research. For the most part, integrates critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. Shows a high degree of engagement with the topic.
- A- (80-84%) Generally a good quality throughout the work. A few problems of minor significance. Good comprehension of subject matter and use of existing literature and research. Work demonstrates an ability to integrate critical and creative perspectives on most occasions. The work demonstrates a reasonable degree of engagement with the topic.

B level - Adequate Work

- B+ (76-79%) Some aspects of good quality to the work. Some problems of minor significance. There are examples of integrating critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. A degree of engagement with the topic.
- B (72-75%) Adequate quality. A number of problems of some significance. Difficulty evident in the comprehension of the subject material and use of existing literature and research. Only a few examples of integrating critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. Some engagement with the topic.
- B- (68-71%) Barely adequate work at the graduate level.

NOTE: For UBC's Faculty of Graduate Studies (FOGS), a final mark below 68% for Doctoral students and below 60% for Masters students is the equivalent of a Failing mark.

C & D level - Seriously Flawed Work

- C (55-67%) Serious flaws in understanding of the subject *material*. Minimal integration of critical and creative perspectives in relation to the subject material. Inadequate engagement with the topic. Inadequate work at the graduate level.

D level

- D (50-54%)

F level - Failing Work

- F (0-49%)

EDCP 510 Course Schedule & Readings

The schedule primarily consists of a series of seminars, & student projects.

Date	Forum	Assignment	Readings & Topics
Week 1 11 Sept	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Video Ethnography, Culture, Technology & Interpretation + Research Ethics Image, Text, Sound, Object
Week 2 18 Sept	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Micro-Video & Micro-Analysis
Week 3 25 Sept	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Doing Video Ethnography
Week 4 2 Oct	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Micro-Video & Micro-Analysis
Week 5 9 Oct	Thanksgiving Holiday		
Week 6 16 Oct	Student Projects	Readings & Assignments	Student 10 x 6 x 600 Projects
Week 7 23 Oct	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Culture: Thick & Thin Description
Week 8 30 Oct	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Videography
Week 9 6 Nov	Proposal / Seminar	Readings & Assignments	First Nations, Culture, Race: Video, Ethics, Protocols
Week 5 13 Nov	Remembrance Day		
Week 11 20 Nov	Seminar	Readings & Assignments	Interpretation: Latour, ANT, and Ethnography
Week 12 27 Nov	Student Projects	Video due 12 Dec	Student Projects Your 300 x 12 x 1200 work in progress

Week 1

Topic 1: Ethnographic & Video Research Ethics

Reference:

- Lecture Notes (Ethics) <http://blogs.ubc.ca/educ500/files/2014/06/02-EDUC500-Lecture-Notes-Ethics.pdf>
- AAA. (2009/2012). Code of ethics. <http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-aaa/files/production/public/FileDownloads/pdfs/issues/policy-advocacy/upload/AAA-Ethics-Code-2009.pdf> + <http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>
- AERA. (2011). Code of ethics. *Educational Researcher*, 40(3). 145–156.
- RTNDA. (2007). Code of ethics. https://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna_code_of_ethics + https://www.rtdna.org/content/guidelines_for_ethical_video_and_audio_editing
- Graham, A., Powell, M., Taylor, N., Anderson, D., & Fitzgerald, R. (2013). *Ethical research involving children*. Florence, Italy: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. Retrieved from: <http://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ERIC-compendium-approved-digital-web.pdf>
- Lowman, J. & Palys, T. (2000). Ethics and institutional conflict of interest: The research confidentiality controversy at Simon Fraser University. *Sociological Practice: A Journal of Clinical and Applied Sociology* 2(4), 245-255.

Week 2**Topic 2: Micro-Video & Micro-Analysis****Readings:**

- Markham, A. N. (2018). Ethnography in the digital internet era: From fields to flows, descriptions to interventions. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Sage handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.) (pp. 650-668). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nguyen, P. X., Rogez, G., Fowlkes, C., & Ramanan, D. (2016). The open world of micro-videos. *CoRR – Cornell Computing Research Repository*, abs/1603.09439.
- Redi, M., O'Hare, N., Schifanella, R., Trevisiol, M., & Jaimes, A. (2014). 6 seconds of sound and vision: Creativity in micro-videos. *IEEE Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR)*.

Secondary Reading

- Rukszto, K. (2005). The other heritage minutes: Satirical reactions to Canadian nationalism. *Topia*, 14, 73-91.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. (1984). What is an image? *New Literary History*, 15(3), 503-537.

Week 3**Topic 3: Doing Video Ethnography****Readings:**

- Pink, S. (2001/2014). The visual in ethnography. In *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research* (3rd ed.) (pp. 17-29). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pink, S. (2001/2014). Video in ethnographic research. In *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research* (3rd ed.) (pp. ?-?). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pink, S. (2001/2014). Video in ethnographic representation. In *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research* (3rd ed.) (pp. ?-?). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Goldman-Segall, R. (1993). Looking through layers. *Points of viewing children's thinking: A digital ethnographer's journey* (pp. 21-42). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Secondary Reading

- Pink, S. (2009). Situating sensory ethnography. In *Doing sensory ethnography* (pp. 7-22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Week 4**Topic 4: Micro-Video & Micro-Analysis****Readings:**

- Moerman, M. (1987). Society in a grain of rice: An exercise in micro-ethnography. In *Talking culture: Ethnography and conversation analysis* (pp. 68-100). Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bene, R. (2014). Opportunities and challenges of using video to examine high school students' metacognition. *Qualitative Report*, 19, 1-26.
- Knoblauch, M. & Tuma, R. (2011). Videography: An interpretative approach to video-recorded micro-social interaction. In E. Margolis & L. Pauwels (Eds.), *Handbook of visual research methods* (pp. 414-430). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Secondary Reading

- Mueller, B. (2014). Participatory culture on YouTube: A case study of the multichannel network Machinima. *Media@LSE Electronic MSc Dissertations Series*.

Week 5**Thanksgiving (Holiday)****Week 6****Student 10 X 6 x 100 Projects**

Week 7

Topic 7: Culture: Thick & Thin Interpretation

Readings

- Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The interpretation of cultures* (pp. 3-32). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Love, H. (2015). Close reading and thin description. *Public Culture*, 25(3), 401-434.
- Wolf, M. (1992). Writing ethnography. In *A thrice-told tale: Feminism, postmodernism, and ethnographic responsibility* (pp. 127-142). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Reference

- Said, E. W. (1989). Representing the colonized: Anthropology's interlocutors. *Critical Inquiry*, 15(2), 205-225.
- Yon, D. A. (2003). Highlights and overview of the history of educational ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 32, 411-429.
- Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2012). Complicating the concept of culture. *Comparative Education*, 48(4), 441-454.

Week 8

Topic 8: Videography

Readings:

- Minh-Ha, T. T. (1990). Documentary is/not a name. *October*, 52, 76-98.
- Beech, H. & Siqui, Y. (2017). How China is remaking the global film industry. *Time*, <http://time.com/4649913/china-remaking-global-film-industry/>

Reference

- Anwer, M. (2014). Cinematic clearances: Spaces of poverty in Hindi cinema's big budget productions. *Global South*, 8(1), 91-111.
- Musburger, R. B. & Kindem, G. (2009). *Introduction to media production: The path to digital media production* (Chapter 2). Boston: Elsevier.
- Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. (2008). *Teachers guide series*. <http://www.oscars.org/education-outreach/teachersguide/index.html>
- TBA

Week 9

Topic 9: First Nations, Culture, Race: Video, Ethics, Protocols

Readings:

- LaFlamme, M. (2014). Unsettling the West: First Nations films in British Columbia. In Levitin, J., Plessis, J., & Raoul, V. (Eds.), *Women filmmakers: Refocusing* (pp. 403-418). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.
- Downie, G. & Lemire, J. (2016). *Secret path* [Story of Chanie "Charlie" Wenjack]. <http://secretpath.ca>

Reference

- Telefilm Canada. (2013). *Indigenous feature film production in Canada: A national and international perspective*. Ontario, ON: Author.
- Krings, M. & Okome, O. (2013). *Global Nollywood: The transnational dimensions of an African video film industry*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Week 10

Remembrance Day (Holiday)

Week 11

Topic 11: Culture: Latour, ANT, and Ethnography

Readings:

- Latour, B. (2014). On selves, forms, and forces. *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4(2), 1-6.
- Latour, B. (2005). Plasma: The missing masses. In *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory* (pp. 241-246). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Latour, B. & Katti, C. S. G. (2006). Mediating political "things," and the forked tongue of modern culture: A conversation with Bruno Latour. *Art Journal*, 65(1), 94-115.
- Latour, B. (1993). Ethnography of a high-tech case. In P. Lemonnier (Ed.), *Technological choices: Transformations in material culture since the Neolithic* (pp. 372-398). London, UK: Kegan-Paul.

Secondary Readings

- Johnson, J. (1988). Mixing humans and nonhumans together: The sociology of a door-closer. *Social Problems*, 35(3), 298-310.
- Fischer, M. M. J. (2014). The lightness of existence and the origami of "French" anthropology. *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4(1), 331-355.

Week 12 Student 300 X 12 x 1200 Projects

Participation

We refer to scholarly levels of participation as **academic conversation**, **academic dialogue**, or often **performance**, which entail a variety of things including articulation and presentation. Throughout, the challenge is to develop a facility for both **description** and **depiction**. Description *and* depiction are key practices across *all* the disciplines and interdisciplines. **Commentary and criticism** seem to presuppose a **close reading** of a text or work, immersion, *and* a transgressive reading, subversion, although this is neither always possible nor the case. If commentary presupposes **solemn reverence** for a discipline, text or work, then criticism presupposes **gentle mocking** or **subversive irreverence** for that same discipline, text and work. Indeed, interdisciplinarity (cross, meta, multi, trans, etc.) demands and presupposes immersion *and* subversion. All of this necessitates a certain **vulnerability**. Avoid **defensive readings**; read for **understanding**.

Participation is variant whereas modes have proliferated. Participation is interdependent with **preparation** for each class, which involves **reading** (highlighting, pagination margin notes, comments & questions, etc.), **writing** (note-taking, outlining, questioning, defining, mapping, framing, summarizing, journaling, blogging, tweeting podcasting, exposition, etc.), **organizing** (documenting, labeling, ordering, archiving, filing, sequencing events, chronicling, etc.), **reflecting** (rethinking, reincorporating, remapping, analyzing, synthesizing, etc.), and **speaking** (discussing, corresponding with peers, social media, etc.). While a variety of apps and media are readily available for organizing notes, consider [*Evernote*](#) for starters.

Assignments

1. **Seminar Leadership (20%)**— (Groups of 2-3, 1.5 hrs) Choose one week on the schedule and coordinate the discussion. It will be your responsibility to clearly re/present the readings, and to move the discussions through the text. For the discussion that you lead, please prepare to:
 - Outline the key reading for the week.
 - Distribute key texts that inform or contextualize the reading.
 - Define key concepts or methodological and theoretical concepts that are challenging.
 - Provide handouts, focus, or discussion questions and presentation media for clarifying the reading.
 - Moderate and bring closure to the reading.
2. **10 x 6 x 600 (25%)**— This is a micro-video and micro-analysis of micro-social or micro-cultural data. Produce or extract a 10 second video and provide a micro-analysis or interpretation with 6 images and 600 words. The micro-video can be drawn from a 3rd party public site (e.g., Vine), a clip from a larger research

project with Ethics approval, or shot within the parameters of EDCP 510 (i.e., with peers from the class). * See elaboration below

3. **Proposal (for 300 x 12 x 1200 Video Ethnography) (10%)**— Develop a brief proposal for a specific research issue or problem. State the research problem, briefly set it in a theoretical context or framework (i.e., “what are the key theoretical terms?”) and discuss how you will address the research problem through a short video ethnography (See outline). *Ideally this will build on the 10 x 6 x 600 project.

BRIEF Proposal Format

Section	Pages
Working Title	NA
1. Introduction & Site: What are your general and more specific interests for the video ethnography? What is the “site” from which the video will be drawn (i.e., 3 rd party, data collection, etc.)?	(1/4 page)
2. Question(s) or Problem: What is the question (or are the questions) that ground(s) your research?	(1/4 page w/ purpose)
3. Purpose: Why is this important? Who is the potential audience or participants that will likely gain from your research?	
4. Key Theoretical or Critical Concepts: Identify 2-3 concepts that you intend to explore or focus on in your research. Provide a brief description of these or definitions.	(1/2 page)
5. Ethical Considerations: Identify any ethical considerations that may arise in your research or ethical problems that will have to be resolved before or during the inquiry (e.g., consent).	(1/2 page)
6. References	Attach

4. **300 x 12 x 1200 Video Ethnography (35%)**— This is a video data and representation project. Produce or extract a 5 minute (approx.) video and provide an analysis or interpretation with 12 images and 1200 words. The micro-video can be drawn from a 3rd party public site (e.g., Vine), a clip from a larger research project with Ethics approval, or shot within the parameters of EDCP 510 (i.e., with peers from the class).

Each video assignment has 3 parts: image (motion or moving & still), text, and sound (ITS). The **first part** challenges you to select a video clip that meets the temporal requirement (10 seconds & 300 seconds). The subject and content of the moving & still images— representation— are entirely your choice. The **second part** requires that you capture or extract still images (6 images & 12 images) that will provide examples (exemplification) in the analysis and be referred to within the analysis to illustrate, emphasize, clarify, etc. We use “capture” and “extract” somewhat loosely, as you may choose to sketch or illustrate instead of actually extracting or taking a snapshot of a frame. Think of the still images as frames (e.g., capture or extract 6 & 12 frames). The **third part** requires analysis of the images and sound (600 & 1200 words) or more technically of the ethnographic data. Analysis should include two parts: description and interpretation. Description requires fidelity to the data (i.e., to human & nonhuman actors or participants) or a provision of what is happening to help readers see and hear or draw one closer to the actors, action, culture, phenomena, or data, etc. Describe with an audience in mind to direct attention to specific actors, actions, interactions, artifacts, discourses, quotations, etc. in the images and sound. Interpretation requires an elaboration of meaning. Think of interpretation as paraphrasing. This challenges ethnographers to make dimensions of culture compelling through emergent or selective codes, categories, themes, conceptual or theoretical filters, lenses, etc. Again, interpret with an audience in mind to make the data meaningful— to direct attention to meanings of specific actors, actions, interactions, artifacts, discourses, etc. in the images

and sound. In three words, these assignments challenge you to represent, describe, and interpret. Or they challenge you to resolve two processes: representation and signification.