

Anthropology 2284G
MOBILE PHONES AND THE INTERNET IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH
January 2018



Cell phone tower, Star Mountains (PNG)



Mobile phone vendors, Port Moresby (PNG)

Instructor: Dan Jorgensen
Lectures: M 12:30-1:30, W 1:30 – 2:30
Tutorials: W 12:30 – 1:30
Place: HSB 11
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Introduction:

By 2000 mobile phones and the internet had become features of the everyday life of millions of people in the developed world. By 2005, however, mobile phone subscriptions in the Global South surpassed those in the developed world, and this growth continues into the present. With the emergence of internet cafés and, more recently, smart phones, the internet has also become available to people in poor countries who could not afford personal computers. For the developing world these new "information and communications technologies," or ICTs, have leap-frogged weak or absent infrastructure at relatively low cost – a fact that has drawn the attention of governments, development planners and international agencies.

In this course we will examine an emerging body of work that considers what we have learned about the role of new ICTs in the developing world. We will look at improvements in livelihoods or the delivery of health services, but we will also look at the many other uses of new communications technologies in people's lives. In the process we will use a comparative approach to shed light on the social and cultural dimensions of technological

change and develop an appreciation for the diversity of ways in which ICTs have presented opportunities, risks, and puzzles for people living in low-income countries.

Learning Outcomes:

Students in this course will develop an understanding of:

- The role of new ICTs in economic development, poverty alleviation, and service delivery in the Global South;
- The relation between instrumental and social uses of new ICTs;
- The role of cultural differences in the adoption of new ICTs;
- How the role of new ICTs is affected by differences of gender and generation;
- The place of new ICTs in relations arising from transnational migration flows;
- The political impacts that new ICTs have in the developing world;
- Anthropology's contribution to a cross-cultural understanding of the role of ICTs in the contemporary world.

Course Prerequisites:

No prerequisites

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Weekly Tutorial Quizzes – (10%)

Meeting to discuss essays - between January 26 and February 9 (5%)

Midterm Exam – February 14 (20%)

Research Essay – March 14 (35%)

Final Examination (30%) – Date TBA

Please note these dates in your calendars. My general expectation is that you will attend lectures and tutorials, and prepare for them by doing the appropriate readings according to the topic sequence shown. If you have questions, ideas, or would just like to chat, I would encourage you to drop in during office hours (or, by making an appointment). Do not be shy about seeking advice or help with the course.

About tutorial quizzes

The first half of our two-hour class meetings will be devoted to tutorials. At the start of the tutorial there will be a brief quiz on the assigned readings for that date. I will count your ten best quizzes (at 1% each) towards your final marks.

About meeting to discuss essays

Each of you will be required to make an appointment to meet with me between January 26 and February 9 to discuss possible essay topics. This meeting will take approximately 20 minutes. Failure to schedule and keep such an appointment will reduce your course mark by 5%. My aim here is to begin discussions early and consider various approaches to the

topic or topics that interest you. Nothing written is required for these meetings (though it could help).

About research essays

The research essay will sum the outcome of your research on a topic related to the course. It must include a clear line of argument, drawing primarily from anthropological sources. The paper should be 8 to 12 pages in length, double-spaced, inclusive of bibliography. In general, your work will be evaluated on the basis of several factors, including:

- overall coherence (consistency, logical construction)
- insight and originality of thought
- grasp of key issues
- ability to link ideas with ethnographic material

You should arrive at a topic in consultation with me or one of the TAs. Further details about papers and format will be available in due course. *Please note that this course carries the essay designation, and submitting an essay is a mandatory requirement; if you do not submit an essay, you will not pass the course.*

For other course policies see the Appendix at the end of this outline

READINGS

There are two required books for this course in the bookstore:

Horst, Heather and Daniel Miller (2006). *The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication*. Oxford: Berg.

Burrell, Jenna (2012). *Invisible Users: Youth in the Internet Cafés of Urban Ghana*. Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press.

The remainder of the readings are available either via Weldon's periodicals holdings or the class OWL site.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Introduction: Anthropology and ICTs

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Introduction. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 1-18. London: Berg.

Burrell, Jenna (2012). Introduction. In: *Invisible Users*, pp. 1-28. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Donner, Jonathan (2008). Research approaches to mobile phone use in the developing world: a review of the literature. *The Information Society* 24(3):140-159.

Connectivity and access I

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Infrastructure; Locations. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 19-57. London: Berg.

Skuse, A. and T. Cousins (2007). Managing distance: rural poverty and the promise of communication in post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 42(2):185-207.

Video: [*We can connect you anywhere you are...*](#)

Connectivity and access II

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Possession; Link-up. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 58-103. London: Berg.

Slater, D. and Kwami, J. (2005). Embeddedness and escape: Internet and mobile use as poverty reduction strategies in Ghana. *Information Society Research Group (ISRG) Working Paper No. 4*.

Sey, A. (2011). "We use it different, different,": Making sense of trends in mobile phone use in Ghana." *New Media & Society* 13(3): 375-390.

Adoptions and appropriations

Kriem, M. S. (2009). Mobile telephony in Morocco: a changing sociality. *New Media & Society* 31(4): 617-632.

Tenhunen, S. (2008). Mobile technology in the village: ICTs, culture, and social logistics in India. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14:515-534.

Hobbis, G. (2017). The shifting moralities of mobile phones in Lau communicative ecologies (Solomon Islands). *Oceania* 87(2):173-187.

Burrell, Jenna (2012). Practical metaphysics and the efficacy of the internet. In: *Invisible Users*, pp. 105-131. Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press.

ICT4D: mobile phones and development I

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Coping; pressure. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 103-136. London: Berg.

Donner, Jonathan (2009). Blurring livelihoods and lives: the social uses of mobile phones and socioeconomic development. *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization* 4:91-101.

Spence, Randy and Matthew L. Smith (2010). ICT, development, and poverty reduction: five emerging stories. *Information Technologies and International Development* Volume 6, Special Edition, pp. 11-17.

Sreekumar, T.T. (2011). Mobile phones and the cultural ecology of fishing in Kerala, India. *The Information Society* 27:172-180.

Mahoney, D. (2016). Mobilities and risks in coastal Kenya: jumping scales vs. staying local. *PoLAR* 39(2):176-189.

Video: [Cellmoni](#)

ICT4D: mobile phones and development II

Burrell, Jenna (2012). Linking the internet to development in a world summit. In: *Invisible Users*, pp. 133-158. Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press.

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Welfare. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 137-158. London: Berg.

Chib, A. and V. Chen (2011). Midwives with mobiles: a dialectical perspective on gender arising from technology introduction in rural Indonesia. *New Media and Society* 13(3):486-501.

Shet, A. et al. (2010). Designing a mobile phone-based intervention to promote adherence to antiretroviral therapy in South India. *AIDS and Behavior* 14:716-720.

Bengtsson, L., et al. (2011). Improved response to disasters and outbreaks by tracking population movements with mobile phone network data: a post-earthquake geospatial study in Haiti. *PLoS Med* 8(8): e1001083. Doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001083

MIDTERM EXAM

***** READING WEEK*****

Migration, diasporas

Horst, Heather (2006). The blessings and burdens of communication: cell phones in Jamaican transnational fields. *Global Networks* 6(2):143-159.

Collins, G. (2009). Connected: exploring the extraordinary demand for telecoms services in post-collapse Somalia. *Mobilities* 4(2):203-223.

Johnson, M. (2013). Culture's calling: mobile phones, gender, and the making of an African migrant village in Lisbon. *Anthropological Quarterly* 86(1):163-190.

Uy-Tioco, C. (2007). Overseas Filipino workers and text messaging: reinventing transnational mothering, *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 21(2):253-265.

Gender, youth and ICTs I

Zainudeen, A., T. Iqbal and R. Samarajiva (2010). Who's got the phone? Gender and the use of the telephone at the bottom of the pyramid. *New Media and Society* 12(4):549-566.

Tenhunen, S. (2014). Mobile telephony, mediation, and gender in rural India. *Contemporary South Asia* 22(2):157-170.

Wheeler, Deborah (2007). Empowerment zones? Women, internet cafes, and life transformations in Egypt. *Information technologies and International Development* 4(2):89-104.

Nisa, Eva (2013). The internet subculture of Indonesian face-veiled women. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 16(3):241-255.

Gender, youth and ICTs II

Lowthers, M. (2014). Mapping uncertain mobility: migrant female sex workers, gender, and mobile phone use in Kenya. Paper presented to the CASCA annual meetings, Toronto.

Kusimba, S., et al. (2016). Hearholds of mobile money in western Kenya. *Economic Anthropology* 2016(3):266-279.

Huang, J.Q. (2017). Digital aspirations: 'wrong number' mobile phone relationships and experimental ethics among women entrepreneurs in rural Bangladesh. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* DOI: 10.1111/1467-9655.12754 .

Kraemer, Daniela (2017). Do you have a mobile? Mobile phone practices and the refashioning of social relationships in Port Vila town. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 28:39-55.

Gender, youth and ICTs III

Archambault, J.S. (2013). Cruising through uncertainty: cell phones and the politics of everyday display and disguise in Inhambane, Mozambique. *American Ethnologist* 40:88-101.

Burrell, Jenna (2012). Youth and the indeterminate space of the internet café. In: *Invisible Users*, pp. 29-54. Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press.

Barendregt, B. (2008). Sex, cannibals, and the language of cool: Indonesian tales of the phone and modernity. *The Information Society: An International Journal* 24(3): 160-170.

Pype, Katrien (2017). Brokers of belonging: elders and intermediaries in Kinshasa's mobile phone culture. In: *Everyday Media Culture in Africa: Audiences and Users*, W. Willems and W. Mano, eds., pp. 198-219. London: Routledge.

Video: *Digicel flash mob, Vision City*

Uncertain communications, shady dealings

Archambault, J. S. (2011). Breaking up "because of the phone" and the transformative potential of information in Southern Mozambique. *New Media & Society* 13(3): 444-456.

Burrell, Jenna (2012). Ghanaians online and the innovation of 419 scams, *and* Rumor and the morality of the internet. In: *Invisible Users*, pp. 58-104. Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press.

Jorgensen, D. (2014). *Gesfaia*: mobile phones, Phone Friends, and anonymous intimacy in contemporary Papua New Guinea. Paper presented at the CASCA meetings, Toronto.

Pype, Katrien (2016). '[Not] talking like a Motorola': mobile phone practices and politics of masking and unmasking in postcolonial Kinshasa. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 22:633-652.

Popular politics and the public sphere

Rafael, Vicente (2003). The cell phone and the crowd: messianic politics in the contemporary Philippines. *Public Culture* 15(3):399-425.

Khondker, Habibul H. (2011). The role of the new media in the Arab Spring. *Globalizations* 8(5):675-679.

Finau, G., et al. (2014). Social media and e-democracy in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Paper delivered at the Twentieth Americas Conference on Information Systems, Savannah, GA.

Tufekci, Z., (2014). Social movements and governments in the digital age: evaluating a complex landscape. *Journal of International Affairs* 68(1):1-18.

ICTs and expanded worlds

Archambault, J.S. (2012). 'Travelling while sitting down': mobile phones, mobility and the communication landscape in Inhambane, Mozambique. *Africa* 82(3):393-412.

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Evaluation. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 159-181. London: Berg.

Burrell, Jenna (2012). Becoming visible. In: *Invisible Users*, pp. 183-208. Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press.

Burrell, Jenna and Ken Anderson (2008). 'I have great desires to look beyond my world': trajectories of information and communication technology use among Ghanaians living abroad. *New Media & Society*, 10(2):203-224.

Jorgensen, Dan (2017) Toby and "the Mobile System": apocalypse and salvation in PNG's wireless network. In: *The Moral Economy of Mobile Phones in the Pacific*, R. Foster and H. Horst, eds., Ch 3. Canberra: ANU Press.

Appendix: Course Policies and Student Responsibilities

Deadlines and missed exams – medical accommodation

Occasionally illness or other medical issues make it impossible to meet deadlines or to take exams as scheduled; in such cases adequate documentation must be submitted to Academic Counseling of your home faculty, according to the terms of the Senate policy regarding medical accommodation as specified at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Providing such documentation is submitted, reasonable effort will be made to accommodate your situation. If such documentation is not provided, I will impose a penalty of 5% per day (including Saturday and Sunday) on late assignments; missed exams will be given a mark of zero. Note that if you are late in handing in an assignment, it is your responsibility to ensure that I receive it.

Essay Requirement

As stated above, this is an essay course and the essay is a mandatory component for this course. If you do not submit an essay, you cannot pass the course.

Use of Electronic Devices (including laptops)

No electronic devices of any kind (including but not limited to cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, other MP3 players, voice recorders, etc.) will be allowed during tests and examinations. Laptops may only be used during lectures for note taking or other course-related purposes; cell phones, iPods, MP3 players and other such devices are not to be used during class. Voice recorders (digital or tape) are not allowed without express permission.

Plagiarism and Scholastic 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:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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>). Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Support Services

Registrar's Services: <http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>

Student Development Services: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>