

# ANTH 309 A01

## ANTHROPOLOGY AND FILM AND VIDEO

---

*INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Andrea Walsh*

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

This course explores the earliest uses of film by anthropologists dating from the turn of the 20th century to the production of video by contemporary anthropologists and filmmakers. Careful viewing of over 25 films, in connection to related class discussions, and in combination with reading and lecture materials, are the building blocks for the case studies presented over the term. In each of these units, the work of particular anthropologists and filmmakers, and the relationship between their work and anthropology is explored. Throughout the course wherever possible, films about Indigenous peoples in Canada, and Indigenous filmmakers residing in Canada are screened, as well as being the subject of readings and lecture content.

Units 1-4 cover the time period from the turn of the century through World War II with a focus on the beginnings of visual research in anthropology. This is followed by an overview of postwar development of visual anthropology as a sub-discipline through the latter 20th century. Unit 5 considers the mid-century films and the anthropological theories that underpinned them as well as the exploration of filmmaking methodologies to express ideas and concepts about culture. Unit 6 continues to explore the role of anthropological theory in the context of film/video making, and examines the emerging role of television media and its impact on visual anthropology. Methodologies that embrace ideas of collaboration in filmmaking between peoples/communities and filmmakers are also taken up through films and readings in this unit. Unit 7 concludes the course with a focus on contemporary Indigenous filmmaking in Canada - both feature films and documentaries are considered for the ways by which they connect with and challenge the history and ongoing development of the discipline of anthropology. Case studies of the work of 3 indigenous women in filmmaking are considered.

### **SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

- understand anthropological approaches to the use of film and video as methods for representing culture
- understand how anthropological theories of culture have intersected with the production of film and video by anthropologists and others
- understand the changing relationship between Indigenous peoples and media
- develop skills in critically analyzing writings and audiovisual material about culture
- analyze both historical and contemporary visual media from an anthropological perspective