Overview

This course introduces students to the ethnography of Southeast Asia, the ethnographic method, and critical media practices through immersion in the cultural politics of Indonesia. Students will learn to conduct ethnographic research and to use media-making as a research method. Students will also learn to use media to disseminate research and to remain engaged with the host community beyond the research period. Students will learn the ethnography of Southeast Asia by focusing on the cultural diversity of Indonesia, with special attention to religious and political issues among marginalized groups.

As a practicum in the ethnography of Southeast Asia, students will learn by doing - by conducting research and making media in a variety of cultural contexts. The primary context will be an active fieldsite in the Mentawai Islands off the west coast of Sumatra, where research has focused on relations between indigenous communities and the state, and on the indigenous religion, exchange, national and international development programs, and tourism. Secondary contexts include the nearby city of Padang in West Sumatra and the tourist destination of Bali. All three contexts are outside of the center of Indonesian cultural politics in Java.

There are no prerequisites for the course, and equipment will be provided. Through immersion in an active fieldsite, students will apply key concepts in cultural anthropology, and by making media continuously, students will develop core skills in critical media practices. Three pre-departure meetings will prepare students to enter the field. The first will introduce the ethnographic method and the ethnography of Southeast Asia. The second will introduce the video cameras and other recording devices that students will be using, and the third will introduce the editing software and other applications.

Format

Although the course is taught in the field, it includes daily readings and lectures/discussions, and frequent screenings of documentary and ethnographic films. It also includes daily exercises in ethnography and media-making, and a capstone media project. Students will keep a daily journal in lieu of exams, and produce videos and other media in lieu of essays.

Journal

Students will be expected to keep a daily journal of fieldnotes and personal reflections for the entire course. (Fieldnotes and personal reflections may be kept in separate journals - it is up to the student.) Fieldnotes are the primary "data" of ethnography, and they are critical for ethnographic media projects. Students will be taught how to take fieldnotes and how to analyze them. Students will think critically
about the relation between fieldnotes and personal reflections. As an important measure of student progress, the journal will be collected two times during the course: at the midpoint and at the end.

Media

Students will be expected to make media continuously. Two short exercises will be followed by a capstone media project that must be sustained over the entire course and completed by the end. The two short exercises are "symphonies" that will help students become familiar with the equipment and the cultural landscape in which they are working. The first is a city symphony - a day in the life of the city of Padang. The second is a village or forest symphony - a day in the life of the village or forest in the Mentawai Islands.

The capstone media project will be based on the ethnographic research that students conduct in the Mentawai Islands. A formal proposal is required, and work in progress will be shared twice before the project is due. The media project is based on a model developed for community media workshops, and although the pace is fast, the goal of producing a short ethnographic media project can be achieved.

Evaluation

The journal and fieldnotes, the ethnography and media-making exercises, and the capstone media project will be evaluated to determine grades at the end of the course. The breakdown is as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal 1:</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Journal 2:</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>City symphony:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Village symphony:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work in progress 1:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work in progress 2:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed project:</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Books

There are two required books:


All other assigned readings will be provided.

Schedule

The schedule follows. Readings that are not in one of the two required books are indicated by an asterisk (*).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TOPIC AND READING</th>
<th>ACTIVITY/ASSIGNMENT</th>
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</table>
| 5/13 | **Orientation: The Land below the Winds**  
Gillogly and Adams  
"Introduction: Southeast Asia and Everyday Life"  
*Hammons, "Shamanism, Tourism, and Secrecy: Revelation and Concealment in Siberut, Western Indonesia" | **Orientation** |
| 5/14 | **Orientation: Visual Ethnography**  
Pink  
"Introduction"  
1. "Visual Ethnography across Disciplines"  
2. "Ways of Seeing, Knowing, and Showing" | **Orientation to West Sumatra, Indonesia, and Southeast Asia** |
| 5/15 | **Travel to Siberut** |  |
| 5/16 | **Fluid Personhood: Conceptualizing Identities**  
Gillogly and Adams, Part One  
1. Arragon, "Living in Indonesia without a Please or a Thanks: Cultural Translations of Reciprocity and Respect"  
2. Causey, "Toba Batak Selves: Personal, Spiritual, Collective"  
3. High, "Poverty and Merit: Mobile Persons in Laos"  
4. Nagata, "A Question of Identity: Different Ways of Being Malay and Muslim in Malaysia" |  |
| 5/17 | **Planning and Practicing Visual Ethnography**  
Pink  
3. "Planning and Practising Visual Ethnography"  
4. "Photography in Ethnographic Research"  
5. "Video in Ethnographic Research" |  |
| 5/18 | **Families, Households, and Livelihoods**  
Gillogly and Adams, Part Two  
5. Conklin, "Maling: A Hanunoo Girl from the Philippines"  
6. Gillogly, "Marriage and Opium in a Lisu Village in Northern Thailand"  
7. Hanks, Jr., "Marriage and Power in the Thai Social Order" | **Proposal** |
| 5/19 | **Producing Knowledge**  
Pink  
6. "Doing Visual Ethnography with the Web"  
7. "Making Meanings in Visual Ethnography" |  |
| 5/20 | **Crafting the Nation-State**  
Gillogly and Adams, Part Three  
10. Schwenkel, "Youth Culture and Fading Memories of War in Hanoi, Vietnam" |  |
<p>| 5/21 |  |  |
| 5/22 | <strong>Travel to Padang</strong> | <strong>Journal 1</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/23</td>
<td>Travel to Seminyak</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 5/24   | Representing Visual Ethnography                         | Pink, Part 3  
8. "Photography and Ethnographic Writing"  
9. "Video in Ethnographic Representation"  
| 5/25   | World Religions in Everyday Life                       | Gillogly and Adams, Part Four  
12. Smith-Hefner, "Javanese Women and the Veil"  
13. Wiegele, "Everyday Catholicism: Expanding the Sacred Sphere in the Philippines" |
| 5/26   | Free Time for Media Projects                            |                                                                                                                         |
| 5/27   | Popular Culture, Arts, and Entertainment                | Gillogly and Adams, Part Five  
15. Kitiarsa, "The Fall of Thai Rocky"  
16. Cate, "Everyday Life as Art: Thai Artists and the Aesthetics of Shopping, Eating, Protesting, and Having Fun"  
17. Avieli, "Eating Lunch and Recreating the Universe: Food and Cosmology in Hoi An, Vietnam" |
| 5/28   | War and Recovery                                        | Gillogly and Adams, Part Six  
18. Malarney, "Living with the War Dead in Contemporary Vietnam"  
19. Traube, "Producing the People: Exchange Obligations and Popular Nationalism"  
20. Zucker, "The Question of Collaborators: Moral Order and Community in the Aftermath of the Khmer Rouge"  
*Vickers, "Where Are the Bodies: The Haunting of Indonesia"  
| 5/29   | Free Time for Media Projects                            |                                                                                                                         |
| 5/30   | Global Processes and Shifting Ecological Relations      | Gillogly and Adams, Part Seven  
21. Lyttleton, "When the Mountains No Longer Mean Home"  
22. Dentan et al, "They Do Not Like to Be Confined and Told What to Do: Schooling Malaysian Indigenes"  
23. Ford and Lyons, "Narratives of Agency: Sex Work in Indonesia's Borderlands"  
24. Ammarell, "Just Below the Surface: Environmental Destruction and Loss of Livelihood on an Indonesian Atoll" |
| 5/31   | Ethnographic Film Festival                              | Completed project                                                                                                         |
| 6/1    | Farewell to Indonesia                                   | Journal 2                                                                                                               |
| 6/2    | Return Home                                             |                                                                                                                         |