Keywords in South Asian Public Culture
(PGSP11290)
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University of Edinburgh
Undergraduate School of Social and Political Science
Social Anthropology
2018/19, Semester 2

Lecture: Friday, 13:10 – 15:00
Place: 1 George Square, G.8 Gaddum LT

Tutorial: Friday, 10:00 – 10:50
Place: Appleton Tower, M1

Course Organisers:

Dr Jacob Copeman jacob.copeman@ed.ac.uk (5.03 CMB)
Dr Lotte Hoek lotte.hoek@ed.ac.uk (5.01 CMB)

Lecturers' Guidance and Feedback Hours TBC – please check their staff profile pages

Summary

This course provides students with a solid understanding of important contemporary debates in the study of South Asian public culture. Introducing key themes through critical and current ethnographic work, this course focuses on the tangible public forms that global cultural flows, political economies and social formations take. This emphasis on contemporary public culture allows a concrete consideration of abstract and changing social and cultural forces that define the region. The course is informed by the existing concerns in the anthropology of South Asia but focuses on areas largely neglected by it. Inspired by Raymond Williams' 'keywords' approach to culture and society, this course examines the subcontinent from unexpected angles by gathering key ethnographic readings under conceptual keywords to be explored empirically and theoretically. The course approaches the region as an integrated socio-cultural whole, rather than a set of self-contained nation-states.
## Course Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Keyword</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18.01.2019</td>
<td>Public Culture, An Introduction (LH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.01.2019</td>
<td>Film (LH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>01.02.2019</td>
<td>Superstition (JC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>08.02.2019</td>
<td>Duplicate (JC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.02.2019</td>
<td>Blood (JC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.02.2019</td>
<td>No Teaching – Festival of Creative Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>01.03.2019</td>
<td>Left (LH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>08.03.2019</td>
<td>Name (JC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.03.2019</td>
<td>Guru (JC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.03.2019</td>
<td>Sex (LH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>29.03.2019</td>
<td>Colour (LH)</td>
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### Learning and Teaching Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar/Tutorial Hours</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed and Independent Learning</td>
<td>166</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
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### Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1500 word Short Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000 word Long Essay</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Thoroughly and critically understand key debates in the anthropology of South Asia and South Asian public culture and synthesise these and new developments in the field.
2. Have a solid grip on sophisticated theoretical approaches to South Asian ethnography and be familiar with its main themes, theories and principles.
3. Understand how important anthropological themes crystallize in contemporary ethnographic explorations of the region.
4. Approach South Asia theoretically and empirically as an integrated socio-cultural and historical space, rather than as made up of radically separated nation-states.
5. Critically reflect on and write about South Asian ethnography and popular culture.

Christmas readings (also relevant throughout the course)

* Dwyer, Rachel (Ed.) (n.d.) Keywords in South Asian Studies
  https://www.soas.ac.uk/south-asia-institute/keywords/

Further Relevant Texts

* Jeffrey, Craig & John Harriss (2014) Keywords for Modern India. Oxford: OUP.
* Williams, R. (1985). Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society. Oxford: OUP.

**Weekly readings = both seminar texts plus any 2 lecture readings.**

**Week 1: Public Culture, An Introduction** (18 January 2019; LH)

**Lecture**


Seminar


Week 2: FILM (25 January 2019; LH)
Lecture


Seminar

Week 3: SUPERSTITION (01 February 2019; JC)

Lecture

Seminar

Week 4: DUPLICATE (08 February 2019; JC)

Lecture

Seminar


Week 5: BLOOD (15 February 2019; JC)


Seminar


Week 6: FLEXIBLE TEACHING WEEK (22 February 2019)

Week 7: LEFT (01 March 2019; LH)


**Seminar**


**Week 8: NAME** (08 March 2019; JC)

**Lecture**


**Seminar**


**Week 9: GURU** (15 March 2019; JC)

**Lecture**


Seminar


Week 10: SEX (22 March 2019; LH)

Lecture


* Das, Veena (2007) Life and words: Violence and the descent into the ordinary. University of California Press. (Chapter 2 ‘The Figure of the Abducted Woman: The Citizen as Sexed’ 18-37)


Seminar

Week 11: COLOUR (29 March 2019; LH)
Lecture

Seminar
ASSESSMENT

You will be assessed by two pieces of writing.

(1)

The first piece of writing, due on 14 February by 12 noon, will be a short 1,500 word essay (worth 30%) for which you are required to find and discuss a piece of South Asian public culture (images from Tasveer Ghar, articles from Caravan, a South Asian film or magazine for example) and analyse this in an effective and accessible manner. This piece of work emphasises creative scholarly work and will look at innovative analysis, accessible writing and creative thinking.

(2)

The second piece of assessment, due on 11 April by 12 noon, is a more formal 4,000 word essay (worth 70%) on a topic addressing key debates in the anthropology of South Asia and South Asian public culture, and must be agreed with the course organiser. This may concern either a general approach to the theorisation of a particular theme or debate, or an investigation in a particular regional context. You will be expected to show initiative in going beyond the set readings for the course. The development of bibliographic and literature skills will be emphasised.

For Assessment requirements you should consult the Taught MSc Student Handbook 2018-19. This is available on Learn.

Requirements included are:

- Coursework submissions
- Extension request
- Penalties
- Plagiarism

Submission and Return of Coursework

Coursework is submitted online using our electronic submission system, ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy of your work.

Marked coursework, grades and feedback will be returned to you via ELMA. You will not receive a paper copy of your marked course work or feedback.
We undertake to return all coursework within 15 working days of submission. This time is needed for marking, moderation, second marking and input of results.

Feedback for coursework 1 will be returned online via ELMA by 07 March 2019.

Feedback for coursework 2 will be returned online via ELMA by 02 May 2019.

**University Email**
The University's official means of communication with you is via your University email account. You should check your University email within 24 hours of an ELMA submission, as well as regular checks (at least three times a week) during semester time, as the Course Organiser and/or Course Administrator may attempt to contact you.

**External Examiner**
The External Examiner for the course is Dr. Arnar Arnason, University of Aberdeen.