

# ANT 3803 Media, Power and Public Culture

University of Texas at San Antonio  
Tuesday & Thursday 2:00 -3:15  
HSS 2.01.06

**Professor:** Dr. Jamon Halvaksz, II  
**office:** HSS 4.03.24  
**office hours:** Tues & Thurs 11:00 - 12:30  
or by appointment

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**office hours:** Tues 1:00 - 2:00, Wednesday 5:00 - 6:00

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"Representation of indigenous peoples by indigenous peoples is about countering the dominant society's image of indigenous peoples, their lifestyle and belief systems"

- Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1999

## **General Course Description from Catalog**

"Film and media images facilitate the production, consumption, and circulation of ideas and practices in the United States and cross-culturally. The course traces the history and meaning of various communication technologies and their impact on culture. It will examine print, film, television, new digital media and the Internet, asking how these are used to create and perpetuate dominant cultural forms as well as how these are appropriated and used by people on the margins as critique and resistance. In an increasingly media-dominated world—mass advertising, indigenous film as political resistance, politics as media campaigns, DVD productions by gangs and terrorist organizations—understanding the relationship between media and culture is a critical dimension of the professional knowledge of our future."

In particular, this class will focus on shifting portrayals of indigenous communities as they have been subject to both an external gaze as well as their own.

## **Learning outcomes:**

Students will learn to critically evaluate various media, assessing the role of power and culture in their creation. This will include writing film reviews, explorations of indigenous media and other sites where the relationship between media and power are germane.

## **Required text:**

1. Ginsburg, Faye, Lila Abu-Lughod and Brian Larkin, eds.. 2002. *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press.
2. Lutz, Catherine and Jane Collins. 1993. *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago: Chicago University Press
3. Other readings made available on WebCT.

## **Grading policy:**

Final grades will be determined using a standard scale (A = 90-100, B = 80-89, etc.). There will be no extra credit, and completion of all assignments is required for passing the course. Late work will be accepted at the instructor's discretion. Except in extraordinary circumstances, any late work that is accepted will be reduced by at least 20%. Grades will be posted as soon as possible, neither the office staff nor I will report grades by telephone, fax, or email.

## **Assignments**

Grades will be calculated based upon student performance on each of the following components. I do not anticipate curving anything at this time. No extra credit will be offered.

### **Video Study Guides**

For each video, students will be provided with a video study guide. These will be graded for participation and attendance purposes. Some questions will be answered in groups (10 points each).

### **Reading quizzes**

Short reading quizzes will consist of short answer, multiple choice, and/or true-false questions based upon the assigned readings. These will take only 5-6 minutes of class time. They will serve two purposes: 1) to ensure fruitful class discussions, 2) to assess reading comprehension as the course progresses. There will be 12 quizzes, and you can drop your two lowest grades (5 points each).

### **Points**

Video Study guides	100
Reading Quizzes	50
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Short Projects	100
Final project	100
<b>Total Point</b>	<b>550</b>

### **Exams**

Each student will be required to complete a mid term and final exam on the scheduled date. While not cumulative, the final exam material will assume some mastery over the material covered on the midterm (100 points each).

### **Writing**

Each of the writing assignments below will be double spaced, standard 12 point font and 1 inch margins. Excessive spacing for titles, names, paragraphs, etc, will be counted against you. You will be graded on grammar, spelling, organization and style as well as content. You will be expect to comply with AAA style guide for bibliographic references. Basically, the Chicago Manual of Style with some modification. This can be found at <http://www.aanet.org/publications/guidelines.cfm>

**Short projects:** Students will need to complete two of these over the course of the term. You may not repeat the same project. (ie two film reviews). Each should be 2-3 pages in length. All reviews should offer a critical assessment of the materials using ideas from class readings and discussions. Basically, apply what you have learned. (50 points each)

**A. Film review:** Choose an ethnographic film from the library and write a review.

**B. Television review:** Examine the portrayal of non-Western or indigenous culture in 2 episodes of a contemporary television series.

**C. Website review:** Examine a website focused on non-Western or indigenous cultures (of at least 10 distinct pages) and critically assess it representations. (include full reference, sample text and images where appropriate)

**D. Magazine Review:** Examine five issues of National Geographic (or other with approval) and critically assess the representations.

**Final project:** Focusing on a specific linguistic or ethnic group (or minimal broader cultural region), identify five distinct media sources to critically evaluate. Your sources should have some thematic relationship. These could be focused on a single practice or belief (i.e. spirit possession), directed by the same person (i.e. Timothy Asch), or examined with an eye toward specific traits (i.e. sexuality in the portrayal of Polynesians). Further guidance will be provided. Final projects will be 5-8 pages in length (100 points each).



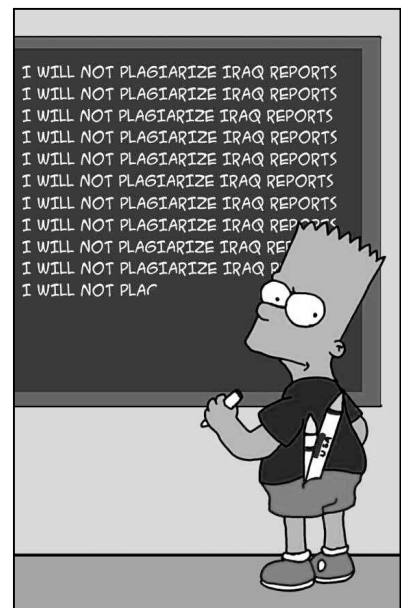
www.wired.com

## **Cell Phones, Text Messaging, use of the**

**Internet:** Please be sure to **turn off all cell phones and refrain from surfing the web, emailing, playing MMORPGs, etc.** during class. You and your fellow students are here to learn and such distractions are disrespectful. If your computer is turned on, I expect that you will only using it for class specific purposes. If students complain about your use, or if you are caught using one for these purposes during class you will be penalized 10 participation points each instance.

## **Academic Policies, including Misconduct:** The University of Texas at

San Antonio has clear policies concerning disruptive classroom behaviors, plagiarism, and other forms of misconduct (see [www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.cfm](http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.cfm)). Plagiarism can be as simple as collaborating with a classmate on an assignment that is intended to show individual effort. A common form in this class is failure to appropriately cite sources in the ethnography paper. More serious forms include cheating or copying another's work as your own. Cutting and pasting from internet sources is particularly problematic as the material on-line is not always accurate, and this is plagiarism. The college's policies regarding this and other misconduct are available in written form, and you are expected to know them and follow them. You can also refer to the UTSA Student Code of Conduct on scholastic dishonesty and disciplinary action (<http://www.utsa.edu/OSJA/index.cfm>). There are clear procedures for instructors and students to follow in the event of misconduct, harassment, or other unwanted behaviors, along with appropriate consequences for infractions. Students who ignore these policies will minimally receive an F on the associated assignment, but could receive an F for the course at my discretion.



www.thesimpsons.com

## **Access/Accommodations:**

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities and learning needs. If you need accommodation in order to fully participate in the course, information about the Disability Services can be found at their web site ([www.utsa.edu/disability/](http://www.utsa.edu/disability/)), or call them at 458-4157. Please let me know if there is anything that I can do as well.

Other college services include:

*Writing Center:* [www.utsa.edu/twc/index.html](http://www.utsa.edu/twc/index.html)

*Counseling:* (210) 458-4140, RWC1.810

*Academic advising (general):* (210) 458-8000

*Tomás Rivera Center:* [www.utsa.edu/trcss](http://www.utsa.edu/trcss)

or (210) 458-4694

*This syllabus is subject to modification by the instructor. Videos are subject to change due to availability.*

## Schedule

### Week 1 January 13 & 15

Readings: 1. Spend at least one hour exploring the following website:

<http://www.downwindproductions.com/>

Questions to think about as you view the site: *What images are presented?*

*How are they contextualized? Who is creating the representations?*

2. Media Worlds Introduction pgs 1-36

Tuesday Syllabus, brief introduction

Thursday Film: *Bird of Paradise* (1932)

Available on Google Video at:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7935634736012705942&ei=AEpmScXMEpXeqAOlxOnBAQ&q=bird+of+paradise>

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### Week 2 January 20 & 22

Readings: 1. Anderson, Benedict 1983. *The Origins of National Consciousness.*

Chapter 3 in *Imagined Communities*. London, New York: Verso press, pgs 37-46

2. Lutz and Collins Chapters 1-2

Tuesday Introduction to class, discussion of film and images of the Waikiki

Thursday Lecture defining key words

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### Week 3 January 27 & 29

Readings: 1. Lutz and Collins Chapters 3-5

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday Film: *The Hunters* (1957)

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### Week 4 February 3 & 5

Small Project 1 due in class on Thursday

Readings: 1. Lutz and Collins Chapters 6-7

2. Media Worlds Chapter 18

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday clips from ethnographic films.

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### Week 5 February 10 & 12

Readings: 1. Lutz and Collins Chapter 8-9

2. *Media Worlds* Chapter 20

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday Film: *Jero on Jero*

Week 6 February 17 & 19

- Readings: 1. *Media Worlds* Chapters 3, 4 & 15  
2. Silverman, Eric. 2004. Cannibalizing, Commodifying, and Creating Culture: Power and Creativity in Sepik River Tourism. In *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*. 2004. V. Lockwood, ed. pp. 339-57. New York: Prentice-Hall.

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday Film: *Cannibal Tours*

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Week 7 February 24 & 26

Tuesday Lecture / Review

Thursday **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 8 March 3 & 5

- Readings: 1. Tomaselli, Keyan. 2006. Rereading The Gods Must be Crazy Films. *Visual Anthropology* 2:171-300  
2. Additional reading to be assigned.

Tuesday Film: *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980)

Thursday Film: *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980)

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Week 9 March 10 & 12

Spring Break.... no class

Week 10 March 17 & 19

Small Project 2 due in Class on Tuesday

- Readings: 1. *Media Worlds* Chapter 1, 2  
2. Faye Ginsburg. 1994. "Culture/Media: A (Mild) Polemic." *Anthropology Today* 10 (2): 5-15.

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday Film: *Smoke Signals*

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Week 11 March 24 & 26

- Readings: 1. Dowell, Kristin. 2006. Indigenous Media Gone Global: Strengthening Indigenous Identity On- and Offscreen at the First Nations/First Features Film Showcase. *American Anthropologist* 108(2): 376-384.  
2. *Media Worlds* Chapters 7, 14  
3. Bessire, Lucas. 2003. Talking Back to Primitivism. *American Anthropologist*. 105(4): 832-838

Tuesday Film: *Smoke Signals* / Lecture

Thursday Lecture

Week 12 March 31 & April 2

- Reading: 1. Hereniko, Vilsoni, "Clowning as political commentary: Polynesia – then and now," in Barry Craig, Bernie Kernot and Christopher Anderson, eds, Art and Performance in Oceania. Honolulu; University of Hawai'i Press, 1999: 15-29  
2. *Media Worlds* Chapters 5, 6 & 8

Tuesday Cartoons: *Bro' Town*

Thursday Cartoons: *Bro' Town*

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Week 13 April 7 & 9

Readings: *Media Worlds* Chapter 9, 10 & 11

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday Cartoons: *Bro' town*

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Week 14 April 14 & 16

- Reading: 1. [www.thelandhaseyes.com](http://www.thelandhaseyes.com)  
2. *Media Worlds* Chapter 19  
3. [www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Hereniko\\_Representations.pdf](http://www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Hereniko_Representations.pdf)  
4. [www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Reflections\\_on\\_Change.pdf](http://www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Reflections_on_Change.pdf)

Tuesday Lecture

Thursday Film: *The Land Has Eyes*

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Week 15 April 21 & 23

Final Projects due in Class on Tuesday

- Readings: 1. Howard, Alan. 2006. Presenting Rotuma to the World: The Making of the Film *The Land has Eyes*. *Visual Anthropology Review* 22(1): 74-96.  
2. [www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Rotuman\\_Youth.pdf](http://www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Rotuman_Youth.pdf)  
3. [www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Interpreting\\_a\\_Wedding.pdf](http://www.thelandhaseyes.com/studyguides/Interpreting_a_Wedding.pdf)

Tuesday Film: *The Land Has Eyes*

Thursday Lecture

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Week 16 April 28 & 30

Tuesday Lecture / Review

Thursday No Class, Study Day

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**Final Exam, Thursday May 07, 10:30 am - 01:00 pm**