

# How Things Talk

## The Linguistic Materialities of Late Capitalism

Aurora Donzelli  
FYS 2018-2019



Brian Jungen, Prototype for New Understanding #9 (1999). Nike Air Jordans, human hair. Collection of Greg and Lisa Kerfoot, West Vancouver. Photograph: Trevor Mills, Vancouver Art Gallery

**\*\*Most of what you need to know about this class is explained in this syllabus\*\***  
Please read carefully

Sarah Lawrence College

**FYS-2018-2019** -ANTH 1025-F

**Class:** Mondays 11:05-1:00 and Thursdays 11:05-12:30

**Location:** WESTLANDS 104

**Group conferences:** **Thursdays of B weeks** 3:35-6:30 First Semester (only)

Weeks of 09/13, 09/27, 10/11, 11/01, 12/06, 12/17.

**Individual conferences:** **Tuesdays of A weeks** first Semester and of **B weeks second Semester**

**Weeks of** 09/18, 10/2, 10/16, 11/6, 11/27, 12/11

Instructor: **Aurora Donzelli**

Office Location: **Mansell Annex**

Email: [adonzelli@slc.edu](mailto:adonzelli@slc.edu)

## Course Syllabus

### Course description

One of the effects of advanced capitalism is to complicate the distinction between words and objects and between humans and things. Within the radicalization of market ideologies characterizing our contemporary moment, what counts as inalienable spiritual values opposed to alienable material entities? Is kindness a virtuous demeanor or a form of immaterial affective labor that requires the performance of specific acts of speech? What should and what should not have a price? Which is the original and which is the copy? Is a brand a symbol that stands for a product or a product in itself? How can we distinguish medium from message?

This course provides an introduction to anthropology's theories and methods through an investigation of how words and things mediate and enable human experience, creating the complex semiotic landscapes we inhabit. The aim is to problematize the conventional conceptualizations of language and materiality and show how, within a regime of advanced capitalism, life and labor unfold through complex interplays of semiotic codes, affective registers, and material objects. Throughout the year, students will be introduced to a series of theoretical and ethnographic readings aimed at illustrating the blurred boundaries between words and things, subjects and objects, signs and referents, artworks and artifacts, gifts and commodities, alienable and inalienable possessions.

### Course objectives

On the one hand, the course will challenge the classic language-world divide that has dominated both academic scholarship and popular common sense. Contrary to the view that language is exclusively a system of symbols that stand for and allow speaking about the world,

a series of theoretical readings, practical exercises, and ethnographic case studies will reveal the materiality and performativity of language. Through this journey, language will appear as a material entity and as a form of action endowed with the power to shape the world.

On the other hand, the course will dialogue with the emerging cross-disciplinary interest in materiality to invert the longstanding exploration of how people make things and generate a new reflection on how things make people. Contrary to the deeply entrenched opposition between subjects and objects, a selection of essays drawn from recent material culture studies and a series of ethnographic tasks will show how things mediate social relations and how inanimate objects may in fact be endowed with a form of agency.

## **Thing-Ethnographies**

Aside from achieving a deeper understanding of how our life is shaped by our relation with things and language, students will also be introduced to the craft of ethnography as a method of research and a genre of writing. At the beginning of the fall semester, each participant will be assigned 1 object and will be asked to explore them—as an individual item or as a class of objects—through three different analytical perspectives: consuming, displaying, collecting. Two more perspective—exchanging and producing—will be covered as topics in the readings of the second semester, but will not be discussed through thing-ethnography work. The thing-ethnographies may provide the material for a larger conference paper to be developed in the second semester. Contrary to the classic approach in which the ethnographer engages the description of a specific cultural context through the narratives, beliefs, experiences, and actions of human agents, these thing-centered essays will provide mini ethnographic sketches of how objects produce cultural meanings and social relations.

## **Assignments, Writing, and Workload for class**

### **First Semester**

- (1) Response pieces on each week's readings-Twice a week (due on **Fri 11 PM** and **Tue 11 AM**), with a few exceptions
- (2) Conference journals, after each individual conference meeting
- (3) One Thing-Ethnography on fonts and typefaces (Due on **Tues** at 10 AM)
- (4) Three Things-Ethnographies on individually assigned objects (Due on **Tues** at 10 AM)
- (5) Ethnographic Exercises (Due on **Tues** at 10 AM)
- (6) Additional individual exercises, rewrites, or other work assigned at your instructor's discretion.

### **Second Semester**

- (1) Response pieces on each week's readings-Twice a week, with a few exceptions

- (2) Conference journals, after each individual conference meeting
- (3) Conference Paper Abstracts
- (4) Conference Paper First Draft
- (5) A one-to-three-page letter of response to each one of your colleagues' conference papers first draft
- (6) Ethnographic Exercises
- (7) One (early) Mid-term paper on gifts
- (8) Video-assignment (due date end of the spring semester-more details to follow)

### Description of Assignments and Tasks.

There will be a number of written assignments and tasks throughout the year. These pieces are evaluated on the basis of your capacity to respond to the prompt, your writing skills (and most importantly your capacity to improve by receiving and providing feedback), your ethnographic creativity, and the proper formatting of the essay (see details in the "how to format your texts" materials on MySLC handout tab).

#### (1) Response pieces on each week's readings.

**Due dates:** on **Friday at 11 pm** for Monday's class and on **Tuesday at 11 am** for Thursday's class.

**Prompt:** For each class, I would like you to write **200 words ca.** on the assigned readings. In these short responses, you are NOT supposed to summarize the reading, but to note down the most salient thoughts and questions triggered by the reading. What interested/annoyed/stimulated you? Responses should identify main arguments; key words, links to class discussion, as well as your own reflections. You will be evaluated on comprehension of texts and the depth of your engagement with these materials. You are welcome to make direct reference and quote the author's words, but please make sure you provide the exact page number.

**Submission:** You will need to **upload** your texts on the **course discussion board**. You are also expected to bring a printed version of your response to each class where response pieces will be required, as your interventions in seminar will in part drawn on your written responses.

#### (2) Conference journaling.

**Due dates:** **By midnight** of the day of every conference individual meeting.

**Prompt:** Write a note on our discussion and your thoughts on the meeting, provide a summary of what we worked on for conference in the form of short answers to the following questions: What did we discuss? What have I encouraged you to look at? What work will you complete for our next conference meeting? I will not assess the quality of your writing so please feel comfortable writing in a drafty and unsystematic manner, but bear in mind that timeliness of your submission will be of paramount importance.

**Submission:** Via email to my email address. Specify in the subject heading your name\_Conference\_journal\_number.

### **(3) Thing-Ethnography on fonts and typefaces - First Semester Only.**

**Due date: Tuesday 9/25 at 10 AM.**

Before assigning to each student one specific “thing,” which will become the focus of their thing-ethnography essays for the rest of the semester. All students will work on the same thing (fonts and graphic artifacts) and produce one essay on it.

**Prompt:** Graphic artifacts—letterforms, logos, internet memes, bureaucratic documents, product catalogs, and other graphic media and visual forms— are embedded in constellations of moral and aesthetic meanings. As we will see through the readings assigned in the first few weeks of school, scholars may use the term “graphic ideology” or “semiotic ideology” to refer to these, often arbitrary, but always systematic associations between graphic artifacts and moral-aesthetic meanings. Though often tacit and implicit, these ideologies play an important role in structuring our interpersonal encounters and our experience of the world. Drawing on the documentary by Gary Hustwit on Helvetica and on the readings assigned on fonts, street signage, and typeface, pick a specific case in point (i.e., NYC street signage, Sarah Lawrence website graphics, the graphic style of an art show you have recently gone to, the brand/logo of a specific product, the font used in a book you like) analyze the graphic ideologies in which this typographic object is embedded, and discuss with concrete examples how graphic artifacts partake in larger ideologies and how they shape our affective and social landscape.

Among the questions you may ask yourself while completing this inquiry are: What are the moral, social, and affective meanings attached to certain sets of graphic artifacts? How these meanings may have become invisible or natural? Under what (social, affective, moral) conditions such meanings can instead be exposed and become the object of active reflection and explicit and explicit meta-semiotic debate? When is the authenticity of an object-sign called into question? How do graphic ideologies mediate relations between texts and the personas they purport to animate? Your paper (4-5 page 1500-2000 word long) will draw on the readings you have done so far, on the documentary and on your ethnographic observations.

Please bear in mind that, as it will be the case with the other thing-ethnographies you will prepare during the semester, you should elaborate on my prompts *by discussing the literature you read for class* as well as by providing concrete examples from the empirical data you gathered for this mini-project. *One of the main goals of the essay is to prompt you to establish connections between the different readings done in the first classes of the semester.* So the more connections you will be able to make in your reflections, the better. *In quoting the literature covered in this course (Please follow the detailed guidelines provided on MySLC handout tab in the document entitled “How to format your texts”).* You are free to refer to other sources if you want, but you will need to prioritize the readings and discussions done for this course.

**Submission:** You will need to **upload** your assignment on **MySLC** Assignment tab by 9/25 at 10 AM due date, email a copy of it to the rest of the class, and bring a hardcopy to the group

conference of 9/27. You will be required to present your material in class and possibly read excerpts from your essay.

#### **(4) Ethnographic exercises.**

**Due dates: Tuesday 9/11 and 10/9 at 10 AM.**

During the course of the year, you will be asked to turn in short ethnographic tasks (approximately one page long max). More details will be provided in the second semester for the Ethnographic exercises due in the Spring.

During the first semester there will be two ethnographic exercises, which will be the topic of the first and the third group conferences on 09/13 (Westland Assignment) and 10/11 (Writing Ethnographic Field notes)

**Submission:** You will have to submit them through MySLC assignment tab and email them to the rest of the class by the due date and bring a hardcopy to class on the designated workshop date.

#### **Westlands Assignment**

What do anthropologists do? According to Geertz, anthropologists engage in ethnography, that is, "thick description". Contrary to "thin description" (i.e. factual accounts and dictionary definitions), thick description requires paying attention to details, providing interpretations, contextualizing practices, and unpacking layers of meanings that we often give for granted in our "natural attitude" towards the world. This ethnographic task requires you to experiment with a structure of attention and a genre of description that is unusually microscopic and thorough.

Read the selected pages from Georges Perec's two novels and the ones contained in his book "Things," which we will discuss in class on 09/13, familiarize yourself with Perec's obsessive examination of the environment, the banal, and the everyday. Pick a place/room/detail in Westlands and drawing on Perec's style write one page account of something (literally anything: objects/humans/traces/behaviors) that caught your attention in or around Westlands.

During our workshop discussion of this task on 09/13 (3: 30- 6:30) we will reflect on the different strategies that each one of you adopted to undertake this first ethnographic task. What type of ethnographic content can we extract from a thorough description? What is it that transforms neutral spaces into culturally salient places? Is it the meanings that humans confer to the environments in which they live? Or is it the sheer materiality of things and the elusive power of objects that can generate "spices of spaces" and culturally meaningful places? What may be the ethnographic purpose of the type of phenomenological bracketing (i.e. suspension of common sense) underlying Perec's "chosisme" (i.e. focus on things/chooses over humans).

**Due on 09/11** at 10 AM. Upload digital copy on MySLC and email it to the rest of the class. Bring hardcopy to Class on 09/13.

#### **Writing Ethnographic Field notes**

Ethnography (a term you may have not heard much before) is one of the core components of any anthropological enterprise. As the course unfolds, we will see how ethnography involves both a specific writing style and a distinctive way to engage with reality that involves stepping out from our most obvious assumptions and abandon our "natural standpoint" to discover different ways of understanding our and other people's ways of being in the world. For this ethnographic exercise you will have to focus on sharpening your observational capacities and step out of your "natural attitude," that is, eliminate the filters through which "normal" people see reality and process experience. Drawing on readings on anthropological fieldwork and on the examples provided in Emerson et. al. at pp. 6-9. Write one page of field notes on a fragment of your daily life on Campus. Pick up a fragment of your day and write a short description of a specific phenomenon or event that you happen to witness. In about 700-800 words you will have to describe something you have observed or experienced during the day. It could be anything from a very specific object in your room, to a certain place on campus, from a meeting or a short conversation you had, from a social event you attended to a squirrel on a tree. You should try to be very meticulous in your descriptions also concentrating on aspect that are not necessarily (or not only) visual. Try to rely on all your five senses and most importantly try not to give anything for granted. We will workshop your field notes on 10/11 during the third of our group conference meetings.

**Due on Tuesday 10/9** at 10 AM. Upload digital copy on MySLC and email it to the rest of the class. Bring hardcopy to Class on 10/11.

### **(5) Thing-Ethnographies on consuming/displaying/collecting- First Semester Only.**

**Due dates: Tuesday 10/30, 12/04, 12/13 at 10 AM.**

Aimed at introducing students to the craft of ethnography, things-ethnographies will constitute the bulk of your writing load during the first semester. At the beginning of the semester each student will be assigned one object, which they will have to explore through the three perspective of consuming, displaying, collecting. This will generate three object-centered essays of 1500-2000 words (4-5 pages) each, each on one of the three activities/analytical perspectives.

The essay will have to be theoretically connected to the thematic readings (on consuming, displaying, collecting) assigned in class and ethnographically thing-centered, that is, aimed at conveying the point of view of the thing rather than the human agents' perspectives.

During bi-weekly groups conference meetings, held on B weeks throughout the fall semester, students will compare notes on their ongoing thing-ethnographies, share their findings, and discuss their theoretical concerns and methodological problems. Students' thing-ethnographies will also be presented periodically to the class. The format of these short presentations will be at the discretion of the participant, but students are encouraged to make use of digital voice recording, photography, and video to illustrate the objects and their contexts of use.



**Submission:** You will need to **upload** your essays on **MySLC** Assignment tab by the due date (generally the Tuesday before our Thursday group conference meeting), email a copy to the rest of the class and bring a hardcopy to the relevant group conference.

See specific due dates in the Class Schedule section and the SLC assignment tab.

- **“Consuming”** due on **10/30** (upload it on MySLC) to be discussed on 11/01 group conference
- **“Displaying”** due on **12/04** (upload it on MySLC) to be discussed on 12/06 group conference
- **“Collecting”** due on **12/13** to be discussed on 12/17. NB the last group conference will take place as a collective session on Monday class time.

### **(6) Conference Papers Abstracts- Second Semester Only.**

**Due date: 2/1, at 11 AM.**

**Prompt:** Write 3 short abstracts (200 words each, 600 words in total, **Max.**) on three possible different topics on which you could imagine yourself working for this Semester. These abstracts will not be binding. Since you will have to decide the topic of your research project by 02/12. This assignment is designed to help you think through possible lines of research you would like to pursue in the course of the semester.

**Submission:** You will need to **upload** your texts on **MySLC** Assignment tab by the due date and bring a hardcopy to conference. You are also expected to bring a printed version of this task to our first conference meeting (week of 2/5).

### **(7) Conference papers First Drafts and Outlines-Second Semester Only.**

**Due dates: 03/22 at 11 PM.**

**Prompt:** This is a preliminary version of your final conference paper. It will contain a draft of some of the paper’s key sections and an outline of how you are planning on articulating the paper’s section (generally 6 or 7). Keep always in mind that this is a draft aimed at a workshop where you will receive feedback without being evaluated: Only your final drafts will and even those will not be “graded”. Do not approach this assignment with anxiety. You will be evaluated on the thoroughness of your comments (see next assignment). The goal of this assignment is to be able to share with your peers and instructor your work in progress.

Therefore the main principle that should orient your draft submission should be: “what is it that I would most need feedback on?” This may include the presentation of your theoretical or methodological framework, the way you introduce the relevance of your ethnographic topic, a review of the relevant literature you are planning on including in your final draft, descriptions of your ethnographic setting, the analysis of some of your ethnographic findings, etc. The more specific/articulated/candid you are going to be now, the better feedback you will receive for the final drafts.

Though this draft will only be preliminary, you should have a sketch of the overall articulation of the final paper (what I call an outline), even if it entails merely jotting down the sections that you were not able to fully develop. You are more than welcome to insert



comments directly aimed at the readers: such as “Not sure how to go about this”, “need to find a better kick off”, “this section will be shortened/expanded”.

In spite of the fact that you are free to develop your preliminary draft in the way you find most convenient for the preparation of your final draft, your preliminary draft will need to provide a sense to the reader of the following five points:

- A theoretical introduction to the topic and a concise review of the relevant literature
- A description of the phenomenon that you will be analyzing in your data
- A description of the ethnographic setting
- A description of the data you will be using
- Conclusions that you may draw

**Submission:** You will **upload** your texts on **MySLC** Assignment tab (naming it YourName\_First\_Draft) by the due date (**03/22 at 11 PM**) and email a copy of your draft to all the other members of our class. Each one of you will have to read every body else’s work and make comments on the way the draft is articulated and the ethnographic material is analyzed. Please insert your comments using track change tool on in Microsoft word (Tools>Track Changes>Highlight changes) and print a hardcopy of your colleagues’ draft with your comments to ensure a more productive discussion during the workshop.

There are no “extensions” in workshop-type classes; the deadline is an obligation to [14] other adults.

### **(8) Feedback on your peers’ conference first drafts - Second Semester Only.**

A one-to-three-page letter of response to each one of your colleagues’ conference papers first draft. This class operates on the belief that you’ll improve as a scholar and a writer by receiving detailed criticism and by becoming a more sophisticated and articulate critic of other writers’ work. The purpose of this workshop on conference papers preliminary drafts is to generate such feedback and train students in how to give and receive comments. Each one of you will have to read every body else’s work and make comments on the way the draft is articulated and the ethnographic material is analyzed. Please insert your comments using track change tool on in Microsoft word (Tools>Track Changes>Highlight changes) and print a hardcopy of your colleagues’ draft with your comments to ensure a more productive discussion during the workshop. You will be required to put great care in reading each of your colleagues’ essays, make helpful and specific comments on the manuscript copy, and provide possible methodological suggestions.

**Submission:** You will have to organize your comments in a one-to-three-page letter to the essay’s author and make two hardcopy of such letter; one for me and one for your colleague. In your review, you will have to explain to the authors what you think the draft’s strengths and weaknesses and thus formulate specific suggestions for the manuscript revision and improvement. At the top of each letter, please put your name, the author’s name, the essay’s title, and the date. You will **bring** your reviews/letters to the conference paper workshops we will have after Spring break.

## **(9) Conference papers Final Drafts - Second Semester Only.**

**Due date: 5/3. Bring a hard copy of the paper in class on 5/6.**

Prompt: Conference papers are not review articles, nor annotated bibliographies. They are research papers. Building on the work done during the first semester, students will need to work consistently on their conference project throughout the spring semester. We will talk about the nature and progressive development of these projects in our bi-weekly "conference" meetings.

Students are expected to make original claims, provide ethnographic evidence for their argument and show intellectual deference to the work of other scholars by referring to the relevant existing literature.

Your paper (16-20 page 5-7000 word long) should identify a key research question and a unifying theme that you will explore in relationship to the existing relevant bodies of academic literature and to your own original ethnographic investigation.

In your writing, you will need to discuss the relevant literature, describe your data and the methodology through which you collected them, advance your own interpretation of both the literature and your own data. Your own interpretation will be advanced in an introduction, articulated in the body of the paper, and clinched in your conclusion I expect your papers to be carefully polished.

You should present work of a quality that you would be willing to submit to a scholarly journal for consideration. Consequently, you must pay close attention to professional standards in your writing and citations. You should write for an imagined audience of fellow anthropologists who have not necessarily read the particular essays and books. Therefore, you should illustrate and explain your points carefully.

The paper must be proofread and spellchecked, in proper AAA formatting for all footnotes, citations within text, and references, see the AAA style guide

[http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style\\_guide.htm](http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.htm), as well as the additional guidelines I uploaded on the handout tab under the heading how to format your texts.

The final paper will need to have a:

Title

Subtitle

Abstract of no more than 250 words

A list of 6 keywords

A list of references cited at the end, following AAA format

It should be divided in number sections (and subsections if you deem it necessary) each bearing its own

heading (and subheading)

Length may vary, but it will need to be at least 16 pages long, 1.5 or 2 spaced , with 1-inch margins.

You must number your pages.

**Submission:** You will **upload** your final drafts on **MySLC** Assignment tab (naming it YourName\_Conference\_Paper) by the due date (**May 3 ay 11 PM**) and bring a hardcopy to class on May 6.

**NB** Late submissions will not be accepted. Failure to submit a conference paper after the semester has ended results in a loss of two credits.

### **(10) Mid-term Papers on "Gifts" - Second Semester Only.**

**Due dates: 04/11, at 11 AM.**

**Prompt:** TBA at the end of the first semester.

Your paper (4 page 1500-2000 ca. word long) will draw on the readings you have done during the first part of the semester and on your own ethnographic observations of gift-giving during Christmas. Please bear in mind that you should elaborate on this prompts *by discussing the literature you read for class* as well as by providing concrete examples from the empirical data you gathered for this project. *One of the main goals of the essay is to prompt you to establish connections between the different readings done in the first half of the Semester.* So the more connections you will be able to make in your reflections, the better. *This will entail quoting the literature covered in this course (Please follow the detailed guidelines provided on MySLC handout tab in the document entitled "How to format your texts").* You are free to refer to other sources if you want, but you will need to prioritize the readings and discussions done for this course. In case there were thematic overlaps and congruencies, you may, if you wish, utilize some of the work (theoretical and/or empirical) done for your mid-term essay for your conference paper and project.

**Submission:** You will **upload** your essay on **MySLC** Assignment tab (naming it YourName\_Midterm \_Paper) by 03/09 by 11 PM and bring a hardcopy to class on 3/11.

### **(11) Video-assignment (due date end of the spring semester-more details to follow)**

#### **Checklist for Assignment Preparation and Submission.**

*All the Assignments other than the weekly posts (which have to be posted on the discussion board) will be submitted online through the MySLC assignment tab. The following link provides you with a set of instructions of how to complete assignments online by using MySLC:*

<http://pages.slc.edu/~support/myslc/show-article.php?id=478>

Please always remember to

- Include a list of references cited and give credit to the sources you use.
- Finish editing and revising far enough ahead of time that you can accommodate computer or printer snafus.
- Always read carefully the assignment prompt to see if an additional hardcopy is required.
- Always ensure that you name your assignments according to the instructions.
- *Respect the Word limit.* Sticking to these limits will not always be easy, but it is an important requirement in many academic and non-academic professional environments. Hence, please be mindful of how much time and space you need to express your point. Remember that you will need to give the reader enough context to make yourself understood and at the same time that you will have to be prepared to having to trim down your writing in order to avoid going over the limits.
- All your written assignments must be high-quality printed in regular font and reasonable point-size.

Everything must be 1.5 or double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around, and stapled. The main reason give your essays generous margins is to give me space to write marginalia.

## **Class rules and practicalities**

**Attendance.** For obvious reasons, you're required to attend every class. **The maximum of allowed absences (including conferences) per semester is three.** If a student misses a combination of three or more classes or conference meetings per semester, she or he will be unable to receive full credit for the course. I will take the roll at the beginning of each class. If for any reason you must miss a class you **will not** need to provide me with a medical certificate or a written excuse. After the first two weeks, chronic or flagrant tardiness will count as an unexcused absence.

**Laptops.** The use of laptops, tablet computers, or smart phones **will not be permitted** except by students giving presentations, or if required for accommodation of a documented disability.

**Timeliness.** You are expected to read all the assigned readings ahead of the class on which they will be discussed. Complete all assignments on time. **Late submissions will not be accepted. Incompletes will not be granted, except in extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation.** "After-the-fact" requests for extensions and incompletes will not be considered.

**Class participation and Scholarly Attitude.** A substantial part of the course will center on group discussions of the readings assigned for that week. Be prepared to talk and devote your full attention to discussion. Active participation and engagement in class discussions are requirements for both your individual and our collective success in this course. Students must come prepared for each week's class by doing the assigned reading ahead of time. Your approach to the course will follow a few basic guidelines:

**Be Charitable.** All the readings selected for the syllabus are insightful and theoretically innovative. Listen to what the texts have to say. Critiquing aspects of the readings is fine, but if you find yourself rejecting an argument *in toto*, this indicates your reading is insufficiently generous.

**Be Open to discomfort.** Remember that a learning process always entails a certain degree of discomfort and effort. You will read interesting and engaging materials, but there may be difficult concepts or technical aspects that you may find challenging. Some of the texts are quite complex and that not all of them are entertaining. When you encounter a difficult concept, please avoid a whining approach and focus on developing a constructive and proactive attitude towards the intellectual challenges you face: Take notes on what you could not understand and ask questions. Re-read difficult passages and be patient. Understanding a text is a process that requires time.

**Be open to the possibility of changing your mind.** Seminar discussions entail the possibility of revising our inherited positions. You are allowed, or better said, encouraged to speak in a provisional manner and required to be supportive and patient towards the other participants.

**Be relevant.** “Active participation” in class and group conferences is encouraged. However, this does not mean bringing the discussion on a tangent. It means listening carefully to what other people have to say, engage with the topics discussed by the readings, come to class with questions and issues to be vetted and debated, and offer feedback and advice on your classmates’ work in progress.

**Be collectivity-minded.** Students have a *collective responsibility* towards seminar discussion and class participation. Participating in a scientific community requires embracing the special commitment to collective work that should always distinguish any individual pursuit of knowledge. Although I am profoundly aware that people may have different personalities and different ways to participate in class discussions, active engagement in classroom activities is not simply a course requirement, but a fundamental responsibility towards the rest of the class and the scientific community at large. By registering for this class students commit to offer their contribution to seminar discussion.

**Conference.** I take conference work very seriously and I expect that you will too.

**Engagement.** Great value will be given to your capacity of being an engaging interlocutor in our one-on-one conference meetings. You will need to come prepared to conferences. If on one conference we decide that for our next meeting you will have read, thought about, or written something, then at the following encounter you will be expected to fulfill the objectives we had agreed upon.

**Collaboration.** I am very willing to accommodate your research interests and I give great value to your own individual trajectories, but **conference work is NOT something you do on your own**. I expect you to engage in a dialogue with me, commit to the topic we choose together, and produce very good quality conference papers.

**Missed conferences will not be rescheduled.** If you must miss a conference due to a scheduling conflict in any given week, it is *your responsibility* to switch conference times with another student. Alternatively, you may contact me with a 48 hours notice and I will try to accommodate your request. But please avoid emailing me minutes before the conferences you are planning of not attending with a rescheduling request.

### **Schedule of Individual and Group conferences**

**Individual conferences.** We will have six **individual conferences** throughout the fall semester always (generally) **on Tuesdays of A weeks**: weeks of **09/18, 10/2, 10/16, 11/6, 11/27, 12/11**.

**Group conferences.** Only during the first semester, we will have six **group conferences** (generally) **on Thursdays of B weeks**.

For Group conferences the class will be broken down in three smaller groups of 4-5 students each. At the beginning of the year, each student will be given an object to work on and will be placed in one of the three dedicated slots. We will meet as smaller groups according to the following schedule and sequence of thing-ethnography topics:

- \* 09/13: Discussion of Westlands assignment
- \* 09/27: Discussion of thing-ethnography on Fonts/graphic artifacts
- \* 10/11 Discussion of ethnographic field notes assignment
- \* 11/01 Discussion of thing-ethnography on Consuming
- \* 11/15 No group conference and no office hours due to instructor's participation in AAA conference
- \* 12/06 Discussion of thing-ethnography on Displaying
- \* 12/17 (during Monday class time) Discussion of thing-ethnography on Collecting

No conferences will take place on October Study Days and Thanks giving weeks.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is defined as using the ideas or words of someone else without acknowledging their source, for example:

- Copying of passages from works of others into your papers without acknowledgment.
- Using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing another person's original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device without acknowledgment.

You are required to uphold the Sarah Lawrence College's Undergraduate Policy on Academic Integrity found at

[https://my.sl.c.edu/ICS/Campus\\_Life/Departments/Dean\\_of\\_Studies/Academic\\_Integrity.jnz?portlet=Free-form\\_Content](https://my.sl.c.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Departments/Dean_of_Studies/Academic_Integrity.jnz?portlet=Free-form_Content)

**Acts of plagiarism and violations of the principles of academic integrity will be VERY strictly sanctioned.** Plagiarism on any assignment is grounds for **credit loss** and may lead to academic probation, suspension for a specified period, expulsion, or recommendation to the dean of the college and president that the degree be revoked (in the case of a student already graduated). For more details see the link above.

**Readings.** Readings are available as E-reserve. Since laptops are not allowed in class, each student will need to *print* a copy for her/himself to read and *bring to class*. In other words, do not merely read the article "online."

**Books for the first semester—available from our Bookstore or at Amazon.com**

- Perec, Georges. 2011. *Things: A Story of the Sixties [with a Man Asleep.]* Random House
- Nakassis, Constantine V. 2016. *Doing style: Youth and mass mediation in South India.* University of Chicago Press.
- Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), *Handbook of material culture.* London: Sage

Suggested [The titles are on reserve in the Library or for sale at the Bookstore-2 day delivery]

- Graeber, David. *The utopia of rules: On technology, stupidity, and the secret joys of bureaucracy.* Melville House, 2015.

- Garfield, Simon. 2011. "Just My Type: A Book About Fonts." Penguin
- Pinker, Steven. 2015. *The sense of style: The thinking person's guide to writing in the 21st century.* Penguin Books.
- Haddon, Mark. 2003. *The curious incident of the dog in the night-time.* New York: Doubleday.
- Price, Sally 1989 *Primitive Art in Civilized Places.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Klein, Naomi. 2000 [1990] *No logo: Taking aim at the brand bullies.* New York: Picador.
- Miller, Daniel. 2013. *A theory of shopping.* John Wiley & Sons.

**Xeroxing.** The College's standard "free" printing/copying allocation for students is 500 pages single-sided or 625 pages double-sided, black-and-white, per semester. Students can pay for printing/copying beyond the 500/625 page allocation using Card Cash (\$25). B/W double-side printing/copying is priced at 4-cents per page, while B/W single-sided printing/copying is priced at 5-cents per page. Color prints and copies are priced at 24-cents per page duplex, 25-cents per page single-sided, and thus heavy use of color printers/copiers will greatly reduce the total number of pages available within the \$25 allocation. As students use their 1Cards for printing/copying, the declining dollar balance will be displayed on the printing/copying equipment.

### **Credit Loss.**

Anyone who appears to be heading for loss of credit should not worry about asking — I'll make it a point to let you know. *Throughout the semester, students will be notified in case their lack of commitment to the coursework and poor performance in class, conference, or both put them at risk of credit loss. For the sake of clarity here are the major sources of credit loss:*

- Bad record of attendance.
- Failure to participate in seminar discussions.
- Lack of engagement in conference work: by not coming to conference meetings, by systematically not doing the to do list we agreed upon on each conference, by changing your topic late or at the end of the semester, by focusing only on the product and not on the process: *no matter how good the final paper might be! Conference work is not only about the final output, it requires working together with your advisor/teacher.*
- Failure to turn in weekly assignments or turning them in late.
- Plagiarism.

**Communication.** I may send updates concerning the course via email. Students are expected to have an email account that they check regularly. Your email inquiries will be answered as fast as possible. But please bear in mind that I may need up to 72 hours to get back to you specially during weekends and holidays.

**Writing and academic standards.** The evaluations you will receive at the end of each semester will assess both your writing and your performance in class and conference. In order to achieve good-results you will have to pay attention to the quality of your writing and be



committed to improve it. By quality of writing I mean evidence of care for your readers, as well as of facility in written English. Your essays need to follow formatting guidelines and be carefully proofread and edited for typos, misspellings, convoluted constructions, and basic errors in punctuation.

### **Due Dates- First Semester**

- \* Assignment on Westlands-Due on 9/11 and will be discussed on 9/13
- \* Thing-Ethnography on Fonts-Due on 9/25 and will be discussed on 9/27
- \* Assignment on Ethnographic Field notes-Due on 10/9 and will be discussed on 10/11
- \* Thing-Ethnography on Consuming Things-Due on 10/30 will be discussed on 11/1
- \* Thing Ethnography on Displaying Things-Due on 11/4 will be discussed on 11/6
- \* Thing Ethnography on Collecting Things-Due on 12/14 will be discussed on 12/17

**NB** All the assignments (weekly responses, ethnographic tasks, and conference papers) must be submitted on the due date stated in syllabus. For any assignments submitted after the posted due date, one half a grade (will be deducted from the evaluation: A becomes an A- etc).

---

**Writing Assistance.** Writing assistance is offered by the School's Writing Center. One of the reasons that I require drafts and benchmarks of your "final" work is so that you can benefit from that support. Students can meet one-on-one with Writing Faculty, ESL instructor, and Graduate Writing Assistants. They can email Writing Center Director, Carol Zoref, or Writing Center Faculty Kevin Pilkington to make an appointment. Or they can may make appointments with the grad students or the ESL instructor by emailing [slcwritinglab@gmail.com](mailto:slcwritinglab@gmail.com). They will receive an auto-reply for making appointments using an on-line scheduler.

Contacts:

Kevin Pilkington

[Kpilking@slc.edu](mailto:Kpilking@slc.edu)

Carol Zoref

[czoref@slc.edu](mailto:czoref@slc.edu)

**Reasonable Accommodations.** If you have a disability that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the objectives of this course, you may be entitled to reasonable accommodations. Please contact Polly Waldman, Associate Dean of Studies and Disabilities Services located in Westlands 116. You may also call Disability Services at 914.395.2235 or email [pwaldman@sarahlawrence.edu](mailto:pwaldman@sarahlawrence.edu). Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Sarah Lawrence College and the College will make reasonable accommodations when appropriate and necessary.

# Course Schedule

(Subject To Possible Change As We Proceed)

## Fall Semester

### 0.Week-Introduction

No conference

No web-post

#### Mon. 3 Sept. – Logistics and Species of Spaces

Arrange the logistics of the future group conferences: divide class in groups, assign objects, etc.  
Westlands assignment- Due on 9/11. To be discussed on our first group conference Thu 09/13

To complete this assignment read the prompt "Westlands assignment" above and do the following readings:

- Perec, Georges. 1997 [1974]. *Species of spaces and other pieces*. Penguin. "Foreword" (pp. 5-9); "The Apartment" (pp.26-40).
- Perec, Georges. 1987. *Life: A User's Manual*: David R. Godine Publisher. Chapter XI "Hutting, 1" (pp. 37-40); Chapter XXV "Altamont, 2", Chapter XXXIII "Basement 1".
- Perec, Georges. 2011. *Things: A Story of the Sixties [with a Man Asleep.]* Random House. **[book]**

#### Optional

- Duranti, Alessandro. 2002. "[Linguistic Anthropology](#)" (pp. 8899-906). In *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Oxford: Elsevier.
- 

### 1. Week

No web-post

1<sup>st</sup> Group Conference-discussion of "Westlands assignment" and Perec "Things"

#### Mon. 10 Sept. -Film screening and discussion

- Discuss Syllabus

Hustwit, Gary 2007 *Helvetica*. Brooklyn, NY: Plexi Productions, LLC. Distributed by Newvideo, c2007. (80 mins.). Call number: Z246 .H45 DVD. Documentary website: <http://www.helveticafilm.com/about.html>

This screening will inspire your first (of four) thing-ethnographic essay due on 10/9. See Prompt above.

#### Thu. 13 Sept. – Language as a system of signs or as cultural practice or as symbolic capital

- Saussure, F. [1916] 1966. "[Subject Matter and Scope of Linguistics; Its relations with Other Sciences](#)" (pp.6-7); "The Object of Linguistics" (pp. 7- 17); "Linguistics of Language and Linguistics of Speaking" (pp. 17- 20); "Nature of Linguistic Sign" (pp. 65-70). In *Course in general linguistics* (Wade Baskin, Trans. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, Eds.). Edited by New York, Toronto, London: McGraw Hill.
- Steven Pinker- Language as a Window into Human Nature  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-son3EJTrU>

### **Optional**

- Hanks, W. 1996. Chapter 2 "[The Language of Saussure](#)" In *Language and Communicative Practices* (pp. 21-37). Westview Press.
- Joseph, J.E. 2004. "[The linguistic sign](#)" (pp. 59-76). Chapter 4. In "The Cambridge Companion to Saussure". Carol Sanders ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Bailey, B. 2009. Communication of Respect in Interethnic Service Encounters. *Language in Society* 26 (3): 327-356.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Group Conference on the Craft of Ethnography**

Discussion of Westlands Assignment and of Percec's novel "Things"

- Oniki, Yuji. 1995. Percec, Marx, and Les Choses. *Qui Parle* 9(1): 92-118. (If you want to hear an interesting perspective on Percec's novel)

### **Optional**

- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick description." In *The interpretation of cultures*, New York: Basic Books, pp.: 3-30.

## **2. Week**

A Week

Web-posts

[1<sup>st</sup> Individual conference](#)

### **Mon. 17 Sept. - Graphic and Linguistic ideologies**

- Murphy Keith M. 2017. "Fontroversy! Or, How to Care About the Shape of Language." In Cavanaugh, Jillian R., and Shalini Shankar, eds. *Language and materiality: Ethnographic and theoretical explorations*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 63-86.
- Jaffe, Alexandra. "Introduction: Non-standard orthography and non-standard speech." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4.4 (2000): 497-513.
- Woolard, Kathryn. 1998. "Introduction: Language Ideology as a Field of Inquiry". In *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press. **[Read only until p. 11]**

### **Optional**

- Hanks, William. 2001. "Indexicality" (pp. 119-122). In *Key terms in language and culture*. A. Duranti (ed.). Blackwell Malden, Mass.

- Errington, Joseph. 2001. "Ideology". In *Key terms in language and culture*. A. Duranti (ed.). Blackwell Malden, Mass.
- Kroskrity, Paul V. 2004. "Language ideologies". In *Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. A. Duranti (ed.). Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 496-518.

#### **Thu. 20 Sept. - Typographic artifacts and urbanscapes**

- Trinch, Shonna, and Edward Snajdr. "What the signs say: Gentrification and the disappearance of capitalism without distinction in Brooklyn." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 21.1 (2017): 64-89.
- Zukin, Sharon. "Restaurants as "post racial" spaces. Soul food and symbolic eviction in Bedford-Stuyvesant (Brooklyn)." *Ethnologie française* 44.1 (2014): 135-147.
- Jaffe, Alexandra, and Cedric Oliva. 2013. "Linguistic creativity in Corsican tourist context." In Pietikainen, Sari, and Helen Kelly-Holmes, eds. *Multilingualism and the periphery*. Oxford University Press, pp. 95-117.

#### **Optional**

- Garfield, Simon. 2011. "Just My Type: A Book About Fonts." Penguin
- 

### **3. Week**

#### **B Week**

Web-post

[Library Instruction Session in E1 of the Library](#)

[2<sup>nd</sup> Group Conference- Thing-ethnography on Fonts](#)

#### **Mon. 24 Sept. – Library Instruction session and more on Language Ideology**

- Bauer, Laurie, and Peter Trudgill. 1998. Chapters 10 "Some Languages have no Grammar", Chapter 11 "Italian is Beautiful, German is Ugly, Chapter 17 "They Speak Really Bad English Down South and in New York City", Chapter 20 "Everyone Has an Accent Except Me", Chapter 21 "America is Ruining the English Language". In *Language myths*. London: Penguin Books.

#### **Optional**

- Jaffe, Alexandra, and Shana Walton. "The voices people read: Orthography and the representation of non-standard speech." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4.4 (2000): 561-587.

#### **Thu. 27 Sept. – Language Ideologies and Political economies of Language**

- Donzelli, Aurora. 2019. Chpt 6. "Transparent Words Opaque Selves." In *Methods of Desire: Language, Morality, and Affect in Neoliberal Indonesia*. Hawaii University Press. Author's manuscript
- Irvine, JT, and S Gal. 2009. [Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation](#). In *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*. Ed. A. Duranti. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.

#### **Optional**

- Donzelli, Aurora. 2012. "The Fetish of Verbal Inflexion: Lusophonic Fantasies and Ideologies of Linguistic and Racial Purity in Postcolonial East Timor." In *Language, Ideology, and the Human: New Interventions*, Sanja Bahun and Dusan Radunovic (eds), ROUTLEDGE, pp. 131-157.

- Donzelli, Aurora. 2007. Words on the Lips and Meanings in the Stomach: Ideologies of Unintelligibility and Theories of Metaphor in Toraja Ritual Speech. *Text and Talk* 27(4): 533-557.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Group Conference Discussion of Thing-Ethnographies on Fonts

- Kallen, Jeffrey L. 2010. "Changing landscapes: Language, space and policy in the Dublin linguistic landscape." In Jaworski, Adam, and Crispin Thurlow, eds. *Semiotic Landscapes: Language, Image, Space*. Bloomsbury Publishing, pp. 41-58.
  - Murphy, Keith M. Sweden Sans, Qualicraft, and the Semiotics of Typographic Nationalism. Author's manuscript
- 

## 4. Week

A Week

2<sup>nd</sup> Individual Conference

Web-post

[Mara Goss on Service Learning](#)

### Mon. 1 Oct. – Language as Symbolic Capital and Mara Goss introducing Service Learning

- Lippi-Green, R. 1997. "Preface" (pp. xiv-xvi), "Introduction" (p. 3-7), "The myth of non accent" (pp. 41-53), "The standard language myth" (pp. 53-63),
- Hill, Jane H. 1998. [Language, Race, and White Public Space](#). *American Anthropologist* 100(3): 680-

#### Optional

- Barrett, Rusty. 2006. [Language ideology and racial inequality: Competing functions of Spanish in an Anglo-owned Mexican restaurant](#). *Language in Society* 35(02): 163-204.
- Cavanaugh, Jillian, R. 2005. Accent matters: Material consequences of sounding local in northern Italy. *Language & Communication* 25(2): 127-148.

### Thu. 4 Oct. – Language Ideologies and Political economies of Language

- Bourdieu, P. (1977) The economics of linguistic exchanges. *Social Science Information* 16(6): 645-668.
  - Johnstone, B. 1999. [Uses of Southern-sounding speech by contemporary Texas women](#). *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3:505-522.
- 

## 5. Week

B Week

Web-post

[3<sup>rd</sup> Group Conference on writing ethnographic fieldnotes](#)

### Mon. 8 Oct. – Language as Commodity

- Heller, Monica. 2017. "Can Language Be a Commodity?" In J. Cavanaugh and S. Shankar, (eds.), *Language Materiality: Theoretical and Ethnographic Approaches*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 251-254.
- Heller, Monica. 2003. Globalization, the new economy, and the commodification of language and identity." *Journal of sociolinguistics* 7(4): 473-492.
- Cameron, Deborah. 2000. Styling the worker: Gender and the commodification of language in the globalized service economy. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4(3):323-347.

### **Optional**

- Heller, Monica. 2010. The commodification of language. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39:101-114.

### **Thu. 11 Oct. – Commodified Experience and Market-driven Styles of Self-presentation**

- Hochschild A. 1983. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: Univ. Calif. Press pp. 3-23.
- Bernstein, Elizabeth. 2007. Buying and selling the "girlfriend experience": The social and subjective contours of market intimacy. In *Love and globalization: Transformations of intimacy in the contemporary world*. Mark Padilla et. al (eds.). Vanderbilt University Press: pp. 186-202.

### **Optional**

- Hall, Kira. 1995. Lip service on the fantasy lines. In Hall, Kira, and Mary Bucholtz, eds. *Gender articulated: Language and the socially constructed self*. Routledge. Pp. 183-216.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Group Conference on Ethnographic notes and methods**

- Emerson, Robert M, Rachel I Fretz, and Linda L Shaw. 2011. "Preface to the Second Edition", "Preface to the First Edition", "Field notes in Ethnographic Research" (Chp 1), "In the Field Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes" (Chpt 2). In *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*: University of Chicago Press. Pp. ix-43.
- Agar, Michael, H. 1980. "The concept of fieldwork". (Chapter 2, pp. 53-73). In *The professional stranger: an informal introduction to ethnography*: Academic Pr.

### **Optional**

- Duranti, Alessandro. 1997. "Ethnographic methods" (pp. 84-121). In *Linguistic Anthropology*. A Duranti (ed.). Cambridge

## **6. Week**

A Week

Web-post

3<sup>rd</sup> Individual Conference

### Mon. 15 Oct. – Appropriations and Re-mediations

- Reyes, Angela. 2005. Appropriation of African American slang by Asian American youth. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9(4):509-532.
- Zappavigna, Michele, and Sumin Zhao. (2017). Selfies in 'mommyblogging': An emerging visual genre. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 20, 239-247.
- Negrin, Llewellyn. "The contemporary significance of 'pauperist' style." *Theory, Culture & Society* 32.7-8 (2015): 197-213.

### Thu. 18 Oct. – The Semiotics of Appearance

- Norma Mendoza-Denton. 1996. "'Muy Macha': Gender and Ideology in Gang-Girls' Discourse about Makeup." *Ethnos* 61(1-2): 47-63.
  - Keane, Webb. 2005. "The hazards of new clothes: What signs make possible." In Kuchler, Susan, and Graeme Were (eds.), *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, Routledge, pp. 1-16.
- 

## 7. Week

October Study Days Week

No Class on Monday

Web-post for Thu

No Conferences

Mon. 22 Oct. – No class due to October Study Days

### Thu. 25 Oct. – Consuming things and words

- Miller, Daniel. 2006. "Consumption." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.). *Handbook of material culture*. Sage, pp. 341-355.
- Gell, Alfred. 1986. "Newcomers to the world of goods: Consumption among Muria Gonds." In A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 110-138.
- Pinch, Adela. 1998. "Stealing happiness: shoplifting in early nineteenth-century England." In Patricia Spyer, (ed.). *Border fetishisms: Material objects in unstable spaces*. Routledge, pp.122-49.

### Optional

- Preda, Alex. 1999. "The turn to things." *The Sociological Quarterly* 40(2): 347-366. **Secon sem in recap.**
- 

## 8. Week

B Week

Web-post

4<sup>th</sup> Group Conference: Thing-ethnography on consuming things



### **Mon. 29 Oct. – Consuming/Eating**

- Farquhar, Judith. 2006. "Food, Eating, And The Good Life." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.). (2006). Handbook of material culture. London: Sage, pp.145-161.
- Gaudio RP. 2003. Coffeetalk: Starbucks and the commercialization of casual conversation. *Language in Society* 32.5 (2003): 659-691.
- Schnapp, Jeffrey T. 2001. The Romance of Caffeine and Aluminum. *Critical Inquiry* 28 (1): 244-269.

#### **Optional**

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1970. "The Berber house or the world reversed." *Information (International Social Science Council)* 9 (2): 151-170.

### **Thu. 1 Nov. – Displaying Things and Producing Publics**

- Warner, Michael. 2002. Publics and counterpublics. *Public Culture* 14(1): 49–90.

#### **Optional**

- Clarke, Alison J. 2002 [1998]. "Window shopping at home: classifieds, catalogues and new consumer skills." In Daniel Miller, (ed.) *Material cultures: Why Some things matter*. Routledge, 85-112, pp. 73-

## **4<sup>th</sup> Group Conference Thing-ethnography on consuming things**

---

## **9. Week**

A Week

Web-post

4<sup>th</sup> Individual Conference

### **Mon. 5 Nov. – Politics of Presentation-Consuming-/Inhabiting**

- Rowlands, Michael. 2006. "Presentation And Politics." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), Handbook Of Material Culture. London: Sage, Pp.443--445.
- St. George, Robert. 2006. "Home Furnishing And Domestic Interiors." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), Handbook of material culture. London: Sage, pp. 221--230.
- Chevalier, Sophie. 2002. "From woollen carpet to grass carpet: bridging house and garden in an English suburb." Daniel, Miller (ed.), *Material cultures: Why some things Matter*. Routledge, pp. 59-84.

### **Thu. 8 Nov. – Semiotic Chains Performativity and the Market**

- Nakassis, Constantine V. 2012. Brand, citationality, performativity. *American Anthropologist* 114(4): 624-638.
- Jaworski, Adam, and Crispin Thurlow. 2017. "Word-things and thing-words: The transmodal production

of privilege and status." In J. Cavanaugh and S. Shankar, (eds.), *Language Materiality: Theoretical and Ethnographic Approaches*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 185-203

- Butler, Judith. "Gender is burning: Questions of appropriation and subversion." *Cultural Politics* 11 (1997): 381-395.

### Optional

- Searle, John. 1996. What is a speech act?
- 

## 10. Week

### B Week

Web-post for Monday

No conference nor class on Thu

### Guest Speaker: Steven Alpert

#### Mon. 12 Nov. – Museum Displays

- Shelton, Anthony A. 2006. "Museums And Museum Displays." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), *Handbook Of Material Culture*. London: Sage, pp.480-500.
- Eastop, Dinah. 2006. "Conservation As Material Culture." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), *Handbook Of Material Culture*. London: Sage, Pp. 516-534.

### Optional

- Noy, Chaim. 2017. Moral discourse and argumentation in the public sphere: Museums and their visitors. *Discourse, Context & Media* 16: 39-47.

**Thu. 15 Nov. – No Class** due to Instructor's attendance of AAA conference in San Jose, CA

---

## 11. Week

### Thanks-Giving Week

Web-post for Monday

### Time Management Session with Polly

No conference

#### Mon. 19 Nov. – Time management session- with Polly Waldman

#### Thu. 22 Nov. – Thx Giving

---

## 12. Week

### A Week

5<sup>th</sup> Individual Conference

Web-post

### Mon. 26 Nov. – For a Social Critique of Judgment and Taste

- Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1984). Selections from Chapters 1 and 3 (pp. 1-18, 53-60, 63-72, 76-83, 85-92, 169-208).
- Gladwell, Malcolm. 1997. "The coolhunt: who decides what's cool? Certain kids in certain places—and only the coolhunters know who they are." *The New Yorker*.
- Holt, Douglas. 1998. "Does Cultural Capital Structure American Consumption?" *Journal of Consumer Research* 25(1): 1-25.

### Thu. 29 Nov. – Doing Style

- Nakassis, Constantine V. 2016. *Doing style: Youth and mass mediation in South India*. University of Chicago Press.

---

## 13. Week

### B Week

Web-post

5<sup>th</sup> Group Conference: [Thing-ethnography on displaying things](#)

### Mon. 3 Dec. – The Appropriation of Indigenous Things

- Myers, Fred. 2006. 'Primitivism', Anthropology, And The Category Of 'Primitive Art.'" In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), *Handbook Of Material Culture*. London: Sage, Pp.267--285.
- Thomas, Nicholas. 1991. "Chapter 4: The European Appropriation of Indigenous Things." In *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific*, pp. 125-184. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

### Optional

- Thomas, Nicholas. 1989. Material culture and colonial power: ethnological collecting and the establishment of colonial rule in Fiji. *Man* 24 (1): 41–56.
- Thomas, Nicholas. 1991. "Chapter 3: The Indigenous Appropriation of European Things." In *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 83-124.

#### Thu. 6 Dec. –

- Jennifer S. Esperanza. 2008. Outsourcing otherness: Crafting and marketing culture in the global handicrafts market. In *Hidden Hands in the Market: Ethnographies of Fair Trade, Ethical Consumption, and Corporate Social Responsibility (Research in Economic Anthropology 28)*. Dr. Donald Wood ed. Pp. 71-95. Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [to retrieve from past Syllabi]
- Bell, Joshua A. 2017. A Bundle of Relations: Collections, Collecting, and Communities. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 46: 241-259.

#### ***Optional***

Dragojlovic, Ana. 2012. Mis-placed Boomerangs: Artistic Creativity Supply Chain Capitalism, and the Production of Ethnic Arts in Bali. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 13(3):245-261.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Group Conference Thing-ethnography on displaying things

---

## 14. Week

A Week

Web-post

6<sup>th</sup> Individual Conference

#### Mon. 11 Dec. – **Collecting**

- **The Linguists**, Kramer, Seth; Miller, Daniel A ; Newberger, Jeremy S ; Anderson, Gregory D. S ; Harrison, K. David . Ironbound Films; National Science Foundation (U.S.) ; Nonprofit Media Group . P40.5.E53 L56 DVD
- Belk, Russell. 2006. "Collectors And Collecting." In Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.), *Handbook Of Material Culture*. London: Sage, Pp.534-546.
- Chow, Rey. 2001. Fateful Attachments: On Collecting, Fidelity, and Lao She . *Critical Inquiry* 28(1): 286-304.

#### Thu. 13 Dec. – **Collecting Languages**

- Errington, J. 2003. Getting Language Rights: The Rhetorics of Language Endangerment and Loss. *American Anthropologist* 105(4):723-732.
- Moore, Robert E. 2017. "Language and Materiality in the Renaming of Indigenous North American Languages and Peoples." In J. Cavanaugh and S. Shankar, (eds.), *Language and Materiality: Theoretical and Ethnographic Approaches*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 204-225.

#### ***Optional***

- Whiteley, P. 2003. Do " language rights" serve Indigenous interests? Some Hopi and other queries. *American Anthropologist* 105(4):712-722.
- Collins, J. 1992. Our ideologies and theirs. *Pragmatics* 2(3): 405-415.

---

## 15. Week

B Week

6<sup>th</sup> Group Conference: Thing-ethnography on collecting things

Web-post

**Mon. 17 Dec.** – Group Conference on Collecting

**Thu. 20 Dec.** – No Class

---