

**DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY  
ANTH 233 ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES WINTER 2019**

I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Susan Vincent [Office: JBB 335E; tel: 867- 5281; email: svincent@stfx.ca]

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSE**

In this course we will explore answers to the following questions: What is ethnography? What ethical issues are associated with different forms of ethnography? What kinds of cultural information can anthropologists use to produce an ethnography? What forms can ethnography take? What are the implications of different representations? How has the subject of anthropology changed? The material will range from classic ethnographic studies, to fiction, museum exhibits and visual and digital ethnography.

This course will build student skills in the following areas:

- 1) knowledge in the discipline of anthropology, specifically in ethnography.
- 2) critical academic reading, research and writing skills.
- 3) ability to identify and apply anthropological theory.
- 4) ability to apply anthropological frameworks to information in the public realm.

**EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space—both real and virtual—that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. These values and practices are in accord with the **StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy** which can be found at <http://sites.stfx.ca/equity/>.

Please feel free to talk to me about your questions or concerns about equity in our classroom or in the StFX community in general. If I cannot answer your questions or help you address your concerns, I encourage you to talk to the Chair of the Department of Anthropology (Dr. L.J. McMillan, [ljmcmill@stfx.ca](mailto:ljmcmill@stfx.ca)), or the Human Rights and Equity Advisor (Megan Fogarty, [mfogarty@stfx.ca](mailto:mfogarty@stfx.ca)).

**READINGS:** Readings available on the library's electronic database.

**EVALUATION:**

Small assignments :	10%
Test (11 Feb.):	20%
Term paper (due 21 Mar.):	35%
April exam (see official schedule):	35%

**RE TESTS, ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS CONDUCT: the following rules have been designed to ensure fairness to all students, to facilitate your academic success, and to allow me to fulfill my responsibilities.**

1. Assignment dates are fixed and cannot be changed.
2. Assignments must be submitted in **HARD COPY**. Electronic submissions will **NOT** be accepted.
3. Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day specified. **I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS**. If you have a legitimate reason for missing an assignment or test, inform me **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, preferably ahead of time. I do not accept papers after I have returned those already submitted; in this situation you will be given an alternate assignment. Similarly, if you miss the test, you will be given an alternate assignment. Papers handed in after the last day of the term in which they are due will receive a mark of zero.
4. You are required to keep a copy of assignments when you hand them in. Keep the returned marked assignment until the end of the course.
5. **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED:** Suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the appropriate authorities and proven cases will result in a mark of zero for the assignment. See the University's policy on plagiarism and cheating (see <http://www2.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/academic-integrity>). **Not intending to plagiarise is not a legitimate excuse**. Know what is included in the definition and ensure that the paper you submit meets acceptable academic standards according to the policy. When in doubt, consult with me.
6. You are expected to attend all classes and are responsible for all in-class discussion and assigned material. **IF YOU MISS THREE CLASSES OR MORE, WHETHER FOR ILLNESS OR FOR ANY OTHER REASON, YOUR ABILITY TO PASS WILL BE SEVERELY COMPROMISED**. At the very least, make sure you get notes from a classmate.
7. **Technology in the Classroom Policy:** Cell phone use in class, unless the phone is being used explicitly for research or learning purposes permitted by the instructor, distracts from the learning of the student using the cell phone, the other students and inhibits the instructor's teaching. Therefore, cell phone use in class is prohibited unless the instructor asks that students use their cell phones for a specific exercise.  
Students may use computers or tablets in class to take notes. Students who are using computers or tablets for other purposes will be asked to close them.
8. **Class Materials Copyright Notification:** The materials from Department of Anthropology courses, including but not limited to the course syllabus, class notes or PowerPoint presentations provided by the instructor, lectures, or assignments and other materials authored by the instructor, are the property of the instructor, unless stated otherwise by the instructor. Sharing, posting or selling this material to third parties on-line or otherwise (for instance, through on-line sites or on social media sites) for distribution without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright law and is strictly prohibited. Students are required to request permission to record lectures or take images of any part thereof.  
For more information, please visit the StFX copyright guide:  
[http://sites.stfx.ca/library/campus\\_copyright](http://sites.stfx.ca/library/campus_copyright)
9. My responsibility is to maintain the academic standards of St Francis Xavier University as

well as of my discipline as I transmit knowledge about the course subject to the students and foster the development of critical academic reading, researching, analytical and writing skills. I will endeavour to do this in a way that recognizes that students have other demands on their time, and within the constraints presented by my other teaching, administrative and research duties. I will return marked assignments as quickly as I can and am happy to meet with students to discuss the course.

### Tentative course schedule

#### **Jan 7, 10: Introduction to course; What is ethnography? What are the different points of view of these authors?:**

**READ:** Howell,, Signe. 2017. "Two or Three Things I Love about Ethnography." *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7(1): 15-20.

Ingold, Tim. 2017. "Anthropology Contra Ethnography." *I7*(1): 21-26.

Kolshus, Thorgeir. 2017. "The Power of Ethnography in the Public Sphere." *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7(1): 61-60

Note that there is a full section in this issue of the journal that addresses ethnography, in case you wish to browse further.

#### **Jan 14, 17, 21, 24: Writing, from classical to contemporary ethnography, to other forms of writing**

An example of classical ethnography. Evans-Pritchard is a MAJOR anthropologist. In "Witchcraft," look for how he understands this cultural element using a structural-functionalist theoretical framework.

**READ:** Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1935. "Witchcraft." *Africa*, 8:(4):417-422.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1973. "Some Recollections on Fieldwork in the Twenties." *Anthropological Quarterly*, 46(4): 235-242.

An example of contemporary ethnography. Compare this presentation of ethnographic material, the role of the ethnographer, and the type of subjects with those of Evans-Pritchard. Notice how this author is in conversation with other authors.

**READ:** Nolan, Kathleen. 2018. "'I'm a Kid from the Bronx': a Reflection on the Enduring Contributions of Willis's Cultural Production Perspective in Learning to Labour." *Ethnography* 19(4): 464-478.

Fiction as ethnography. Compare the fictional account with an ethnographic account of Afghan refugees in Iran.

**READ:** Yarbakhsh, Elizabeth. 2018. "Call." *Anthropology and Humanism*, 43(1): 159-164

Compare with: Olszewska, Zuzanna. 2013. "Classy Kids and Down-at-Heel Intellectuals: Status Aspiration and Blind Spots in the Contemporary Ethnography of Iran." *Iranian Studies*, 46:6, 841-862,

News reporting and ethnography:

**READ:** Azeez, Walé and Sarah Marshall. 2013. "Why Newsrooms Need Anthropologists." *Journalism.co.uk*.

<https://www.journalism.co.uk/news-commentary/-why-newsrooms-need-anthropologists-/s6/a554681/>

Prasse-Freeman, Elliott. 2017. "The Rohingya and the World." *Jacobin*. 28 December 2017.

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/12/myanmar-rohingya-ethnic-cleansing-aung-san-su-kyi>

## MIDTERM TEST FEB. 11

**Jan. 28, 31, Feb. 4, 7, 14: Museum anthropology:** The Spirit Sings controversy and its aftermath;

**READ:** Harrison, Julia. 1988 "The Spirit Sings' and the Future of Anthropology." *Anthropology Today*. 4(6): 6-10. JSTOR.

Wrightson, Kelsey. 2017. "The Limits of Recognition: The Spirit Sings, Canadian Museums and the Colonial Politics of Recognition." *Museum Anthropology*. 40(1): 36-51.

Moran, Mayo. 2018. "The Macron Report and How we Right History's Wrongs." *The Globe and Mail*. 27 December 2018.

What do to with monuments to historical figures who committed acts of atrocity. Expanded Commentary section in *Museum Anthropology*.

**READ:** Saul, Gwendolyn W. And Diana Marsh. 2018. "In Whose Honor? On Monuments, Public Spaces, Historical Narratives, and Memory." *Museum Anthropology*. 41(2): 117-120, and comments by Bailey Duhé, Alex Barker, Courtney Lewis, Eric Gable, Richard Leventhal, Mark Auslander, and Chelsey Carter (pages 120-141 in this issue of the journal)

### Review online exhibits:

Adams, Julie. 2016. "Containing the Divine: A Sculpture of the Pacific Goddess." *British Museum*. <https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/KAKYkHU7R6rvJQ>

Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) in collaboration with the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute (GSCI), Northwest Territories, and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN), Yukon. N.d. "Gwadàl' Zheii: Belongings from the Land." *Canadian Museum of Civilization*. <https://www.historymuseum.ca/gwichin/>

## MARCH 4, 2019: Last day to drop second term 3-credit courses

### **Feb. 25, 28, Mar. 4, 7: Ways of seeing: Still and moving ethnographic representations, reflexivity, debate and voice**

How might the way data are recorded, especially through visual images, constitute a subject of ethnographic research, and how might these data affect the subject peoples and the anthropologists? Still photographs: Are photographs true images of their subjects, or are they constructions, with social and political meanings?

**READ:** Lutz, Catherine and Jane Collins. 1991. "The Photograph as an Intersection of Gazes: the Example of *National Geographic*." *Visual Anthropology Review* 7(1): 134-149.

Case study of "*First Contact*"

What are the good and bad aspects of the film? How are viewers manipulated by various techniques? What is the debate between Jay Ruby, James Roy MacBean and Bob Connolly about? What do we

learn about the film, and about the difficulties of ethically making films, from the article by Henry and Vávrová?

**WATCH:** Connolly, Bob and Robin Anderson. 1983. *First Contact*. Documentary Educational Resources, DVD.

**READ:** MacBean, James Roy. 1994. "Degrees of Otherness: A Close Reading of *First Contact*, *Joe Leahy's Neighbors* and *Black Harvest*." *Visual Anthropology Review* 10(2): 55-70. Anthrosource. Concentrate on the review of *First Contact*, pp. 55-61.

Ruby, Jay. 1995. "Letter to the Editor." *Visual Anthropology Review*. 11(1): 143.

MacBean, James Roy. 1995. "Ongoing Contact: A Reply to Jay Ruby." *Visual Anthropology Review* 11(2): 114-116.

Connolly, Bob. 1995. "Reply to James Roy Macbean and Jay Ruby." *Visual Anthropology Review*. 12(1): 98-101.

Henry, Rosita and Daniela Vávrová. 2016. "An Extraordinary Wedding: Some Reflections on the Ethics and Aesthetics of Authorial Strategies in Ethnographic Filmmaking." *Anthrovision, Vaneasa Online Journal*. 4(1) <https://journals.openedition.org/anthrovision/2237>.

## **ESSAY DUE MARCH 21: ELECTRONICALLY TO SVINCENT@STFX.CA AND IN PAPER IN CLASS**

**Mar. 11, 14, 18, 21, 25: Virtual anthropology: Ethnography and ICTs.** What is digital (or virtual) anthropology? What form does digital ethnography take? What are its advantages and disadvantages?

**READ:** Miller, Daniel. 2018. "Digital Anthropology." *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. <http://doi.org/10.29164/18digital>

**BROWSE** through the findings presented through digital forms on the *Why We Post* site (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post/discoveries>). Go through at least three discoveries. What are the advantages and drawbacks of this form of ethnographic representation? What are the insights generated by the research that surprised you?

Participatory and ethical issues in digital ethnography

**READ:** Walton, Shireen. 2016. "The Anthropologist as Curator: Introducing a Digital Photography Exhibition as a Collaborative and Participatory Fieldwork Method." *Visual Ethnography*, 5(1): 47-67. 10.12835/ve2016.1-0058.

Does everyone have (or want) access to ICTs?

**READ:** Fotopoulou, Aristeia. 2016. "Digital and Networked by Default? Women's Organisations and the Social Imaginary of Networked Feminism." *New Media & Society* 18(6): 989-1005.

Baumer, Eric P. S. Et al. 2015. "On the Importance and Implications of Studying Computer Non-Use." *Interactions*. 22 (2), 52-56.

## **Mar. 28, Apr. 1: Autoethnography: The Researcher as Subject**

**READ:** Wall, Sarah. 2012. "Ethics and the Socio-political Context of International Adoption: Speaking from the Eye of the Storm." *Ethics and Social Welfare* 6(4): 318-332.

Apr. 4: Course conclusion.

**DESCRIPTION OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Assignments:** There will be several small assignments through the course to give practice with academic skills and course content.

**Test and Exam:** The test and exam will be composed of short written answer and essay questions.

**Term paper: DUE 21 MARCH** Submit a digital copy to me (in word, wordperfect or pdf) by email (svincent@stfx.ca), as well as submitting a paper copy in class. This assignment builds your critical research, reading, analytical and writing skills.

Write a 8 to 10 page (2000-3000 word; put the word count on your title page) ESSAY answering ONE of the following questions.

1. Who should curate a museum exhibit, and who should visit it? This topic focuses on the ethics of representation as well as on the responsibilities of audiences with respect to how they consume such representations. Explore this topic by examining anthropological discussions of museums.. You must have five ethnographic sources, of which at least three must come from the required and additional readings. You are encouraged to look for additional sources, although you are strongly advised to show them to me so I can verify that they are appropriate.
2. Which is a better form of ethnographic representation, fiction or academic analysis? Why? Explain your choice by comparing fictional and academic ethnography. This topic focuses on the purpose and audience of ethnographic writing: whom does it serve and how? You must have five relevant sources, of which at least three must come from the required and additional readings. Match fictional representations of a specific ethnographic study with an academic one to compare the two. You will have to look for additional sources, and are strongly advised to show them to me so I can verify that they are appropriate.

Some rules:

- 1) Use the style described outlined on the Anthropology “Writing and Citing” tab of the library’s web site ([http://stfx.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=3538355](http://stfx.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=3538355)).
- 2) Abide by the StFX Academic Integrity Policy: available from [http://sites.stfx.ca/registrars\\_office/academic\\_integrity](http://sites.stfx.ca/registrars_office/academic_integrity).
- 3) You are permitted no more than THREE direct quotations from your sources, and none of these three quotations may be more than 30 words in length. For all other references to content from your sources you must paraphrase.

You will be marked on:

- 1) the quality, strength and clarity of your argument;
- 2) the quality and clarity of your evidence, including the quality of the sources you use;
- 3) the appropriateness of the theoretical framework and the quality of the analysis (that is, how well you use the theoretical framework to analyse the evidence);
- 4) the style and structure of the paper, including proper and complete referencing, grammar, spelling, word use, sentence structure, essay structure, etc.