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ANTHROP 3ST3
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY STUDIES IN/OF AFRICA
FALL 2021
MONDAYS 11:30AM-2:20 PM ON ZOOM/A2L

Instructor: Professor Cal Biruk (she/her or they/them)

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 4:00pm-5:00pm (Zoom, recurring link on A2L)

Note: All times listed in the course outline are in Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Contents

Course Description.....	2
Learning Objectives.....	2
Required Materials and Texts.....	2
Class Format.....	3
Course Evaluation (Overview).....	4
Course Evaluation (Details).....	4
Assignment 1 (20%), due October 8.....	4
Assignment 2 (25%), due November 1.....	4
Assignment 3 (25%), due November 29.....	5
Assignment 4 (5%), due December 1.....	5
Assignment 5 (25%), due December 14.....	6
Weekly Course Schedule and Readings.....	7
Week 1 (September 13).....	7
Week 2 (September 20).....	8
Week 3 (September 27).....	9
Week 4 (October 4).....	10
Week 5 (October 11).....	11
Week 6 (October 18).....	12
Week 7 (October 25).....	13
Week 8 (November 1).....	14
Week 9 (November 8).....	15
Week 10 (November 15).....	16
Week 11 (November 22).....	17
Week 12 (November 29).....	18
Week 13 (December 7).....	19
Course Policies.....	20
University Policies.....	22

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of science and technology studies (STS), with a geographic focus on Africa. We will engage scholarship and media produced by anthropologists, historians, and postcolonial theorists to challenge narratives that construct the continent as a passive recipient of knowledge, projects, and technological innovations that originate in the global North. Each week, our focus will be on tracing the itineraries of a single technoscientific artifact, such as soap, bush pumps, ‘blood minerals’, humanitarian goods, biometric technologies, motorcycle taxis, medical objects, and so on. We will attend to what kinds of relations, politics, emotions, and economies assemble around these objects, and explore science and place, technology and culture, traveling technologies, and the many meanings that adhere to (post)colonial science and technology. No prior knowledge of African studies, anthropology, or STS is needed.

As members of the McMaster community, we are grateful to work, learn, and study on lands that are the traditional territory shared between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinabe Nations, acknowledged in the Dish with One Spoon Wampum belt.

Learning Objectives

1. Gain knowledge of the growing subfield of postcolonial science and technology studies
2. Challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and narratives about the global distribution and circulation of technology, with particular focus on retheorizing technologies and science from the perspective of Africa and African experiences through engagement with assigned texts, films, and other media
3. Apply critical theoretical and methodological tools learned in class to texts, narratives, and representations of science, technology, and development
4. Recognize and analyze the complex and interrelated factors and histories that uphold myths of Africa as a ‘non-modern’ place ‘lacking’ technology or waiting for science to arrive from the global North
5. Gain familiarity with object-centered modes of inquiry and methodologies at the core of science and technology studies
6. Develop awareness of how cultural and political processes and histories inflect the production and circulation of science and technology (and narratives told about them)
7. Gain confidence in contributing ideas and critical insights to an intellectual community and being an active participant in self-directed learning

Readings

There is one **required book** for this course. It is available for purchase at the McMaster online campus store (see here: <https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/cgi-mcm/ws/txhome.pl?wsgm=coursematerial>). Please note that you should order the book well ahead of its assigned date of November 8. You may need access to the book in order to complete some questions on the exam due Nov. 29; you are responsible for ordering it in good time. One copy of the book is on reserve at Mills Library for our course.

Paul Wenzel Geissler, Guillaume Lachenal, John Manton, and Noémi Tousignant. 2016. *Traces*

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of the Future: An Archaeology of Medical Science in Africa. University of Chicago Press.

All other readings and films are available as PDFs on A2L (“Content”→”Readings, lectures, modules, course materials”→organized by week). Readings should be completed by the day/session for which they are listed.

Class Format + Technology/Platforms

I recognize that these enduring Covid-times are difficult and unconventional times: We are all doing our best and juggling many commitments, including caring for ourselves and others, holding jobs, navigating the stress and isolation of living through a pandemic, and academic work. **I have considered all of this in putting together a plan for our time together that is fulfilling, fun, reasonable, and enriching, rather than stressful.** It is important in these times that students in this course show the same generosity, care, flexibility, and respect toward the instructor (and all other professors and TAs!) that they expect in return.

In this class, we will use **Avenue to Learn** (our course site) and **Zoom** (synchronous sessions + virtual office hours). This class is **primarily an asynchronous course, but will include 4 synchronous Zoom sessions clearly noted on the syllabus for Sept 27, Oct 4, Nov 8, Nov 29.*** On those dates, we will convene at our scheduled class time (Mondays, 11:30am). You can join the meetings via Zoom link on the class A2L page. These sessions are a valuable opportunity to deeply engage with a small group of people and build community, and to bring some of our course material to life through discussion. Attending the synchronous sessions is very strongly encouraged, and will, *without a doubt*, improve your performance on all class assessments (see below for more on participation). Synchronous sessions will not be recorded to ensure privacy and security of all class members. I will record asynchronous lectures using MacVideo; these files will be uploaded by class time each week for you to listen to/view on your own time. Most lectures will include Powerpoint slides and be captioned as well as technology allows. I may also show video or other media during lectures (embedded), or post links to such things for you to follow along with lecture. All content can be accessed by navigating in A2L from “Content” to “Lectures, modules, and course material.” Content will be organized by date it corresponds to on the course outline.

My office hour will be held on Zoom via a recurring link set to the designated time (Tues, 4p-5p) on A2L. Click on the link in A2L (“Content”→ “Virtual Office Hour”) and you will be in my Zoom office. I utilize the “waiting room” function for office hours. If someone is waiting, meetings are limited to 10 minutes.

*I very much appreciate when students leave their videos on in the Zoom space. It is discouraging to speak to and with black boxes. If at all possible, please have your video on as much as possible in class.

Please note that I do not generally respond to emails at the weekend or in the evenings. I prefer to communicate via email (I often miss messages sent to me on A2L).

Communications and announcements will be posted to A2L and sent to the entire class via the

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A2L “email classlist” function.

Course evaluation

- *Object itineraries paper: 20% of grade
- *Take-home film quiz: 25 % of grade
- *Take-home exam: 25 % of grade
- *Participation portfolio: 5% of grade
- *Final project: 25 % of grade

Due dates

- *October 8 at 5:00pm, Object itineraries paper due
- *November 1 at 11:30am, Take-home film quiz due
- *November 29 at 11:30am, Take-home exam due
- *December 1 at 5pm, Participation portfolio due
- *December 14 at 5pm, Final project due

Assignments

1. Object itineraries paper

This 3-page (double spaced) paper provides a chance for you to apply an object-centered methodology to a case study artifact or object—broadly related to science and technology in/of Africa— of your choice. The paper will ask you to adapt some of Dumit’s methodological provocations (to be discussed in class, week 3) to your chosen object in order to reflect on how unpacking multiple dimensions of and stories about objects can provide a window onto a wider world of social, political, symbolic, and economic circuits and relations. More detail to be provided in a detailed assignment sheet. This short paper will also act as practice for thinking toward your final project. Paper must follow all formatting requirements listed on assignment sheet (“Content”→”Assignment sheets”) and must be submitted to A2L by Friday, October 8 at 5pm (“Assessments”→”Assignments”→”Object itineraries paper”).

2. Take-home film quiz

You will complete a graded film quiz on your own time over the course of one week. The assessment entails watching a short film titled *The Boda Boda Thieves*, listening to the accompanying short lecture for the week, and reading the assigned texts. The film questionnaire on A2L (“Assessments”→”Quizzes”→”Film quiz”) will require you to respond to questions in various formats (true/false, short answer, application exercises, analysis). The film quiz should take you around 1.5 hours **max** (though you have multiple days and unlimited efforts in A2L to complete it). It will assess your basic comprehension of the film and your ability to apply concepts, frames, and ideas learned up to now in class to the film and texts assigned for that date. You are free to consult your notes or readings from class. The film quiz will become available on Monday, October 25 at 11:30am and must be submitted by 11:30am on Monday, November 1 to A2L. The expectation is that you should aim to take the quiz during our regular scheduled class time on October 25 (obviously, you should complete the readings and view the film before then), but I have extended the deadline to accommodate all learners—extensions will not be granted

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due to the flexible timeline for the quiz. Questions will be designed to be not Googleable, and Googling will likely lead you astray. Further, if it is obvious you have googled when I grade the quiz, you are at risk of receiving no credit for the given question. **You should not consult anyone else in the class or otherwise (family members, friends, etc...) in completing the exam.**

3. Take-home exam covering material from Weeks 1-10

The take-home exam will be posted by Monday, November 22 at 11:30am. You must submit your completed midterm on A2L by Monday, November 29 at 11:30am and you may use notes, lectures, slides, and films at your disposal. The exam will be taken on A2L. Questions will be designed to be not Googleable, and Googling will likely lead you astray. Further, if it is obvious you have googled when I grade the exam, you are at risk of receiving no credit for the given question. **You should not consult anyone else in the class or otherwise (family members, friends, etc...) in completing the exam.**

The take-home exam will cover material from Weeks 1-10 (lectures/class, films, readings). It may include definitions, short answers, visual analysis, true/false queries, multiple choice questions, and application instruments (i.e., applying a theory or concept from class to a case or scenario). You may also be prompted to cite readings to support answers or interpret quotations from course readings. When the time comes, you will find the exam on A2L (“Assessments”→”Quizzes”→”Take-home exam”). The timeline/format of this take-home exam (with one full week permitted to complete it) accommodates all learners; extensions will not be granted.

4. Participation Portfolio

In order to demonstrate your participation in a primarily online format, you will prepare and submit a participation portfolio any time before December 1 at 5pm via A2L (“Assessments”→”Assignments”→”Participation portfolio”). The portfolio will include two components, outlined here:

a. (2.5 %): You will complete all four of the modules associated with classes/readings on Sept 20 (#1), Oct 18 (#2), Nov 1 (#3), and Nov 15 (#4). The four modules will be assessed for completion and adherence to the guidelines articulated in the module worksheet itself. Modules are a low-stress way to keep engaged with and practice applying class material.

b. (2.5 %): You will write **one double-spaced page** that describes and assesses your participation in this course this term. You should: 1) define/describe what you deem to be ‘participation’ in a course; 2) give examples of how you personally engaged with our material this term; 3) Reflect on one specific way in which your views on science, technology, and Africa changed over the term.

The portfolio will be graded *for completion* and must adhere to the formatting and submission guidelines listed on the participation portfolio assignment sheet posted to A2L

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(“Content”→”Assignment sheets”). If all parts are submitted, guidelines are met, formatting is correct, and basic effort is demonstrated, the participation grade will be between 90-100. If not submitted, the participation grade is 0. If submitted, but guidelines are not met or little to no effort is demonstrated, points will be deducted.

5. Final project: Contribution to the “3ST3 Museum of Science and Technology in Africa”

The final project asks you to creatively apply what you’ve learned this term. Part of our agenda has been to challenge prevailing narratives about science and technology in Africa and to think about how technologies, for example, reconfigure social lives, identities, and bodies and how they reinforce(d) or challenge(d) imperial projects and power structures. For this project, you will select an object broadly related to science and technology in/of Africa. You will create a visual depiction (this can be a photo, screen shot, creative artistic rendition, collage, etc) of your object, and a short (150 word) placard/label that seeks to disrupt pre-existing ideas a museum goer might hold of your object or its stories. You will then write a 5-page (double spaced) paper explaining how your chosen object and placard relate to texts or insights from our class this term. More detailed instructions and clear guidelines and examples will be provided in the assignment sheet (“Content”→”Assignment sheets”). Final project will be submitted to A2L (“Assessments”→”Assignments”→”Final Project”) by **Tuesday, December 14 at 5pm.**

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Weekly Course Schedule and Readings

****Schedule and readings subject to change****

Week 1| Monday, September 13

Introduction of course and instructor

To read (required):

*This entire course outline

*Addisu Lashitew. 2020. "Covid-19 exposes Africa's digital divide." *African Business*. Access at: <https://african.business/2020/09/technology-information/covid-19-exposes-africas-digital-divide/>

*Sean Jacobs. 2011. "The solar oven fallacy." *Africa is a Country*
<https://africasacountry.com/2011/03/the-solar-oven-fallacy>

After reading Jacobs, read Ranit Mishori. 2009. "The simple tool that saves women's lives." *Parade* <https://parade.com/97439/drranitmishori/solar-cooker-project/>

*Binyavanga Wainaina. 2005. "How to write about Africa." *Granta*. AND "How to write about Africa: The revenge." *Bidoun*

Access here: <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/> and <https://www.bidoun.org/articles/how-to-write-about-africa-ii>

Reading questions: What are some common narratives told about Africa, science, and technology (think of news media, films, etc...)? In what ways do some of these reproduce the kind of tropes and narratives Wainaina warns us against? What assumptions does Lashitew make about 'development'? What is a 'digital divide'? What does it mean for a solar cooker to 'save lives'? How does Jacobs' account of this device complicate the narratives in Mishori's piece?

To do (required):

*Listen to recorded lecture ("Introduction"). This lecture will provide an overview of the expectations, organization, and assignments for this course, and use the short readings assigned for today as a platform for introducing some of the themes to be explored in the course this term.

Assignments due:

*Fill out introductory google survey (10 minutes) by Monday, September 20. The link is available on A2L under "Announcements."

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Week 2 | Monday, September 20

Terms and orientations: Science, technology, Africa, development

To read (required):

*Clapperton Chakanetsa Mavhunga. 2017. “What do science, technology, and innovation mean from Africa?” in *What do Science, Technology and Innovation mean from Africa?* MIT Press. (pp. 1-22 ONLY)

*Walter Rodney. 1972 [1982]. “Some questions on development” in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Howard University Press. (pp. 1-22 ONLY).

Reading questions: Rodney argues that Europe (or, more broadly, the West) underdeveloped Africa. What does he mean—what were the specific mechanisms and processes through which underdevelopment transpired? How does Rodney’s argument challenge normative assumptions baked into terms like ‘developed’ or ‘developing’ or ‘undeveloped’? Mavhunga suggests that “science, technology, and innovation are not Houdini acts of white people” (p. 2)—how does this claim relate to Rodney’s arguments? Mavhunga puts forth a critique of scholars’ use of universal terms to theorize and write about science and technology in Africa. Make some notes on how attending to “African meanings and practices” (p. 7) can give us a new lens on concepts and terms like laboratories, innovation, startups, etc... There is a lot of reading assigned for today, so do your best. Lecture will provide detailed discussion of both readings.

To do (required):

*Listen to posted lecture (“Science, technology, and histories of exploitation in Africa”) + do associated module #1 (“On ‘Africa’”)

Assignment due:

*Fill out google survey (see “Announcements” on A2L) by 11:30am today.

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Week 3 | Monday, September 27

Defining our object-centered methodology

To read (required):

*Joe Dumit. 2014. "Writing the implosion: Teaching the world one thing at a time." *Cultural Anthropology* 29(2):344-362.

+**Note that you should only read pp. 350-358.**

*Stephen J. Collier, Jamie Cross, Peter Redfield, and Alice Street. 2017. "Little development devices/ humanitarian goods." *Limn* 9 <https://limn.it/articles/precis-little-development-devices-humanitarian-goods/>

*Tom Scott-Smith. 2017. "A slightly better shelter?" *Limn* 9 <https://limn.it/articles/a-slightly-better-shelter/>

*Vincent Duclos. 2017. "Demanding mobile health." *Limn* 9 <https://limn.it/articles/demanding-mobile-health/>

*Tatiana Thieme. 2017. "Water is life, but sanitation is dignity." *Limn* 9 <https://limn.it/articles/water-is-life-but-sanitation-is-dignity/>

Reading questions: As you read Dumit, choose an object/artifact (as he suggests you do on p. 350). It can be anything, maybe something around your house, an event reported in the media, or any other 'object' broadly interpreted. As you read the assigned pages, try to answer some of the questions presented by Dumit. You should bring your notes/jottings to class. In what ways do the "little development devices" discussed by Collier et al reproduce or capitalize on assumptions about Africa, science, and technology discussed by Mavhunga (from last week)? What problems do each of the development devices in the short pieces try to solve (IKEA shelter, MOS@N, IkoToilet)? In what ways do they succeed and fail? Across all three, what assumptions did the designers hold in common? How do each of the essays about the development devices mobilize aspects of Dumit's object-centered methodology?

To do (required):

*Attend live session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

*Come to class ready to introduce yourself (Name, pronoun(s), major, one hobby). Bring your notes on the 'object' you chose to 'follow' using Dumit's method (see reading questions) and be ready to share your insights about your thought process/insights. *Note that we will discuss expectations and ideas for your first assignment ("Object itineraries paper," due Friday, October 8) in detail during this session.*

Assignment due:

None.

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Week 4 | Monday, October 4

Soap

To read (required):

*Cal Biruk. 2017. “Ethical gifts?: An analysis of soap-for-data transactions in Malawian survey research worlds.” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 31(3):365-379.

*Timothy Burke. 1996. “Sunlight soap has changed my life: Hygiene, commodification, and the body in colonial Zimbabwe.” In *Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-colonial Africa*. Duke University Press (pp.189-212).

*Jenni Marsh. 2016. “Could this soap stop malaria?” *CNN.com*
<https://www.cnn.com/2016/05/18/africa/faso-soap-malaria-bukrina-faso/index.html>

Reading questions: Burke suggests that soap became a commodity imbued with potential to ‘civilize’ Africans and African bodies. Summarize, after reading Burke, the general intersections between race, bodies, and cleanliness in colonial Zimbabwe. How does giving soap as a ‘gift’ for research participation in Malawi build on such colonial constructions? Why has soap—in particular—been such a dense site of meaning-making for so long? What anxieties does this commodity help relieve or wash away? What is Biruk’s critique of ‘culturalist’ critiques of ethics (p. 378)?

To do (required):

Attend live Zoom session (link on A2L), 11:30am. Please bring a bar of soap to our Zoom classroom with you (if you have one around).

Assignment due:

Note that your first assignment (“Object itineraries paper”) is due **this Friday, October 8 by 5pm EST**. Please submit to A2L.

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Week 5 | Monday, October 11

Mid-term recess

No class

To do (required):

Enjoy the break 😊

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Week 6 | Monday, October 18

The bush pump

Note: I will not be holding office hour this week.

To read (required):

*Marianne de Laet and Annemarie Mol. 2000. “The Zimbabwe bush pump: Mechanics of a fluid technology.” *Social Studies of Science* 30(2):225-263.

Reading questions: Think about what de Laet and Mol mean when they call the bush pump a ‘fluid technology.’ Sketch/draw a bush pump and, as you read, draw as many ‘actors’ as possible, as mentioned by the authors, around the pump—does the drawing make it harder to answer the seemingly simple questions “What is the bush pump?” Where do the boundaries of the pump end? In what way is the pump’s designer Peter Morgan, not unlike the pump, ‘fluid’? The authors talk about love (as in ‘loving’ the bush pump). How does their orientation to the pump depart from typical discussions of development technologies?

To do (required):

*Listen to posted lecture (“Appropriate technology, fluid actors”) + do associated module # 2 (“Why is the bush pump so loveable?”)

Assignment due:

None

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Week 7 | Monday, October 25
***Boda boda* (motorcycle taxis)**

*Jacob Doherty. 2017. "Life (and limb) in the fast-lane: disposable people as infrastructure in Kampala's boda boda industry." *Critical African Studies* 9(2):192-209.

*Watch: *The Boda Boda Thieves* (Donald Mugisha, 2015, 1 hour, 21 minutes)

*Jonathan W. Rosen. 2017. "Uganda's 'Uber for motorcycles' focuses on safety." *MIT Technology Review* <https://www.technologyreview.com/2017/04/03/152808/ugandas-uber-for-motorcycles-focuses-on-safety/>

*Uber. "Ride in style: Different types of Uber rides in Kenya." <https://www.uber.com/en-KE/blog/different-types-of-uber-rides-kenya/>

Reading questions: Doherty describes boda bodas as infrastructure—how can people be infrastructure? Doherty repeatedly suggests that boda bodas are seen as disposable in the Kampala imagination—describe the three main forms of disposability he identifies (p. 194) in your own words. Why are bodas cast as the 'irrational other to Kampala's modernization'? (p. 205) Are there iterations of 'people as infrastructure' where you live? Given Doherty's discussion of the boda boda industry in Uganda and the film, write down some reflections on Uberboda in Kenya and Uganda—do you think it will succeed? What effects will it have on the existing boda industry?

To do (required):

*Listen to brief posted lecture ("People as infrastructure")

*Complete film quiz after watching the film, doing the readings, and listening to the brief lecture (due to A2L on Monday, November 1). The film quiz will be posted to A2L by 11:30am today ("Assessments" → "Quizzes" → "Film Quiz"). The quiz will include a mix of questions in various formats (true/false, short answer, application exercises, analysis) that will assess your comprehension of the film, and ability to interpret it through lenses learned thus far in class.

Assignment due:

None.

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Week 8 | Monday, November 1

Cell phones/coltan

To watch and read (required):

*Watch *Columbite Tantalite* (2013, Chiwetel Ejiofor) [12:41] and read the brief reflection by the director: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2013/dec/11/columbite-tantalite-film-congo-chiwetel-ejiofor>

*Watch music video “Capture” (Baloji, 2015) [3:50]: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEgfc1__n8

*Read James H. Smith and Jeffrey W. Mantz. 2006. “Do cellular phones dream of civil war?” in Max Kirsch, ed. *Inclusion and Exclusion in the Global Arena*. Routledge (pp. 71-87).

Reading questions: Pay close attention to the first paragraph on p. 76—articulate in your own words what the authors are suggesting about the relationship between Congo, coltan, and the world. On p. 78, the authors suggest that an object-centered methodology (“trac[ing] the connection between production and consumption through a particular object...”)—what they term global accounting—is key to understanding global political economy. What other ‘objects’ (aside from coltan) do you think could be useful entry points for such questions? Read p. 84-85 before watching the music video “Capture”(Baloji is a Belgian-Congolese artist): Do you see any connections? Finally, what is the argument being made by Ejiofor’s film and how does film’s method relate to or resonate with Smith and Mantz’?

To do (required):

*Listen to posted lecture (“Capture, commodity fetishism, coltan”) + complete module #3 (“iPhones, blood, global accounting”)

Assignment due:

Submit completed Film Quiz to A2L by 11:30am EST today.

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Week 9 | Monday, November 8
Medical debris

To read (required):

*Paul Wenzel Geissler, Guillaume Lachenal, John Manton, and Noémi Tousignant. 2016. *Traces of the Future: An Archaeology of Medical Science in Africa*. University of Chicago Press.
[excerpts, page numbers TBD]

Reading questions: Forthcoming.

To do (required):

*Attend live session on Zoom (link on A2L), 11:30am

*We will discuss the final project in detail in class today. I recommend re-reading the assignment sheet for the final project before class.

Assignment due:

None

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Week 10 | Monday, November 15

Biometrics

To read (required):

*Keith Breckenridge. 2014. "The global biometric arena." In *Biometric State: The Global Politics of Identification and Surveillance in South Africa, 1850 to the Present*. Cambridge University Press. (pp. 1-26)

*Valley, Natasha Thandiwe. 2016. "Insecurity in South African social security: An examination of social grant deductions, cancellations, and waiting." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42(5):965-982.

Reading questions: What are biometrics? What kinds of giving and taking do biometric technologies require and normalize? Where have you 'given' your own biometrics and why? What distinguishes the 'biometric state' from the modern state (or the documentary state) (for Breckenridge)? What is the relationship between race and biometrics? How does Valley's ethnographic approach to studying the social grants system in South Africa challenge top-down claims that the centralized card-linked cash distribution network was more 'efficient' than past iterations?

To do (required):

Listen to lecture ("Surveillance, (in/)security, and the state") + do module #4 ("Biometric wanderings")

Assignment due:

None

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Week 11 | Monday, November 22

Take-home exam on material covered in weeks 1-10.

Note: I will not be holding office hours this week.

To do (required):

The take-home exam will be posted to A2L today by 11:30am.

It must be submitted to A2L by Monday, November 29 at 11:30am.

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Week 12 | Monday, November 29
Final class meeting of the term

To read (required):

*Gabrielle Hecht. 2018. "The African Anthropocene." *Aeon* <https://aeon.co/essays/if-we-talk-about-hurting-our-planet-who-exactly-is-the-we>

Reading questions: What is Hecht's critique of the "Anthropocene" as a discourse and concept? Why should those who are talking about and trying to address climate change and global crisis think "from, and with, Africa"?

To do (required):

*Attend live session on Zoom (link on A2L, 11:30am). We will reflect on our semester, discuss the reading for today, and you will have time to share ideas/ask questions about your final project.

Assignment due:

Submit your completed exam to A2L by 11:30am today.

***Please note: Your participation portfolio is due no later than Wednesday, December 1 at 5pm to A2L.**

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Week 13 | Tuesday, December 7

***No class**

****Final project is due Tuesday, December 14 at 5:00pm to A2L****

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Course Policies

Discomfort and learning

Before you enroll in this course, it is important to understand that the discipline of Anthropology, in its theory and methods, entails a comparative and reflective perspective that relies on one's investment in understanding different ways of being, living in, or seeing the world. Encountering experiences that are radically different from our own, or that resonate (sometimes in painful ways) with our own can be disorienting and raise a host of emotions. Our classroom community encompasses people who have different vocabularies for discussing privilege, oppression, politics, and selves (we should note that these vocabularies are learned, and, thus, cultural). I hope we can use both the alignments and differences between our vocabularies, social positions, and experiences as starting points for learning. If you are reading this, send me an email sharing your favorite food (by Monday, September 20 at 11:30am). I ask that you always be respectful of one another, and keep in sight our shared project: denaturalizing and destabilizing the self so as to gain a wider perspective on others, whether in our own classroom or further afield.

Before deciding to take this course, please read the syllabus thoroughly. I trust that each of you can assess whether and how the content of our readings or films might disturb you. If you think any of the material or assignments might disturb you to the point where your emotional or mental health may be threatened, but you wish to remain in the course, take advantage of mental health and other support services available on campus or elsewhere.

Inclusive learning environment

I am committed to making my classrooms a welcoming space for a wide spectrum of diverse learners and thinkers. Please see the note below regarding academic accommodation of students with disabilities. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to make this course more accessible to you, and I will do my best.

Privacy and intellectual property

Audio and video recording of class sessions (open sessions, Zoom) is never permitted without my explicit prior consent. All materials related to class should ***never be circulated and should only be used for the purposes of taking this course.*** Please note, according to University Policy, that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. ***The Copyright Act and copyright law protect lectures by University instructors.*** Students are advised that circulating or sharing recorded lectures or any other course material with anyone outside this course will incur disciplinary measures.

Zoom sessions will not be recorded by the instructor. In specific and approved circumstances, students should be aware that their voice/image may be recorded by others during live open Zoom sessions. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Format for Written Assignments

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All written assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with standard one-inch margins and in-text citations and works cited page should follow APA style format. Do not include more than one space between paragraphs (see here: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html). **Note that you do not need to include the APA cover page or “running head” for coursework.**

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

This term’s course outline has been designed to build in ample time and flexibility for submitting assignments. Late assignments will be subject to one full letter grade deduction for each calendar day the assignment is late. (For example, an A assignment turned in two days late becomes a C paper; for clarity: 1 minute-24 hours late=A drops to B; 24 hours-36 hours late=A drops to C; all *inclusive* of weekend days). Late assignments will not be accepted after five calendar days have passed, inclusive of weekend days. Extensions will only be considered in *extenuating* circumstances, given the ample time and generous flexibility built into deadlines this term.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

You are responsible for any announcements, changes to course outline, or material shared in Zoom meetings, on A2L, or in email communications. While attendance itself is not mandatory, missing live sessions will make mastering the material more difficult.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

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Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to *submit their work in hard copy and electronically to Turnitin.com* so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Please note University policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015. You can find information at mcmaster.ca/msaf/. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student’s religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

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Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.