Digital Video Ethnography:
Cultural Interpretation with New (Social) Media

19:2075

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Description

In this course, we explore the role that digital video and social media technologies play in the scholarly research toolkit. Video accounts provide researchers with vivid and complex representational forms for presenting what happens in continually evolving learning settings. They also provide researchers and research audiences with opportunities to actively and repetitively review what happened in the research site as a discourse community, refining interpretations with each viewing. The use of emerging video technologies provides ways to tell different stories—stories co-constructed with both participants and stakeholders in the research site without loosing the authorial voice of the video researcher.

This course delves into an examination of the challenges of using digital video tools. We explore what is available and what is missing when technologies become windows into learning environments. Students not only wrestle with how to reach their conclusions from this rich data, but they also learn how make meanings from collaboratively constructed digital video datasets. In doing so, they examine how video analysis leads to configurational validity, a form of validity that relies on finding patterns from the interpretation of layers of video and commentary data added by stakeholders.

The course will be of interest to all levels of researchers involved in using digital video as an investigative environment in their studies. Media artists and designers are invited to explore the impact of an aesthetic media as creators for a range of media installations. Cultural and media theorists will greatly contribute to the critique of interpreting visual representations. Space permitting, interested faculty members are welcome to participate.

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