

Department of
Communication and Culture

Communications Studies COMS 591 S-02

SENIOR SEMINAR IN COMMUNICATION

Fall 2010

R 14:00-16:50

Brian Rusted

Social Sciences Building 340

220-7766

rusted@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Tues 13:30-16:00 or by appointment

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Some assignments in this course may require research involving human subjects. Students should be aware of information contained in the note on “Ethics” below. Some course content may contain material that is sexually explicit, violent or otherwise offensive. If you have concerns about this please make them known to the instructor in advance. This course may also include one or more field trips which may have additional expenses beyond the course registration costs. Lecture notes will not be available for electronic distribution: it is the student’s responsibility to make notes on lecture material during the lecture. Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Special topic: Visual Performance

With reference to a special topic, this course explores the variety of ways in which communication builds social and cultural values. Students will undertake a major project that will integrate their understanding of communication theory, history and methodology.

In this offering of the course, primarily visual modes of human communication will be considered using research methods and interpretive paradigms of performance and performativity. In a society increasingly based on cultural performance rather than economic production, this special topic seems appropriate for students of communication. The course will consider the production, display, circulation and use of visual forms of culture in tourist and museum contexts, in relation to vernacular and domestic display, as a component of spectacle and festival, and in relation to social change and social movements.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

- to integrate previous course material in Communications Studies relevant to visual culture and performance
- to provide an opportunity to develop independent research taking account of critical and ethical issues
- to explore the contributions performance studies makes to research on visual culture
- to create an interdisciplinary experience of communications behaviour with attention to the sensory and embodied experience of culture

Internet and electronic communication device information

Use of cellphones during class is not permitted. Use of laptops is for course related work and noting taking. No recording of lectures or classes permitted.

TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS:

Required reading for the course includes the following book that will be available in The Bookstore. Other related materials indicated for particular classes will be on reserve in the library, available as PDF files in Blackboard, or available in electronic book form from the Library website.

Bell, Elizabeth (2008). *Theories of Performance*. Sage.

Optional/Mandatory Supplementary Fees: Attendance at the fieldtrip in advance of the final exam may require modest transportation costs and possibly admission fees.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:

To receive a final grade for the course you must complete **ALL** of the following assignments:

- A **project proposal** integrating readings with your topic (20%): due in class September 30
- an in-class **workshop** presentation introducing your topic (20%): presentation dates *to be determined*; topics to be linked with weekly, seminar themes
- a **major project** on visual performance (30%): due in class December 9
- and, a final, registrar scheduled **exam** (30%).

All assignments are oriented towards the integration of course readings with field research methods, critical analysis, and performance or media based presentation. Assignments will demonstrate an understanding of the value of using models of cultural performance in the analysis of a specific mode of visual communication.

Depending on the nature of the final project you choose to undertake, you can anticipate taking the role of researcher conducting research with human subjects, and will need to follow ethical research procedures for your project.

Detailed expectations for the project proposal, the workshop, and the major project will be discussed in class and available on Blackboard. Topics for the workshop will be coordinated with weekly seminar topics. You will be assigned a date to make your workshop presentation in the first class. It is anticipated that there will be a maximum of 3 workshop presentations per week.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. Personal illness and death in the immediate family are the primary grounds for an extension. Having a lot of work due at the same time in other classes is not.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Faculty policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see www.comcul.ualgary.ca/info. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. APA format is recommended for assignments in this class.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ualgary.ca

Grading System

In this class, assignments will be assessed with letter grades that correspond to the University's 4-point scale. In the case of assignments that are scored numerically, you will receive a letter grade based on converting the score of that particular assignment using the grading system of the Faculty of Communication and Culture (revised effective September 2008), provided below. You may receive a grade that falls between two letter grades (for example a 3.5 is the mathematical mid-point between a B+ or 3.3 and an A- or 3.7). In such a case, I reserve the right to scale the grade upwards (for example from a B+) to the next nearest letter grade (an A-).

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews,

observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:

<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/compliance/ethics/info/undergrad/>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings:

Week 1 September 16: Introduction

Readings:

- Elizabeth Bell, Chapter 1 and 2
- W.J.T. Mitchell (2002). "Showing Seeing: A critique of visual culture." *Journal of Visual Culture* 1:2.

Week 2 September 23: Performing Fieldwork

Readings:

- Bell Chapter 3
- Sarah Pink (2007). "Walking with Video." *Visual Studies* 22:3.

Week 3 September 30: Proposals

Readings:

- Bell, Chapter 4
- Suchy, Patricia A and James V. Catano (2010). "Revisiting Flaherty's *Louisiana Story*." *Southern Spaces* 27 April.

<http://www.southernspaces.org/contents/2010/revisiting/1a.htm>

Week 4 October 7: Performing the Archive

Readings:

- Bell, Chapter 5
- Amy Pinney (2007), "Archive Incarnate." *The Theatre Annual* 60.
- Craig Gingrich-Philbrook (2007). "Taking Pictures: Rage and Forgiveness in Autoperformance from the Family Archives." *The Theatre Annual* 60.

Week 5 October 14: Domestic Visual Culture

Readings:

- Kirstie McAllister (2006). "Photographs of a Japanese Canadian Internment Camp: Mourning Loss and Invoking a Future", *Visual Studies*, 21:2.

- Kitchens, Melanie (2008). *Performing Photographs*, Chapter 3. PhD Dissertation. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University.
- Elizabeth Bell, Chapter 6

Week 6 October 21: **Spectacle and Festival**

Readings:

- Elizabeth Bell, chapter 7
- Diane Taylor (1999). "Dancing with Diana: A Study in Hauntology." *The Drama Review* 43:1.
- Rachel Hall (2006). "Patty and Me: Performative Encounters Between an Historical Body and the History of Images." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26:4.

Week 7 October 28: **Tourism and Place**

Readings:

- Bærenholdt, Chapter 5 "Photographing Attractions"
- Solange Davin (2005). "Tourists and television viewers: some similarities" chapter 13 in Crouch et al, *The Media and the Tourist Imagination*. Routledge.
- Mike Crang (1997). "Picturing practices: research through the tourist gaze," *Progress in Human Geography* 21:3.

Week 8 November 4: **Documentary and Social Change**

Readings:

- Nichols, Bill (2001). "Performing Documentary," Introduction to *Documentary*. Indiana University Press.
- Elizabeth Bell, Chapter 8
- Rusted, Brian (2010). "Portapak as Performance: *VTR St. Jacques* and *VTR Rosedal*," chapter 23 in Waugh, et al, *Challenge for Change*. McGill-Queens University Press.

Week 9 November 11: **Reading Break (Performing Research)**

Readings:

- Bowman, Michael (2000). "Killing Dillinger: A Mystory." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 20:4.
- O'Neill, Maggie and Phil Hubbard (2010). "Walking, sensing, belonging: ethno-mimesis as performative praxis." *Visual Studies* 25:1.

Week 10 November 18: **Exhibition and Display**

Readings:

- McLoughlin, Mora (1993). "Of boundaries and borders: First Nations' History in Museums." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 18:3.
- Kristin Langellier (1994). "Appreciating phenomenology and feminism: Researching quiltmaking and communication," *Human Studies* 17.

Week 11 November 25: **Telepresence and Performing technology**

Readings:

- Bell, Chapter 9
- Mindy Fenske (2006). "The Movement of Interpretation: Conceptualizing Performative Encounters with Multimediated Performance." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26:2.
- Couldry, chapter 5

Week 12 December 2: Exam Field Trip

Readings:

- TBA

Week 13 December 9: Conclusion

Readings:

- Conquergood, Dwight (2002). "Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research," *The Drama Review* 46:2.

RESERVE READING LIST:

Bærenholdt, J. O. ed. (2003). *Performing Tourist Places*. Ashgate.

Bauman, R. Ed. (1992). *Folklore, Cultural Performances and Popular Entertainments: A Communications Centered Handbook*. Oxford. (The majority of articles from this collection are also available in the *Encyclopaedia of Communications*, Oxford University Press.)

Carlson, Marvin (1996). *Performance: A critical Introduction*. Routledge.

Church, A. and T. Coles (2007). *Tourism, Power and Space*. Routledge.

Coleman, S. and M. Crang (2002). *Tourism: Between Place and Performance*. Berghahn.

Couldry, Nick (2003). *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*. Routledge.

Crouch, D. et al, editors (2005). *The Media and the Tourist Imagination*. Routledge.

Hooper-Greenhill, Eilean (2000). *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*. Routledge.

Kennedy, D. (2009). *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity*. Cambridge.

Lubben, Nina and David Crouch, eds. (2003). *Visual Culture and Tourism*. Berg.

Madison, Soyini (2005). *Critical Ethnography*. Sage.

Pink, Sarah. (2007). *Doing Visual Ethnography*, 2nd edition. Sage.

Prelli, Lawrence, ed. (2006). *Rhetorics of Display*. University of South Carolina Press.

Urry, John. (2002). *The Tourist Gaze*, 2nd edition.

Waugh, Thomas et al eds (2010). *Challenge for Change*. McGill-Queens University Press.

E-Books

Hammond-Callaghan, Marie. (2008). *Mobilizations, protests and engagements: Canadian Perspectives on Social Movements*. Fernwood.

Langford, Martha (2001). *Suspended Conversations: the afterlife of memory in photographic albums*. McGill-Queens University Press.

Nichols, Bill (2001). *Introduction to Documentary*. Indiana University Press.

"SAFEWALK" PROGRAM -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call **220-5333** for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.