

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

(Sample outline - tentative only)



Cell phone tower, Star Mountains (PNG)



Mobile phone vendors, Port Moresby (PNG)

Instructor: Dan Jorgensen

Lectures: TBA

Tutorials: TBA

Place: TBA

Offices: TBA

Office Hours: M 1:30-3:30; Th 10:30-11:30

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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 communications technologies in economic development, poverty alleviation, and service delivery in the Global South;
- The relation between instrumental and social uses of new technologies;
- The role of cultural differences in the adoption of new communications technologies;
- How the role of new communications technologies is affected by differences of gender and generation;
- The place of new communications technologies in relations arising from transnational migration flows;
- The political impacts that new communications technologies have in the developing world;
- Anthropology's contribution to a cross-cultural understanding of the role of communications technologies 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 TBA (20%)

Research Essay – March TBA (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

NOTE: BOOK LIST IS TENTATIVE ONLY

DO NOT PURCHASE UNTIL THE COURSE OUTLINE IS FINALIZED

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; possession. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 19-80. London: Berg.

Donner, Jonathan (2007) The rules of beeping: exchanging messages via intentional "missed calls" on mobile phones. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13:1-22.

Burrell, Jenna (2010) Evaluating shared access: social equality and the circulation of mobile phones in rural Uganda. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 15:230-250.

Smith, D.J. (2006) Cell phones, social inequality and contemporary culture in Nigeria. *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 40(3):496-523.

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

Connectivity and access II

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

Horst, H. and D. Miller (2006). Link-up. In: *The Cell Phone*, pp. 81-103. 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.

Best, Michael, et al. (2010). Uses of mobile phones in post-conflict Liberia. *Information Technologies and International Development* 6(2):91-108.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

Morawczynski, O. and M. Pickens (2009). Poor people using mobile financial services: observations on customer usage and impact from M-PESA. Washington: CGAP Brief (WB paper).

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

Video: [Cellmoni](#)

ICT4D: mobile phones and development II

Veeraraghavan, R., et al. (2009). Warana unwired: replacing PCs with mobile phones in a rural sugarcane collective. *Information Technologies and International Development* 5(1):81-95.

Jorgensen, Dan (2016). Nancy Sullivan, mobile phones, and optimism when the chips are down. Paper presented at the meetings of the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis.

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

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.

Lindley, Anna (2007). The early morning phone call: remittances from a refugee diaspora perspective. Working Paper No. 47, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford.

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.

Gender and ICTs

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.

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.

Youth and ICTs

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.

Batson-Savage, Tanya (2007). 'Hol' Awn Mek a Answer mi Cellular': sex, sexuality and the cellular phone in urban Jamaica. *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 21:239-251.

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.

McIntosh, J. (2010). Mobile phones and Mipoho's prophecy: The powers and dangers of flying language. *American Ethnologist* 37(2): 337-353.

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.

Tenhunen, S. (2011). Culture, conflict, and translocal communication: mobile technology and politics in rural West Bengal, India. *Ethnos* 76(3):398-420.

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

Logan, Sarah (2012). *Rausim!* Digital politics in Papua New Guinea. *SSGM Discussion Paper 2012/9*. Canberra: State, Society and Governance in Melanesia, Australian National University.

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.

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

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

Prerequisite checking - the student’s responsibility

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will 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.

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/>