TRANSNATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Professor M. Kamari Clarke

Classroom Location: on-line, via ZOOM
Weekly Classes: Mondays – 10:10am-12noon
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:00pm
Office Address: 14 Queen’s Park Cres West, 2nd floor, Room 205
Office Phone: 416-978-7124
Email: kamari.clarke@utoronto.edu

Join Zoom Class:
https://zoom.us/j/6152307369?pwd=dWFQZXhoVmtpUWpXQWhBZ0JxR2o0Zz09
Meeting ID: 615 230 7369
Passcode: 673310

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00noon – 3:00pm (please request an appointment time)
https://zoom.us/j/6152307369?pwd=dWFQZXhoVmtpUWpXQWhBZ0JxR2o0Zz09
Meeting ID: 615 230 7369
Passcode: 673310

As anthropologists, sociologists, and cultural studies scholars continue to grapple with the changing approaches to studying local phenomena, this course covers transformations in approaches to making sense of locality in transnational, global and diasporic arenas. By addressing theoretical problems connected to transnational and diasporic circulations, students in the course will explore “transnationalism” and “globalization” as conceptual frameworks and will explore how various contemporary ethnographies might provide possibilities for understanding such complexities. Drawing on a range of ideas, from poststructuralist approaches to cultural processes, to materialist and rhisomatic theories, and that of the study of diasporic formations, students will explore the rapid transformation of what constitutes new fields of study and the implications for addressing questions of scale and complexity. The emphasis will be on the interrelations between the social and cultural, the political, notions of agency and power, zones of national, international and transnational forms of practice.

In the first section of the course, Rethinking Culture, Nation, Space, students will explore the way that scholars have attempted to rethink locality and offered new ways of conceptualizing transnational complexity. Inspired by Salman Rushdie’s Imaginary Homelands, we will both explore de-territorialized and diasporic approaches to cultural processes as well as explore the way that national and transnational identities are established through various transnational forms of subject-making. The second section, Transformations of the Social: Ethnographies of Global Connection, will involve how we can meaningfully understand new forms of transformations in the context of changing social, economic and socio-legal-political spaces. From studies of new economic, legal, cultural, and transnational movements, to emergent diasporic formations,
students will read a range of transnational ethnographies in order to understand contemporary approaches to transnational ethnography.

The class will meet once per week for a two-hour time block. During this time, I will lecture for the first thirty minutes of the class to situate the context for understanding the material. In the final ninety minutes we will discuss various themes and concepts related to the assigned readings. At time our discussions will be supplemented by interactive video clip excerpts to spark discussion. As this is a graduate student-level class, there is an expectation that both will participate fully. Upper-level graduate students will be expected to complete the same assignments as graduate students and will receive graduate credit.

**Course Objectives**

1. Understand current academic debates, theories, and public discussions around what transnationalism and globalization is and the various ways that scholars study them.
2. Develop conceptual and methodological tools to critically analyze transnational processes and their empirical manifestations in the everyday lives of local communities and peoples.
3. Understand the various ways that people construct meanings, relations of belonging and identity in their lives.
4. Discern how cultural meanings and practices (no matter how small) play a role in shaping, and are themselves shaped by, large-scale situations including colonialism, nationalism, capitalism, racial, gender, sexual orientation, migration.
5. Read ethnographic texts and understand the main points of the argument as well as how the data are used for contemporary understandings of transnational formations.
6. Analyze ethnographic material in several ways, ranging from summarizing the argument or data that an author uses, to taking generalizations or interpretations made about one set of material and applying it to another set of materials.
7. Turn the lens on one’s own world and engage in reflexive analysis.
8. Be able to present ideas with sound evidence and a questioning mind in safe break-out group formats.

**Format and Expectations**

Because of the Covid19 restrictions, this course will be taught as an on-line seminar in a synchronic format using a zoom videoconferencing platform. Students will need access to a computer in order to participate in this course. Use of a tablet, iPad, or smartphone is not recommended as the primary way to engage with the course. A fast and reliable Internet connection is also required. Use of a webcam and microphone may be required to participate fully in course activities.

**Zoom for Students**

Zoom is a video conferencing platform that offers one-on-one and group video meetings. Students can sign up for the basic free plan. The U of T Zoom sign can be found here: [https://utoronto.zoom.us/](https://utoronto.zoom.us/)

You can access zoom by downloading it on your computer. For first time users to Zoom go to: get a UofT Zoom account at: [https://act.utoronto.ca/zoom-information/](https://act.utoronto.ca/zoom-information/)
Once you download the application you will need to activate your account by verifying your email address. For more information go to: Zoom general use and tools: https://utm.library.utoronto.ca/students/canvas/zoom

Our weekly classes will consist of an opening lecture, class presentations and class discussions. Opening lectures will provide a broad contextual, theoretical and historical background for each weekly theme, including clarification of key concepts and explorations of their application. Class presentations followed by discussions of the readings will provide an opportunity to review and discuss course material. **Attendance is required.**

Your participation grade will reflect the extent to which you contribute to class discussions in an informed way. However, the grade will not just be based on your attendance. You will be expected to do the required reading prior to attending class and tutorial sections and also participate in an informed way in discussions. If you miss a class, you will still be held responsible for all course material discussed on that day. If you are absent, please make arrangements to borrow someone else’s notes as they are your responsibility to ensure that you catch up on missed material.

**Office Hours**

My office hours will be held by zoom using the same link as used for class. **Please set up an appointment in advance so that I can reserve that time slot for you. Log-on at your appointment time and wait in the waiting room until I admit you. It is possible that I may not be able to admit you at the exact time that you have scheduled and you may end up waiting a little longer than expected. If so, apologies in advance and please be patient. It means I am wrapping up meetings with those ahead of you.** However, if you have a genuine scheduling conflict and cannot meet me during the allotted time, please send me e-mail to set up an appointment for an alternate time.

**Submission and Return of Term Assignment/Final Paper**

All assignments/final papers must be typed and submitted via the on-line class portal. Please submit assignments as documents in Microsoft Word format in either *.doc or *.docx formats. If you do not have Microsoft Word, it is fine to use Open office or Libre Office.

Please submit your assignments on-time. Unless you have a legitimate excuse, all late assignments will receive a 25% grade deduction. Once graded, the assignments will be returned within a one-week period.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Student evaluations will be based on the following assignments: (a) **Class Participation**, (b) **Class Presentation of Readings**, (c) a **Final Paper**.

**Grade Breakdown**

(a) Class Participation (20%);
(a) Class Participation – (20% of grade)
Students are expected to do all of the required readings and participate in class discussions in an informed way. The weekly readings should be completed in advance of the relevant class to which they are assigned. Participation will be based on both attendance and discussion contributions. **However, if you are not able to participate fully please send me an email so that we can discuss the possibility of sharing your reflections via the online discussion forum.**

(b) Class Presentation - (30% of grade)
In addition to regular class participation, each student is expected to serve as a discussant for one of the weekly group of readings. To do this, students will be expected to prepare a forty-five minute oral presentation that should serve to orient the weekly discussion. Presentations should address one or two broad overarching themes that arise in the assigned text(s) or they may focus in more detail on shared or divergent perspectives. While it may be useful to point out differences in approaches to empirical data, or to signal aspects of the readings that require clarification, presentations should focus especially on the intellectual-historical background to the week’s readings. They should examine the significance at the time and to future generations of anthropologists, what general assumptions that underlie the author’s work (and where the assigned readings stand in the bodies of work of the theorist(s) we are reading that week, and their significance at the time and to future generations of anthropologists. All other students must be fully prepared to participate in discussions.

When presenting, please try to incorporate questions raised in the materials posted by fellow class members on the Discussion Forum of the class website. **Discussion leaders should introduce the plan for the class discussion through a power point presentation and also provide questions for other class members to follow along.** To determine who will present each week, a sign-up sheet will be circulated at the beginning of the term.

(c) Final Paper – Reading Response of a Transnational Ethnography (50% of grade)
All students must write a final paper (double spaced, 15 pages/cover page and references not included) that involves a discussion and reflection of one of the four ethnographies covered in Section Two of the course. For this final assignment, students will be expected to select and engage with one of the following global ethnographies:

- The Illicit Life of Capitalism. Hannah Appel
The paper should outline the core arguments of the book. It should summarize the main points, identify the debates in which the authors are engaged, explain how the arguments are used to support the author’s claims and look for the unstated assumptions that the authors use: what does s/he assume about how humans behave or think? What does s/he assume about the ability of groups to act collectively, and so on? Each paper should indicate whether or not you feel he/she succeeds in supporting and analyzing his/her arguments. It is very rare to find a piece of writing that you agree with entirely. As you come across issues with which you disagree with or find unconvincing write them down and bring them along to section for discussion. Also note when you are surprised by a particular argument.

It is important to assume that the reader is unfamiliar with the subject matter and therefore should outline what the publication is about (briefly), how it fits into a larger debate, and what the strengths and weaknesses are. Ultimately, the paper should raise critical questions and highlight whether and how the author is challenging theoretical norms. The final paper should be uploaded to the course portal by the deadline.

**Anthropological Citation Style**

Please use the correct citation style for all papers submitted (with the exception of exams). The papers should follow the format of one of the two major anthropological professional journals. They are: (1) the American Anthropologist or (2) American Ethnologist. This means that you need to cite both in the text and in a section titled “References Cited” following the text, works from which you have drawn ideas as well as works you quote.

You should cite authors whose ideas you use with their last name and the date of publication, and can even include more than one citation if you got the idea from more than one source (Ginsburg 1989; Ginsburg and Rapp 1991). If you quote an author, e.g. that "the powers of village women...[do not] provide women with the last word," (Harding 1975:308), you must include the page number(s). Note the placement of punctuation, and that the citation and period/comma are outside of the quotation marks.

**References Cited** (not “Bibliography”), placed starting on a new page at the end of your text, does not include any publication not cited in the text. All entries must be listed alphabetically by last name of author, and chronologically arranged for two or more titles by the same author. Nothing, except “in,” is underlined in References Cited. The layout should be as follows:


3) For a book (title is capitalized; date, place of publication [use the first one listed], and publisher

4) For articles taken from the internet, cite as closely as you can to a printed publication (including author’s name, date of publication, title, publisher), followed by the URL of the site you are citing: United Nations. 2009 Revision of the World Population Estimates and Projections. Http://www.popin.org.

Submission and Return of Term Assignment/Final Paper
All assignments/final papers must be typed and submitted via the class website. Please submit assignments as documents in Microsoft Word format in either *.doc or *.docx formats. If you do not have Microsoft Word, it is fine to use Open office or Libre Office. Please submit your assignments on-time. Unless you have a legitimate excuse, all late assignments will receive a 25% grade deduction. Once graded, the assignments will be returned to you by the Teaching Assistant (TA) assigned to your tutorial. He/she will communicate the return of assignment details to you.

NUMERIC TO GRADE ASSIGNMENTS

Academic standing in a course is determined by the course instructor. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points, is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>50-52</td>
<td>D-</td>
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REQUIRED READING

All articles and supplemental readings will be available on the class website. The readings listed under the headings are required. Those listed under the heading, “Optional Readings” are not required and only included for general interest and further background. The following four books are required for the course and can be purchased from the bookstore or through an online book ordering source:

• Cosmopolitan Conceptions: IVF Sojourns in Global Dubai. Marcia Inhorn.
• Human Rights and Gender Violence. Translating International Law Into Local Justice. Sally Engle Merry.
• The Illicit Life of Capitalism. Hannah Appel. Duke University Press
• Strangers in their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right. Arlie Hochschild.

Course Organization: Topics, Readings, and Schedule

Section 1
Rethinking Culture, Nation, Space

Week 1 – MONDAY JANUARY 11
The Ethnographic Study of the Global: An Introduction

Optional Readings
• Hybridization, Differentialism, Convergence - Ritzer text—Ch. 8 “Global Culture and Cultural Flows” Pp. 205-236
• What is the Concept of Globalization Good for? An African Historian's Perspective African Affairs (2001) 100(399): 189-213

Week 2 – MONDAY JANUARY 18
Theorizing Space and Place: Race and Transnational Formations

Optional Reading
• Editor Doreen Massey. The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race.
• Baumann, G. “Nation, ethnicity and community”
• Yossi Shain, Marketing the American Creed Abroad: Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, chapter 3
• Paths to Postnationalism. Monica Heller. Introduction. Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

Week 3 – MONDAY JANUARY 25
Deterioralization, Cultural Formations in Global Scapes
• Arjun Appadurai. 1996. Modernity at Large: Cultural dimensions of globalization. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press. Introduction, chapters 1, 2, 3

Optional Reading
• Transforming Ethnographic Knowledge: Eds. Rebecca Hardin and Kamari Maxine Clarke. Introduction and Chapters by Bateson, Inhorn, and Kalocsai

Week 4 – MONDAY FEBRUARY 1
The Vernacularization of Human Rights

Optional Reading
• Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson. Eds: Culture, Power, Place. Pps 33-50

Week 5 – MONDAY FEBRUARY 8
Rhisomatic Formations: Building the Groundwork for Assemblage Theory

Optional Reading
• Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times. 2007. Jasbir K. Puar
Week 6 – MONDAY FEBRUARY 15 – Reading Week – NO CLASSES

SECTION TWO

Transformations of the Social: Ethnographies of Global Connection and Disconnection

Week 7 – MONDAY FEBRUARY 22

Transnational Science: IVF, Eggs, Sperm and the Market for Babies

  Introduction, Chapter 1, 2, 3

Film: “Made in India” (2010) - PBS documentary on surrogacy in India and the quest of couple from Texas who travel to India to hire surrogate - http://www.pbs.org/programs/made-india/

Optional Reading

- Ritzer Text Ch. 12 “Negative Global Flows and Processes” Pp. 327-356
• Fertility Holidays: IVF Tourism and the Reproduction of Whiteness (2016)
• Transnational Reproduction: Race, Kinship, and Commercial Surrogacy in India (2016)

Week 8 – MONDAY MARCH 1
Migration and Global Inequalities: Gender and Labour
Film: Chain of Love: https://video-alexanderstreet-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/watch/chain-of-love?context=channel:docuseek2

Optional Reading
• What’s Love Got to Do With It? Denise Brennan.

WEEK 9 – MONDAY MARCH 8
Globalization, Finance and Culture

Optional Reading
Optional Film: Commanding Heights: The Battle for the World Economy.

**WEEK 10 – MONDAY MARCH 15**

**New Frontiers in Ethnographic Issues: Gaming and the Study of On-line Communities**
• Shoot First, Ask Questions Later: Ethnographic Research in an Online Computer Gaming Community. Sue Morris. 2004
• Toward a Connective Ethnography of Online/Offline Literacy Networks. Chapter 2. Kevin M. Leander. IN Handbook of Research on New Literacies
• Video games in context: An ethnographic study of situated meaning-making practices of Asian immigrant adolescents in New York City. Chia-Yuan Hung.

• Film: Even Asteroids Are Not Alone.
https://vimeo.com/ondemand/evenasteroidsarenotalone/357363131?autoplay=1

**Optional Reading**
• Ilana Gershon. 2011 “Un-Friend My Heart: Facebook, Promiscuity, and Heartbreak in a Neoliberal Age” Anthropological Quarterly 84(4): 867-896
• Networks of outrage and hope: social movements in the Internet age. Manuel Castells (2012).
• Networks of outrage and hope: social movements in the Internet age. Manuel Castells (2012).


WEEK 1

1 – MONDAY MARCH 2

Transnational Citizenship and Its Exclusions


• The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying and the Migrant Trail. Jason DeLeon.
  o Introduction, 1, 2, 3, 5, 11, 12

Optional Background Reading


WEEK 12 – MONDAY MARCH 29

Neo-Nationalism and Global Retractions: Re-inscriptions of Race and Difference

• Strangers in their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right. 2016. Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 8, 9, 14, 15.

• Making the Cuban American Dream Great Again: Race and Immigrant Citizenship in Miami. Ariana Hernandez-Reguant

Optional Readings


• Lauren Berlant – Trump, or Political Emotions - https://thenewinquiry.com/trump-or-political-emotions/
• Trump. By Alain Badiou. 2019
• Toward the anthropology of white nationalist postracialism: Comments inspired by Hall, Goldstein, and Ingram’s “The hands of Donald Trump”. By Jeff Maskovsky. HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory. 7 (1): 433-440.
• Ritzer Text, Ch. 15 “Dealing with, resisting, and the futures of Globalization” Pp. 419-446.
• How ‘clicktivism’ has changed the face of political campaigns. Emma Howard. September 24, 2014. The Guardian.

Closing Discussion - Toward Changing Futures? What a Global Pandemic Teaches Us

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FINAL PAPER DUE
APRIL 16, 2021 • 11:55pm
CLASS RULES AND REGULATIONS

Course Conduct
There is an expectation that everyone in this course will be committed to the pursuit of scholarly exploration, knowledge acquisition and intellectual freedom. When there are contentious issues being discussed, it is expected that everyone will comport themselves in a spirit of mutual respect and exchange. Rudeness, disruption, harassment, and threats will not be tolerated.

While laptop computers are encouraged in class, please do not conduct non-course related activities during class time. This includes social media, games, texting, and the general use of digital devices that divert attention from the class content.

Requests for Academic Accommodation
You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation
While pregnancy itself does not qualify as a disability, certain conditions, such as gestational diabetes or preeclampsia, may qualify. However, the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) can still provide academic accommodations for pregnant, parenting, and lactating students. In order to access accommodations through CAE students must first apply for an accommodation. Some common accommodations available to pregnant, parenting, and lactating students include: adjusted attendance requirements, adjusted assignment deadlines, exam accommodations, and access to lactation spaces on campus.

Religious obligation
Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities.
Survivors of Sexual Violence

The regulations within the Student Conduct Code and the Student Conduct Procedures for Allegations of Prohibited Conduct have been developed to create and maintain a safe, supportive, and inclusive campus community that engages students in order to foster their academic success, personal growth, and responsible citizenship. Students are considered to be maturing adults, capable of making their own decisions as well as accepting the consequences for those decisions. The student conduct process has been established to respond to incidents involving allegations of prohibited behavior within the community.

Class notes and Expectations

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Medical Certificates and Illness

In the unfortunate case of illness or injury, only a medical certificate/note signed by a licensed physician and indicating that treatment/counsel was sought on the day of the missed assignment or examination will be accepted. Please note that Doctor’s notes for minor illnesses (e.g. colds, flu) and past illnesses that have been resolved cannot be accepted.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. If I suspect that the work turned in has been plagiarised, I will turn it over to the Dean’s office for them to conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor
suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**Intellectual Property**
Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

**E-mail Accounts**
All email communication to students will be via official university e-mail accounts. As important course information is distributed this way, it is the student’s responsibility to monitor their university accounts.