The aim of this MA-level seminar is to explore changing ethnographic treatments of audio-visual and digital media in various Middle Eastern contexts. Media is broadly defined to include a range of expressive cultural forms. Particular attention will be devoted to the ways in which work on contemporary Middle Eastern media draws from and contributes to trends in social theory and cultural studies. We trace the rise of national television and film industries, move onto recent work on new media such as satellite television and video games, and culminate with cultural production during the 2011-2013 Arab uprisings. Sessions will include occasional film or television screenings, introducing students to significant indigenous works that exemplify themes discussed. Assessment is based on three extended review essays and class participation. Students will also be asked to present brief, critical presentations on reading assignments.

**Requirements**

Blackboard is an essential feature of this course. You will need it to download reading assignments and to access other class information. If you have not already done so, please open your CUNY portal account. This gives you access to our class on Blackboard. For technical assistance, contact the IT Help Desk 718-960-1111.

Reading, Screening and Discussion. Completing assigned readings and screenings, and discussing them in class each week are basic requirements for this course.
2 Reading Response Essays. Essay questions will be handed out and posted on Blackboard in Assignments two weeks before their due date. Essays must be 5-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, and properly, consistently referenced (any citation format is acceptable). They are intended to demonstrate completion and comprehension of the assigned readings and screening; no outside sources may be used. **Plagiarism in any form, including internet downloads, will result in automatic failure and notification of the appropriate college authorities.**

1 Research Paper (15-20 pages). Topic must be discussed and approved well in advance of the end of semester.

Papers must be emailed to <christa.salamandra@lehman.cuny.edu> by midnight on the due date.

1 Class Presentation. Each week one student will be responsible for a critical summary of the reading that proposes questions for class discussion.

Essays and participation are weighted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response essay 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response essay 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation and presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
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**January 28: Introduction**

Screening

**February 4: Motion Pictures, Colonial Struggle, Emerging Nationalisms**

Required reading:


Optional reading:
Armbrust, Walter


February 11: Guest Lecture by Prof. Vit Sisler, “Digital Heroes: Identity Construction in Iranian Video Games”
Required reading:
Sisler, Vit

Souri, Helga Tawil

February 20: (Re)Imaginings: Nostalgia and Nasser’s Egypt
Required reading:
Gordon, Joel

Shafik, Viola

Stone, Christopher

Optional Reading:
McAlister, Melanie

February 25: Israel, Palestine and the Cinema of Dispossession
Required Reading:
Bardenstein, Carol

Salti, Rasha

Shohat, Ella

Optional Reading:
Gertz, Nurith and George Kheifi


Optional screening:

March 4: Television Drama of and Beyond the Nation
Required reading:
Abu-Lughod, Lila

Salamandra, Christa

Salamandra, Christa

Optional Reading:
Armbrust, Walter

Screening: selection of TV drama clips

**March 11: Islams and Secularisms**
Required reading:
Armbrust, Walter

Moll, Yasmin
http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=732


Winegar, Jessica

Optional reading:
Salamandra, Christa

van Nieuwkerk, Karin


**March 18: Recent Realisms in Cinema and Television**
Required Reading:
Abu-Lughod, Lila

Naficy, Hamid
Salamandra, Christa

Optional reading:
Niazi, Sarah


(March 25, April 1 no classes)

April 8: News Media, Documentary and Reality Television
Required reading:
al-Abdalla Yakoub, Hala

Amiralay, Omar

Kraidy, Marwan

Soueid, Mohammad

Zayani, Mohamed

Optional reading:
Wedeen, Lisa

April 15: Debating Cultural Intimacy, part 1: Arab Americans

Required reading:
Shryock, Andrew

Mandell, Joan

Shryock, Andrew

Screening: *Tales from Arab Detroit: Abu Zayd Comes to America.* USA 1995. Joan Mandell and Sally Howell, directors.

*The Arab American Comedy Tour.* 2006 USA. Ahmed Ahmed, Dean Obeidallah and Maysoon Zayid, directors.

April 22: Debating Cultural Intimacy, Part 2: Gender, the Politics of Representation, and Neocolonialism

Required Readings:
Abu-Lughod, Lila and Maya Mikdashi

Tamer Nafar, Suhell Nafar, and Mahmood Jrery (DAM)
http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9181/dam-responds_on-tradition-and-the-anti-politics-of

Abu-Lughod, Lila and Maya Mikdashi
http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/9249/honoring-solidarity-during-contentious-debates.-.-

Optional reading:
Abu-Lughod, Lila.
Khader, Nehad


**April 29: Students’ Choice**
Reading TBA

**May 6: The Arab Uprisings, part 1: Egypt and Beyond**
Required reading:
Aouragh, Miriyam and Anne Alexander
2011 “The Egyptian Experience: Sense and Nonsense of the Internet Revolution.”
http://ijoc.org/ojs/index.php/ijoc/article/view/1191/610

Kraidy, Marwan

Schielke, Samuli and Jessica Winegar
http://www.merip.org/mer/mer265/writing-walls-egypt

Wilkins, Karin Gwinn

Optional Reading:
Boëx, Cécile

Della Ratta, Donatella
http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/8125/syrian-hands-raised_user-generated-creativity-betw

Peterson, Mark Allen
2011 “Egypt’s Media Ecology in a Time of Revolutions,” *Arab Media and Society*, 14
http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=770
May 13: The Arab Uprisings. Part 2: Precursors and Aftermaths
Required reading:
Armbrust, Walter
2012 “Dreaming of Counterrevolution: Rami al-I'tisami and the Pre-Negation of Protest,”
*Cinema Journal* 52(1): 143-147


Kartoussieh, Karim

Salamandra, Christa
2012 “Prelude to an Uprising: Syrian Fictional television and Socio-Political Critique,”
*Jadaliyya*, 17 May.