

CGS 3005G 550 – Theorising Subjectivity and Power
The Centre for Global Studies
Huron University College
Winter 2023

Instructor: Dr. Alejandra González Jiménez
Office Hours: Wednesdays 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. (V121)
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Day and Time: Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: W8

Course Description

The course is organized around the nexus among subjectivity, power, experience, and agency. We will examine how people's experiences and interpretations are shaped by the cultural and social worlds in which they live, as well as by larger forces, structures, and forms of power. How do people recreate themselves while accommodating, contesting, and transforming power structures? What is agency? Does agency equal resistance? Students will be introduced to different theories of power that are widely used in anthropological research as well as to ethnographic approaches to subjectivity and power. As such, the course presents a toolbox for delving into social phenomena in our contemporary world.

Prerequisites

0.5 from Centre for Global Studies 2002F/G - 2004F/G, or permission of the Centre for Global Studies.

Learning Outcomes

- 1) Develop skills of creative and critical thinking, inquiry, synthesis, evaluation, and analysis.
- 2) Become familiar with different anthropological approaches to subjectivity, power, and agency and understand their possibilities and limits.
- 3) Learn how to approach subjectivity and power ethnographically.
- 4) Hone reading and writing skills.
- 5) Practice generous participation in group discussions.

Course Materials and Books

Articles can be found in OWL Course Readings section. Books are found at Western University Library (some online, others in hard copy). You can also check your local public library.

Books to review (you will be assigned ONE of these books):

- Karen Ho. 2009. *Liquidated: An Ethnography of Wall Street*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- João Biehl. 2013. *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tom Boellstorff. 2008. *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Methods of Evaluation and Due Dates

- 1) Class attendance and participation (10%) – ongoing
- 2) Develop critical questions and comments for class discussion (10%) – two individually assigned due dates per student
- 3) Mid-term take-home exam (20%) – Friday February 17, 8 a.m.
- 4) Book Review (20%) – March 15
- 5) In-class presentation of book reviewed (10%) – April 5
- 6) Final take-home assignment (30%) – Friday April 7, 8 a.m.

Course Expectations

1) Attendance and Participation: It is imperative that students attend and participate in all class sessions. Participation includes active involvement in discussions and small group activities. If you find it difficult to speak in front of other people and you think that this will inhibit your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible. While everyone has the right to be 5 minutes late to class on occasion, consistent tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful to your classmates and to me. The same applies to early departures. You are responsible for the material covered during each class, even if you are not present. Absences do not relieve your responsibility to submit coursework. You should, in such cases, make arrangements to submit materials in advance or have them delivered by a classmate.

2) Develop critical questions and comments for class discussion: On the first day of class, students will pick two different weeks for which they will develop two or three critical questions and one comment based on the assigned readings. Most likely you will work on these questions together with a classmate. On the week you pick, you will submit your questions and comment to me on Tuesday at 11 a.m. so I can offer feedback. You will then present the ideas in class the following day to stir discussion.

3) In- class presentation of book reviewed: During our final class, you will give a 15–20-minute group presentation on the book you were assigned together with the other students who were assigned the same book. Please work together and prepare a Power Point for your presentation.

4) Book review: For this assignment, you will describe, analyse, and evaluate a book that you will be assigned on the first day of class. Please note that a book review is not a summary of the book. Rather, it is thoughtful discussion of the book in which you identify the main argument, themes, and sub-arguments, and the evidence that supports them. Make sure to start reading the book as soon as possible so you can take your time to develop a thoughtful discussion of the book's contents. I'll provide you with guidelines (1000 words).

5) Mid and final take home exam: These examinations will consist of a few questions about theoretical concepts that we will have examined in class, as well as an essay question. You will have more than 24 hours to work on the take-home examination. Please make sure that you proofread and edit your work and that your essay has a proper argument and format.

Writing assignments general guidelines: Each writing assignment must have a title and subtitles, as well as page numbers. Use Times New Roman 12 font and regular margins (2.54 cm). All assignments should be double-spaced. Your name and the date should appear on the first page.

All texts used in assignments should be cited in-text—including page numbers—and in a bibliography using Chicago Style. Click [here](#) for a quick guide to the Chicago Manual of Style Online. Please note that all assignments should be submitted via OWL.

I encourage you to seek support at [Huron University Writing Services](#) for all your writing assignments.

Penalty for late assignments: To ensure fairness to those who complete their work on time, a penalty of 10% per day will be deducted from assignments handed in after the due date, unless students present medical or other emergency reasons and have contacted the instructor in advance of the due date. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the act of using the ideas or work of another person as if they were one's own. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Click [here](#) for more on how Western Libraries defines plagiarism and how to avoid it.

Communication: Course communication will be sent through the course website. All email queries should have a subject line clearly indicating the topic/question of your message. In the message's body, you must include your full name. I'll try to respond within 48 hours. Any query related to essays must be sent in advance. If the answer of your query is on the syllabus, I won't respond to your message.

Course Schedule

I. Subjectivity, Culture, and Anthropology

Week 1: January 11 / Introduction

In-class reading

- Tanya Luhrmann. 2010. "What students can teach us about iPhones." *Salon*, 1.

Week 2: January 18 / Subjectivity

- Tanya Luhrmann. 2006. "Subjectivity." *Anthropological Theory* 6(3): 345-361.
- Sherry Ortner. 2006. "Subjectivity and Cultural Critique." In *Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power, and the Acting Subject*. Durham: Duke University Press.

II. Power and Subjectivity

Michel Foucault

Week 3: January 25 / Power and Resistance

- Michel Foucault. 1982. "The Subject and Power." In *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, edited by Hubert Dreyfuss and Paul Rabinow. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 208-226.

- Lila Abu-Lughod. 1990. "The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power through Bedouin Women." *American Ethnologist* 17(1): 41-55.

Week 4: February 1 / Microphysics of Power

- Michel Foucault. 1995. "The Body of the Condemned" and "The Means of Correct Training." In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 3-31, 170-194.
- Pun Ngai. 2005. "The Social Body: The Art of Discipline and Resistance." In *Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace*. Durham: Duke University Press, 77-108.
- Ann Stoler. 2002. "Genealogies of the Intimate: Moments in Colonial Studies." In *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1-21.

Week 5: February 8 / Neoliberal Selves

- Michel Foucault. 1991. "Governmentality." In *The Foucault Effect*, edited by G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 87-104.
- Ilana Gershon. 2011. "Un-Friend My Heart: Facebook, Promiscuity, and Heartbreak in a Neoliberal Age." *Anthropological Quarterly* 84(4): 865-894.

Antonio Gramsci and Raymond Williams

Week 6: February 15 / Hegemony

- Raymond Williams. 1977. "Cultural Theory." In *Marxism and Literature*. England: Oxford University Press, 108-144.
- Sherry Ortner. 1996. "Gender Hegemonies." In *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press, 139-172.

**** Mid-term take-home exam due on Friday, February 17th
at 8 a.m.****

February 22, Spring reading week, no class

Week 7: March 1 / Hegemony

- Paul Willis. 1977. *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*. New York: Columbia University Press, vii-116 and 171-219.

Pierre Bourdieu

Week 8: March 8 / Habitus

- Pierre Bourdieu. 1977. "Structures and the Habitus." In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 72-95.

- Sherry Ortner. 2003. “Drawing Boundaries” and “Dealing with Boundaries.” In *New Jersey Dreaming: Capital, Culture, and the Class of '58*. Duke: Duke University Press, 51-89.

In-class screening: [sections from the Up Series documentaries](#)

III. Agency and Resistance

Week 9: March 15 / Domination and Resistance

- James Scott. 1990. “Preface” and “Domination, Acting, and Fantasy.” In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, ix-xii and 17-44.
- Robin D.G. Kelley. 1997. “Looking to Get Paid: How Some Black Youth Put Culture to Work.” In *Yo’ Mama’s Disfunktional! Fighting Culture Wars in Urban America*. Boston: Beacon Press, 43-77.

****Book Review Due****

Week 10: March 22 / Agency

- Sherry Ortner. 2020. “Power and Projects: Reflections on Agency.” In *Anthropology and Social Theory*. Duke: Duke University Press, 129-154.
- Holly Wardlow. 2006. “‘To Finish My Anger’: Body and Agency among Huli Women.” In *Wayward Women: Sexuality and Agency in a New Guinean Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 63-98.

IV. Experience

Week 11: March 29 / Subjectivity, Madness, and Social Suffering

- Byron J. Good, Subandi, and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good. “The Subject of Mental Illness: Psychosis, Mad Violence, and Subjectivity in Indonesia.” In *Subjectivity: Ethnographic Investigations*. Edited by João Biehl, Byron Good, and Arthur Kleinman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 243-272.
- Anne M. Lovell. “Hoarders and Scrapers: Madness and the Social Person in the Interstices of the City.” In *Subjectivity: Ethnographic Investigations*. Edited by João Biehl, Byron Good, and Arthur Kleinman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 315-340.

Week 12: April 5 / Presentations and Wrap-up

****Final-take home assignment due on Friday April 7th at 8 a.m.****



Appendix to Course Outlines: Academic Policies & Regulations Fall/Winter 2022-2023

Huron will continue to follow the guidance of public health and government officials. It is anticipated that there will be no disruptions to in-person instruction. This is subject to change.

Student Code of Conduct

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at:

<https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf>.

Prerequisite and Antirequisite Information

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have not completed any course antirequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Attendance Regulations for Examinations

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Review the policy on Attendance Regulations for Examinations here: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy,

specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academiccalendar/) . The appeals process is also outlined in this policy as well as more generally at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf.

Turnitin.com

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

It is not appropriate to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.**

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation. Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>.

Policy on Academic Consideration for a Medical/ Non-Medical Absence

- (a) **Consideration on Medical Grounds for assignments worth *less than 10%* of final grade: Consult Instructor Directly and Contact Academic Advising**

When seeking consideration on **medical grounds** for assignments worth *less than 10%* of the final course grade, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect documentation. If documentation is requested, the student will need to complete and submit the [Student Medical Certificate](#). The instructor may not collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation.

b) Medical Grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of final grade: Go Directly to Academic Advising

University Senate policy, which can be found at [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#) requires that all student requests for accommodation on medical grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of the final grade be made directly to the academic advising office of the home faculty (for Huron students, the “home faculty” is Huron), with supporting documentation in the form (minimally) of the Senate-approved Student Medical Certificate found at: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

The documentation is submitted in confidence and will not be shown to instructors. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. The instructor will not normally deny accommodation where appropriate medical documentation is in place and where the duration it describes aligns with the due date(s) of assignment(s). Before denying a request for accommodation on medical grounds, the instructor will consult with the Dean. The instructor’s decision is appealable to the Dean.

c) Consideration on Non-Medical Grounds: Consult Huron Support Services/Academic Advising, or email huronsss@uwo.ca

Students seeking academic consideration for a **non-medical** absence (e.g. varsity sports, religious, compassionate, or bereavement) will be required to provide appropriate documentation. All consideration requests must include a completed [Consideration Request Form](#). Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor.

Please review the full policy on Academic Consideration for medical and non-medical absence at: [accommodation_medical.pdf \(uwo.ca\)](#). Consult [Huron Academic Advising](#) at huronsss@uwo.ca for any further questions or information.

Support Services

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should email an Academic Advisor in Huron’s Student Support Services at

huronsss@uwo.ca. An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>.

Department Chairs, Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about individual programs. Contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/contact/faculty-staff-directory/>.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your workload is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you are considering reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines. Please refer to the Advising website, <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/academic-advising/> or review the list of official Sessional Dates on the Academic Calendar, available here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm>.

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP and/or Scholarship/Bursary eligibility.

Huron Student Support Services: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/> Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/>
Student Quick Reference Guide: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/#1> Academic Support & Engagement: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>
Huron University College Student Council: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/beyond-classroom/hucsc/>
Western USC: <http://westernusc.ca/your-services/#studentservices>

Wellness and Health Supports at Huron and Western

University students may encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. Huron offers a variety of services that are here to support your success and wellbeing. All Huron staff and faculty have received training on responding to disclosures of Gender-Based Sexual Violence (GBSV); students should know that the Community Safety Office is a resource for survivors, providing support and, if desired, guidance while referring them to the further supports that they may require. Please visit <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life-campus/student-services/wellness-safety> for more information or contact staff directly:

Wellness Services:

huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca Community

Safety Office: safety@huron.uwo.ca

Additional supports for Health and Wellness may be found and accessed at Western through, <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

Western Calendar - Policy Pages -
[Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)