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E t h n o g r a p h i c I m a g e
S p r i n g 2 0 2 2



ANG 6930 – 30600 / ANT 4930 – 30601 / LAS 6938 – 26666
Wednesdays | Period 3 – 5 • (9:35 AM – 12:35 PM)
TUR208H

Instructor: R i c h a r d K e r n a g h a n
Grinter 335 | kernaghan@ufl.edu
office hours: Friday 2:30-4pm (or by appointment)

This course examines the decisive place of pictures and picturing for ethnographic writing, which takes seriously the challenges of describing empirical worlds. We will explore the strange, dual capacity images have to stimulate creativity in intellectual inquiry but also to render the texts we compose more vivid and discerning. Designed as a workshop, the class gives priority to honing skills of observation, to working with verbal and non-verbal pictures, to drawing and crafting descriptions. We also familiarize ourselves with image theory and its profound implications for ethnographic practice. Images rise up from lived encounters of fieldwork. They reveal their full force, however, less in the circumstances where they first surface than in their capacity to persist and later startle when they return. Such is the form and tenacity with which ethnographic images take hold. Therefore, we will study by experimenting—with the pictures we make or merely find

striking—and by sharing the works we compose, so that by exchanging perspectives, impressions, and advice we might gain greater insight into how images meet up with writing but also into why the problem of their relation becomes a privileged terrain for ethnography.

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Course Learning Goals: By the end of this class, students should be able to:

1. identify contemporary trends in ethnographic expression;
2. analyze key concepts and concerns of image theory;
3. craft ethnographic descriptions, which foreground an interplay of image, sound & text;
4. maintain a sketchbook within a larger archive of fieldwork materials;
5. develop a project portfolio of independent research; and
6. create a compelling and insightful visual essay

Overview of Seminar Requirements: (1) active engagement in all group discussions and related activities; (2) a sketch- or scrap- book kept throughout the semester that elaborates upon lived observations, field notes or diaries; (3) a series of short image-text compositions (five in all) based on scenes, experiences and encounters from fieldwork or ordinary life; (4) a personal glossary of critical terms from image theory that you find pertinent to ethnographic research; and (5) a final project that explores the visual essay as an expressive form.

Texts: Most assigned readings can be downloaded from the Canvas course page.

The following books are also recommended; however, their purchase is not required.

Barthes, R. *Camera Lucida* (Hill and Wang, 2010)
Benjamin, W. *Walter Benjamin's Archive* (Verso, 2015)
Berlant, L. & Stewart, K. *The Hundreds* (Duke University Press, 2019)
Ferry, E. & Ferry, S. *La Batea* (Red Hook Editions, 2017)
Foucault, M. *This is Not a Pipe* (University of California Press, 1983)
Lepselter, S. *Resonance of Unseen Things* (University of Michigan Press, 2016)
Stepanova, M. *In Memory of Memory* (New Directions Book, 2018)
Taussig, M. *I Swear I Saw This* (University of Chicago Press, 2011)

On the Canvas course page, you will also find an archive of supplementary materials: texts, still and moving images, as well as links to films, websites, and other online resources.

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Attendance: This course is designed as a discussion-oriented workshop with in-person attendance expected. As a courtesy to all, please arrive punctually, with assigned materials in hand, and ready to be an active participant throughout each session.

Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are all excused; however, proper notification should still be provided. Proper notification for illness is a doctor's note, though in the case of COVID-19, "Screen, test, and protect" status in UF.ONE will also suffice.

If you must miss class, please inform me ahead of time (or as soon as possible). In such cases, you are responsible for contacting a classmate to obtain notes on materials and topics covered while away.

Clearly, the on-going pandemic has created circumstances that may undermine regular in-person attendance. Therefore, if for reasons of illness, Covid exposure or other emergency, you are not able to arrive in person, you have the option of attending remotely via zoom. In such cases, to be counted as present you will have to log onto the video conference.

When attending class in person, I highly recommend, but also strongly request, that you *please*, wear a mask, and to the extent possible exercise appropriate social distancing practices.

Please note: Since participation as well as assimilation of class materials depend upon attendance, multiple absences (3 & above) will undermine academic performance and may even risk failing the course. Students, however, with perfect or near perfect attendance will receive bonus credit towards the final grade. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#) [And for here current UF COVID-19 guidelines.](#)

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Evaluations – Student progress will be weighed through a combination of **five** criteria:

1. Participation (20%) will be assessed based on student engagement during in-class discussions and activities, as well as during one-on-one meetings with the instructor (*office hours*). Participation should be both *active* and *consistent* throughout the semester.

2. Sketchbook/scrapbook (10%) will be evaluated as a completion grade. This moveable workshop or study should be a physical book, rather than digital or electronic. Size, dimensions, and type of construction are up to you. You might buy a book with blank pages or prefer to make one. Though I do recommend something small enough to carry wherever you go. Mini or micro sizes are also fine, just not so small you feel constrained or in any way discouraged. To accompany your sketchbook/scrapbook, you will need some minor but nevertheless essential equipment: Something to write, draw and/or paint with (pencils, pens, color markers, watercolors, etc.).

Something to cut with (scissors or precision knife). Some kind of adhesive too (glue or tape). To repeat, what you use is your decision. *The spirit of the sketchbook is low tech, make-shift, minimalist, with a stress placed on portability.* No special equipment required, so nothing to spend lavishly on. All the same, if you have access to a smart phone or point-and-shoot camera, to a scanner and a printer (monochrome, color), these could come in handy

3. Image-text compositions (25%) are exercises in ethnographic description. The first two assignments ask that you respond in writing to a ready-made image, photograph, film, video or still through close attention to what they contain, stir up, point to or perhaps silence. The final three assignments ask that you combine drawing and written words to create compositions inspired by some scene, experience and lived encounter.

- *assignment 1*: describe a photograph (from fieldwork or connected to you in some other way)
- *assignment 2*: describe a film/video clip (30 sec max) or still
- *assignment 3*: render a portrait that combines drawing & writing
- *assignment 4*: draw a landscape, then write about it
- *assignment 5*: retell a dream with verbal & nonverbal pictures

Please note: Special expertise with drawing, photography or other sorts of figuration is not required for these image-text compositions. You will also not be evaluated on your skills as a visual artist! Nevertheless, *for this assignment all image-text composition should fulfill three basic rules:*

- i. each is connected in some way to your own everyday life or to fieldwork you have conducted.
- ii. each includes a nonverbal image (from photography, video, film, drawing, dream, etc.)
- iii. length of the written portion should be a hundred words (give or take a few)

4. Personal glossary of critical terms (15%): This glossary of eight to ten entries will feature concepts of image theory, drawn expressly from our course readings. Each entry should define the term in your own words, while explaining its relevance for your own ethnographic research.

5. Visual essay (30%): The final project will weigh the possibilities and limits of the visual essay as a mode of ethnographic representation. The project should be an original composition, generated through—and in conversation with—your own research materials. Ideally it will directly contribute towards the development of a conference paper, journal article or dissertation chapter.

Note: With the exception of the sketchbook/scrapbook, all assignments should be submitted *via Canvas*.

Assignment schedule		
<i>participation</i>	20%	Ongoing
<i>image-text compositions</i>	25%	
• 1 – photograph		1/12
• 2 - video/film clip or still		1/26
• 3 – portrait		2/9
• 4 – landscape		2/23
• 5 – dream		3/16
<i>personal glossary</i>	15%	3/30
<i>sketchbook/scrapbook</i>	10%	4/13
<i>final visual essay</i>	30%	4/20

Late policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class of the calendar deadline. Papers handed in late but still within one week of the original due date will be docked the equivalent of a full letter grade. After that they will no longer be accepted. No extensions will be granted for the final project.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. All work submitted for a grade must be free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations of one's own efforts. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question. In such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students.

If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights & Responsibilities. See: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> also <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/quick-links/academic-integrity/>

ADA Statement: "Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the Disability Resource Center to assist in planning accommodations."

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments and exams: 94-100=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 84-86=B; 80-83=B-; 77-79=C+; 74-76=C; 70-73=C-; 67-69=D+; 64-66=D; 60-63=D-; 59 and below=E (failing).

You may consult current UF policy on how grade point averages are calculated at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>.

Course feedback: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Additional UF Resources:

Health & Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352 392- 1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member can reach out to the student.
- [University Counseling & Wellness Center](#), 401 Peabody Hall (392-1575)
- [University Police Department](#): 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- [Student Health Care Center \(392-1161\)](#)
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, [visit the GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic

- [Teaching Center, 1317 Turlington Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420](#). General study skills and tutoring.
- [The Writing Studio, 2215 Turlington Hall \(846-1138\)](#)
- [Career Resource Center, Reitz Union \(392-1601\)](#)
- [Library Support](#) - Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

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Please note: I may make minor adjustments to class readings during the course of the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.

Course Schedule

week 1 describing things empirical

1/5 Stepanova, *Memory of Memory*, Part I: 1 & 2

short film: Milkman (Cao Fei)

Walser, “The Kitten (I),” “The Kitten (II)”

short film: CGH-SDU (*Homenagem à Mínima Informação*) (Giselle Beiguelman)

[Art & Ethnographic forms in Dark Times \(Cultural Anthropology Fieldsights series\)](#)

week 2 images & relations

1/12 Stepanova, *Memory of Memory*, Part I: 3 & 4.

Belting, “An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body”

Umoja Noble, “Close-Up: Black Images Matter”

Takemitsu, “Conversation on Seeing”

film: Wiñaypacha / Eternity (Óscar Catacora)

week 3 visitations, denotations | listening

1/19 Barthes, “The Third Meaning”

Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (excerpts)

Sebald, *The Emigrants* (excerpt)

Berlant & Stewart, *The Hundreds* (select passages)

film: Perfumed Nightmare (Kidlat Tahimik)

week 4 drawing moves

1/26 Eisenstein, “How I learned to draw”

Kleiman, “Yo Autoritratto Nuevo Laredo”

Taussig, *I Swear I Saw This*: Chapters 1 & 10

Partridge, "Diagrams in Anthropology: Lines and Interactions"

film: Qué viva México (Sergei Eisenstein)

week 5 **workshop 1: what are the archives of fieldwork?**

2/2 **film:** *Archivo Cordero* (Gabriela Zamorano)

remote guest: Gabriela Zamorano

Rosón & Douglas, "The things they carried"

website: *entre-ríos* (Blackmore, Domínguez Londoño et. al.)

week 6 **scrapbooks, memoires & other gatherings**

2/9 Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin's Archive*

Benjamin, *Berlin childhood around 1900* (selections)

Taussig, *I Swear I Saw This*: Chapter 14

Didi-Huberman, "Warburg's Haunted House"

Warburg, "The absorption of the expressive values of the past"

film: *Triumph over Violence* (Mikhail Romm)

class visit: Grand Reading Room – Smathers East

week 7 **resemblances**

2/16 Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image"

Kracauer, "Photography"

Foucault, *This is Not a Pipe*

week 8 **quality opaque: densities, shadows, fogs...**

2/23 Blanchot, "Sleep, Night"

Kincaid, "In the Night"

Cortazar, "The Night Face Up"

Canetti, "The Unseen" (*Voices of Marrakesh*)

film: Limbo (Alex Fattal)

week 9 **colors**

3/2 Benjamin, "A Child's View of Color"

Benjamin, "A Glimpse into the World of Children's Books"

Takemitsu, "Dream and Number"

film: Kaili Blues (Bi Gan)

week 10 ****SPRING BREAK****

week 11 **workshop 2: what is a visual essay?**

3/16 Ferry & Ferry, *La Batea*

[Writing with Light collective \(selected essays from *Cultural Anthropology*\)](#)

Fattal, "Hostile remixes on YouTube"

week 12 **the uncanny**

3/23 Lepselter, *The Resonance of Unseen Things* (excerpts)

film: Stalker (Tarkovsky)

week 13 **things filmic**

3/30 Deleuze, *Cinema 2: "From recollection to dreams"*

Berlant, "Structures of Unfeeling: *Mysterious Skin*"

week 14 **claims, counterfeits, simulacra**

4/6 Deleuze, "Plato, the Greeks"

Deleuze, "The Simulacrum & Ancient Philosophy"

Serres, *The Birth of Physics* (selected passages)

week 15 **workshop 3: where is the portfolio?**

4/13 on sharing sketchbooks - a roundtable discussion

week 16 **final presentations**

4/20 visual essays