



### Imagining Social Worlds -Artefacts (ANT1033/SOC1033)

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This course aims at bringing out the imaginative side of future anthropologists and sociologists, particularly emphasising the creative and inventive side of social analysis. After a familiarisation with techniques of interpretation and hermeneutic attitudes, with a special focus on how to develop hypotheses (abductive inferences), students will produce their own analyses of everyday artefacts as diverse as food items, films, pop songs, wedding photographs etc.

#### teaching

The course consists of three introductory lectures (one hour each, followed by one hour seminar), a minimum of three three-hours supervised workshop sessions, one workshop session at the Bill Douglas Centre for Film History, one four hours conference session, and three guided one-hour discussion groups.

#### assignments

Students will complete one team project report (2000 words), one 15-minutes team presentation, and one individual project report (2000 words).

#### assessment

Assessment will be based on the group project report (50%, to be submitted through E-BART before 10th March 2015, 2pm. The individual project report (50%) is to be submitted through E-BART before 24th March 2015, 2pm. If your project includes material that cannot be submitted electronically please talk to the lecturer for alternative arrangements

### penalties

School procedures on late submission of assessed work apply as outlined in the student handbook

Attendance is essential in this course. Team sessions and discussion groups count as tutorials and missing a tutorial without a tutor's (preferably prior) permission is a disciplinary offence.

### structure of the course:

#### weeks 1-3: introductory lectures

Introductory lectures will outline the interpretative/hermeneutic approach we will adopt in the analysis of material objects, texts, images, films etc. Methodological foundations for the practical exercises will be laid and examples of interpretations will be introduced.

#### weeks 3-4: sessions at Bill Douglas Centre

There are two introductory sessions to artefact analysis at the Bill Douglas Centre with the curator of our film museum, Phil Wickham – you will be expected to attend one of them. Time and room will be announced in the first lecture. Please sign up using the wiki on ELE. You will be able to suggest artefacts from the film museum catalogue.

#### weeks 4-6: workshop/team projects

You will be divided up into teams (four to five per group) to work on a mini project about one artefact of your choice. Groups are expected to meet at least once a week in a team session of three hours (check your online timetables for designated rooms and times). The lecturer will be available for advice/guidance during this time.

These meetings are for interpreting, analysing and discussion – writing up the results should be done outside those times. You are strongly encouraged to meet and discuss outside these times as well and utilise the group discussion facilities on ELE.

You will produce a written report that will be part of the assessment and you will prepare a 10 minute presentation for the course conferences in week 7. You will be able to incorporate feedback from the course conference over the term holidays – the final version is due through BART at the Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm.

#### week 7: course conference

The teams will hand in their reports and present their results to the course (10 minutes). There will be a discussion of five to ten minutes after each presentation. You are encouraged to incorporate any useful feedback in your team report to submitted in week 8

### weeks 8-10: discussion groups on individual analyses

In these small-group sessions (supervised by the lecturer) you will talk about the progress of your own mini project. Each participant will at each session give a short summary about what they have been doing (why they have chosen a particular artefact for analysis, what clues they are following up, what secondary sources they are using, etc.). The group will then give feedback, discuss the plausibility of suggested interpretations and contribute own ideas.

### week 11: individual work

In this week you will have to finalise your individual project (submit before Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm!) – the lecturer will be available for feedback.

### artefacts

The lecturer will be happy to suggest artefacts, but do try to come up with your own suggestions. Here are some examples:  
An RAF recruitment brochure, a pop song, a wedding photo, a National Trust handbook, an episode of Relocation Relocation, Runescape (an online multiplayer RPG), a Marks and Spencer bag with things for making pizza and a bottle of red wine, a mobile phone (students to videotape one phone interaction), a TV commercial, a letter to the editor from the Express and Echo etc. etc.

You can also use artefacts that relate to the case studies in SOC1026B (Contemporary Societies): Scenes from The Thrill of It (Doris Day and James Garner) or from Kramer V Kramer (Dustin Hoffman and Merrill Streep), the CoE advertising campaign (Jesus as Che), an issue of Connect magazine, a TV commercial for Actimel, an NHS stop smoking brochure, a TUI holiday brochure, a few pages from The Buddha of Suburbia by Hanif Kureishi, scenes from the film East is East... etc.

### readings

This is a hands-on course, so there is not much obligatory reading. The following are possible gateways into the hermeneutic attitude the course is intended to introduce you to. Items in bold font are included in an online course pack and they are required reading.

Further, you are expected to make heavy use of the library resources in order to find clues to the artefacts you are going to interpret. As the contextual knowledge necessary for the interpretation depends on which artefacts you chose it is not possible to include any of that literature here.

course pack:

- Doyle, Arthur Canon (1929): 'A Study in Scarlet' in: The Complete Sherlock Holmes Long Stories, London: John Murray.
- Chesterton, Gilbert Keith (1929): 'The Queer Feet', in: The Father Brown Stories, London: Cassell
- Peirce, Charles Saunders (1992): 'Deduction, Induction and Hypothesis', in: The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings, Volume 1, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp.186-99
- Peirce, Charles Saunders (1955): 'Abduction and Induction', in: Philosophical Writings of Peirce, New York: Dover, pp.150-6
- Miller, Daniel (2010): Stuff, Cambridge: Polity Press (pp.23-31: The Sari)

further readings:

- Agar, Michael (2006): 'An Ethnography by Any Other Name...', in: Forum Qualitative Social Research, Vol.7, No.4, Art.36, <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/4-06/06-4-36-e.htm> accessed 4th January 2007
- Barthes, Roland (1972): Mythologies, London: Cape
- Barthes, Roland (1987): Image, Music, Text, London: Fontana.
- Bloomfield, Brian P. et al. (2010): 'Bodies, Technologies, and Action Possibilities: When is an Affordance?', in: Sociology, Vol.44, No.3, pp.415-33.
- Dant, Tim (2008): 'The "Pragmatics" of Material Interaction', in: Journal of Consumer Culture, Vol.8, No.1, pp.11-33.
- Eco, Umberto/Sebeok, Thomas (eds.) (1988): The Sign of the Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Freud, Sigmund (1975): The Psychopathology of Everyday Life, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Garfinkel, Harold (1984): Studies in Ethnomethodology, Cambridge: Polity Press, particularly chapter 2 (routine grounds and everyday activities)
- Gibson, James J. 1977): 'The Theory of Affordances', in: Robert Shaw/John Bransford (eds): Perceiving, Acting, and Knowing, Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp.67-82.
- Giddens, Anthony (1984): 'Critical Notes: Freud on Slips of the Tongue', in: Anthony Giddens: The Constitution of Society, Berkley: University of California Press, pp.93-109
- Harré, Rom (2002): 'Material Objects in Social Worlds', in: Theory, Culture & Society, Vol.19, No.5/6, pp.23-33
- Inglis, Tom (2010): 'Sociological Forensics: Illuminating the Whole from the Particular', in: Sociology, Vol.44, No.3, pp.507-22.
- Norman, Donald A. (2002): The Design of Everyday Things, New York: Basic Books
- Reichertz, Jo (no year): 'Abduction, Deduction and Induction in Qualitative Research' <http://www.uni-essen.de/kowi/reichertz/downloads/Abductionenglisch.pdf>
- Rose, Gillian (2001): Visual Methodologies, London: SAGE

- Paavola, Sami (2004): 'Abduction as a Logic and Methodology of Discovery: The Importance of Strategies', in: Foundations of Science, Vol.9, pp.267-83.
- Sacks, Oliver (1985) The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat
- Schatzki, Theodore R. (2001): 'Practice Mind-ed Orders', in: Theodore R. Schatzki, Karin Knorr Cetina, Eike von Savigny (eds): The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory, London: Routledge, pp.42-55
- Simmel, Georg (1964): The Sociology of Georg Simmel, Glencoe: Free Press (chapter on the senses)
- Weber, Max (1948): 'Science as a Vocation', in: From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Williamson, Judith (1978): Decoding Advertising, London: Marion Boyars

marking criteria (indicative)

will reward effort as well as ideas - more will be explained in lectures

first class: well presented imaginative interpretation, many original narratives and associations have been taken into account, efforts for validation have been made, sense of relevance with respect to more general social practices and orders has been demonstrated

upper second class: well presented imaginative interpretation, some original narratives and associations, efforts for validation have been made, sense of relevance with respect to more general social practices and orders has been demonstrated

lower second class: well-presented interpretation, some signs that efforts to find original narratives and associations have been made, limited attempts to show general relevance have been made

third class: interpretation shows little effort, half-hearted attempts at finding narratives and associations, little effort in validation, no sense for relevance

fail: no visible effort has been made, essay shows no imagination and very little work

Examples of some excellent reports are available on ELE