The School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies  
CDNS 3700A  
Cultural Traditions in Canada  
January 7 – April 7

Tuesdays 6:05-8:55pm  
SA501

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Office Hours: By appointment.

Course Description:

In this year's offering of CDNS 3700A, we will consider how and why cultural traditions come to be negotiated through the Canadian documentary tradition and the interrelated production of the *Historica Heritage Minutes*. We will explore this in the context of the ongoing (and seemingly endless) project of Canadian nation building. Of interest is how the fears and desires of this project manifest in the realm of cultural production and the role the *Minutes* play with respect to: 1) perpetuating myths, narratives and traditions that foster a sense of belonging, identity and *Canadianness*; 2) promoting a national culture imbued with history and tradition; and 3) educating Canadians about this shared heritage.

We begin by reviewing key terms and concepts that will inform our analyses over the term and apply these to a critical examination of the Canadian nation-building focusing on how cultural policy and cultural production serves this project. We will explore both the application and implications of the above using the *Heritage Minutes* as a case study over the remainder of the course.

Working in groups, students will demonstrate their critical understanding of the themes, concepts, and theories discussed in class through an assignment requiring creative and collaborative knowledge production. This project involves the design, production and screening of their own *Heritage Minute* at the end of term.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS:

Week 1 – January 7

Course Introduction...
- Overview of course outline as well as themes, concepts and materials.
- What are some examples of cultural traditions from international, national, regional and local perspectives. What initial assumptions or insights can we draw about cultural traditions?

https://www.historicacanada.ca/heritageminutes

Week 2 – January 14

Unpacking Key Terms and Concepts

Themes:
- What do we mean we speak of terms like representation, culture, tradition and heritage in the context of the nation state and the study of Canada?
- What are some of the ways we can approach and unpack the subject matter?

Readings:
http://faculty.washington.edu/ellingsn/Hobsbawm_Inventing_Traditiions.pdf


Week 3 – January 21

Canadian Cultural Policy and Nation Building

Themes:
- What is cultural policy and what role does it play in the Canadian context of nation building, creating/protecting cultural traditions and identity formation?
- What does it say about the fears and desires informing cultural nationalism in Canada?
- What are some of the impacts, positive or negative, of Canadian cultural policies?

Readings:


Week 4 – January 28

Before the Minutes: The Canadian Documentary Tradition, Hinterland Who’s Who, NFB Vignettes, Body Break

- Why are documentaries and Canada’s documentary tradition important in terms of the nation state?
- How do you view HWW and the Vignettes in terms of the educational role assumed by the state’s cultural institutions?
- Besides education, what are other potential objectives of such programming?
- Who is the intended audience? Where is the intended audience setting? Why is this significant?
- What are the narratives, sensibilities and traditions being conveyed in these texts (i.e. what do they tell you about Canada and what was deemed to be important to tell Canadians about Canada at the time of their production)?
- In terms of form and narration, how do these texts compare or contrast?
- How might these predecessors inform the Heritage Minutes?

Screenings:
- National Film Board. Canada Vignettes. Selections. e.g.: https://www.nfb.ca/film/canada_vignettes_news_canada

Readings:


Week 5 – February 4

The Heritage Minutes (pt.1 – 1991-2005)
Themes:
- How do the Minutes compare and contrast with the predecessors discussed in the previous class?
- What are some of the cultural traditions being exemplified in these texts?
- How do the Minutes conform to, or reflect, the larger themes concerning cultural nationalism, national project and identity formation considered thus far?
- What are some of the formal, visual, narrative and production elements that come to characterize, or can be attributed to, the Minutes?

Screenings:

Readings:


Week 6 – February 11
Heritage Minutes (pt.2 2012-present)

- In what ways have the Minute's formal or narrative elements changed over time?
- What are the factors potentially contributing to these changes?
- What are some of the cultural traditions being exemplified or renegotiated in these texts?
- Contrasting the minutes described in the previous class, are there insights we can draw with respect to course themes considered thus far?

Screenings:
Readings:


Critical Reflection Due

February 18 – Reading Week – No Class

Week 7 – February 25
The Minutes (pt.3 Making fun of the Minutes)

Themes:

• How do parody, satire and subversion work to critique (or compliment) the goals/objectives, as well as the narratives/myths produced through the Heritage Minutes, and the Canadian national project more generally?
• What are the cultural traditions being spoofed or challenged in these texts?
• How does this relate to our earlier discussions concerning cultural nationalism, collective memory and the Canadian documentary tradition?
• What makes parody, etc... successful?

Screenings:
Various selections on YouTube, e.g.:

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FemkPk3R2JU
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHYMdhgCo-k
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7OxiEu57EQ
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFhZHEn5BDE&pbjreload=10
Readings:


Group work: proposal development

**Week 8 – March 3**

*The Minutes (pt. 4 Influence and Reach)*

**Themes:**

- Why is corporate nationalism so prevalent in Canada? What role does heritage play in this regard?
- What are some of the cultural traditions being exemplified in these texts?
- In what ways has the Heritage Minute model influenced other political and corporate objectives and tactics?
- What does this say about the overall impact of the Minutes within Canadian culture?

**Screenings:**

  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QINv6rebyTU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QINv6rebyTU)
- The Hudson's Bay Company. *We Were Made for This.* (2010)  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLsFkZKj63U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLsFkZKj63U)
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ae-UZyNgzM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ae-UZyNgzM)

Readings:


Group work: proposal development

**Week 9 – March 10**

**The Pitch**

- Groups will pitch their proposed heritage minute concepts to the instructor.

**Week 10 – March 17**

**Storyboarding Presentations**

- Each group will present a summary and rationale of their chosen Minute and provide a detailed production outline to the class.
- Class and instructor will provide feedback
Week 11 – March 24
Production Week 1
• Groups are expected to use this dedicated class time for producing their minute. This should include script development and production design. The instructor will be available for consultation in the classroom. Groups will be required to submit, via email, a brief summary of the work undertaken during class time.

Week 12 – March 31
Production Week 2
• Groups are expected to use this dedicated class time for production. The instructor will be available for consultation in the classroom. Groups will be required to submit, via email, a brief summary of the work undertaken during class time.

Week 13 – April 7
Heritage Minutes 3700 Film Festival
• Groups will present their Heritage Minutes in the final class.

Course Evaluation

Participation (15%):
Students are not only expected to regularly attend class, but to make a meaningful contribution within the class environment. As a seminar-structured course, this means actively participating in classroom discussions and activities; the success of the class is directly correlated to the level of engagement with course readings and topics and demonstrated through informed, considered, and lively discussion each week. In other words, all of us are responsible for the successful outcome of the class as a whole.

Heritage Minute Critical Reflection (25%):
• For this assignment, students will submit (online via CULearn) a 4-6pp. close reading of a Heritage Minute of their own choosing (preferably one that has not already been screened in class). In this submission, you will offer your reflection of the Minute critically informed by course content, themes and readings. You should include a general summary of the Minute before turning to critical observations regarding formal elements (i.e. how the Minute is produced); narrative elements (i.e. what the story is and how it’s being told); and then offer your analysis of how the minute relates to themes and topics discussed thus far in the course, and supported by references to course readings. A bibliography or works cited is required.
Due: February 11

Main Assignment: The CDNS 3700 Heritage Minute Film Festival

(This assignment is divided into three parts: the initial pitch, the design presentation and the production)

The Pitch (10%)

- In class on March 10, groups will pitch three different concepts for a heritage minute to the instructor. Groups will present a critically informed rationale (i.e. informed through course themes and readings) for each of their proposed Minutes as well as a brief explanation of how each would be produced. A visual outline (1-2 pp.) will be required. The instructor will work with the group and provide feedback and guidance so that they can make a final decision on which Minute they plan to produce.
- Evaluation will be based on the level of preparation, care, collaboration, and forethought demonstrated in each of the proposed Minutes. This is also an opportunity for the group to bring any concerns or questions to the attention of the instructor.
- In terms of tone and content, groups are welcome to consider the various approaches discussed in class (e.g. as "straight", alternative, subversive, comedic, parody or satire provided that the chosen form is critically unpacked when presented).

Storyboarding Presentation (20%)

- Following the pitch, on March 17, groups will then present the production design or storyboard of their chosen Minute to the class. Here you will present (ideally, using visual aids) an informed rationale and structured outline for your Heritage Minute (i.e. what you are going to do, how you are plan to do it, who is going to do what, scene sketches/summaries, and the critical statement you will be making through the production). Feedback will be provided by the instructor and other classmates following your presentation.
- Again, evaluation will be based on the level of organization of the production schedule and elements, clarity of both narrative and critical commentary, and the collaborative effort demonstrated by the group as a whole.

Production (30%):

- Based upon feedback and commentary provided over the design process, groups will then produce their Minute. While the high-end production values associated with the actual Minutes are not expected, consistent emulation of their visual, formal, and narrative elements will be. At the end of the term, on April 7, groups will screen their Minute in front of the class; they will provide a brief 10-15
minute discussion that explains their narrative rationale; division of labour, course materials, themes and concepts informing their narrative and creative choices; their experiences with the production process including unexpected setbacks and outcomes; and, critical insights gained through the process overall.

- A 2-3pp. synopsis of the discussion cited above must also be submitted to the instructor at the outset of the screening.
- Groups are welcome to use their own recording equipment although, a/v equipment can be reserved through Instructional Media Services.
  https://carleton.ca/ims/classroom-technology-support-ver1/equipment-reservations/

Academic Regulations

University Deadlines:
Final submission of assignments is governed by the deadlines imposed by the University. All assignments are due no later than the deadlines set by the University Senate for each semester. Instructors are not allowed to grant extensions beyond these dates. Students who cannot meet these deadlines must request a deferral from the Registrar’s Office. University deadlines are as follows: Winter Term 2020 Deadline: April 7

For medical reasons, students must produce a Doctor’s Certificate. A doctor’s certificate does not allow for an unlimited extension. The extension is limited to the length of the period of illness specified in the doctor’s certificate. For legal reasons such as jury duty, court appearance, imprisonment or deportation, students must produce official documentation from legal authorities.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as the passing off of anyone else’s work as one’s own. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has enacted that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: a) directly copies more than one or two sentences of another’s written work without acknowledgment; or b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgement; or c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student’s own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student’s own, would contribute to the merit of his or her work.

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary Letters of Accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for
alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton’s Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.