

**GENA2212**  
**Debates in Human Values**

Lecture: Wednesdays, 10:30am – 12:15pm

Venue: Tsang Shiu Tim (UCA 104)

Instructor: Dr FAMING, Manynooch

Office hour: Thurs.: 10-11am (via Zoom); by appointment (F2F)

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### **Course Description**

This course discusses the ongoing issues under modernity and globalized world context. Within these contexts people share similar ‘values’, such as education, economy, freedom, sentiment, taste, beliefs, etc. that one holds to ‘oneself’ and/or to/against ‘others’. The course also leads students to discuss how and why we have come to hold certain values. Through a socio-cultural perspective, the course introduces several fundamental themes and debates in human values. The course provides no black or white answers and/or values but to provide students with analytical skills to these debates.

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a reflexive skill in understanding human values;
2. Critically reflect and self-reflect values in one’s own and/or a cross-cultural context;
3. Apply key theoretical concepts to analyze values in one’s own context and/or cross-culturally.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **1. Participations**

- |                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| A. Class Participation: | 20% |
| B. Group Debates:       | 40% |

#### **2. Independent Projects:**

- |                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| C. One Reflexive Memo: | 20% |
| D. Final Paper:        | 20% |

## Course Assessments details

### A. Class Participation (including Blackboard responses) 20%

- **Discussion:** Share your thoughts and questions in class, Volunteer answers to others' questions, Volunteer to respond to the weekly presentation's debates
- **Commenting on group's presentation**  
Students are expected to contribute to commenting to the groups' debate presentation.

### B. Group Presentation 40%

You will be assigned into a group of 3-4. A debate presentation will be in form of two teams discussing issues of our weekly topic. **Please submit your presentation file to me either before class or by the end of your presentation.**

### C. Reflexive memo 20%

Each student will submit a reflection of 1,000 words. You will reflect on the following options (choose **ONE** only):

1. One or two of the readings listed in this course (e.g., W1 to W12). (*A few samples of reflection are available on Blackboard*). **(Due Week: 8 by 5pm)**. Students can read and reflect the reading(s) from W7 or W12 but the due date remains unchanged.
2. One or two values from the cases discussed during the class **(Due Week: 10 by 5pm)**.
3. Your debate presentation. **(Due one week after your presentation; i.e., before class of the following class meeting)**. For example, if students' debate is week 4 class, the submission time is 10am. of W5 class.

### D. Final Essay (Choose ONE only) 20%

1. Two pieces of the above reflexive memos. That is, if students have submitted 2 of the items in *section C* by the due dates, students are not required to submit the final essay as listed below.
2. A paper of 1,000 words that draws on careful reading of and conversation with class themes and texts to critically analyze and advance debates in human values. **Due Wednesday, 15 December 2021, 5pm.**

### E. Notes on Submission of written assignments

All written assignments is not meant to give definite answers or judgments to the debates, but to demonstrate students' intellectual skills in approaching the debates.

Note 1: Submit a soft copy (with the signed VeriGuide receipt) to Blackboard.

Note 2: Save your final paper in **Word format**, and scan your signed **VeriGuide receipt into PDF** format. The final paper and the VeriGuide receipt should be uploaded as two separate files.

Note 4: Please name your final paper file **2212Final Paper Last name First name (assignment title)**, and your VeriGuide receipt file **2212VeriGuide Last name First name**.

The both reflections and final papers are to be **double-spaced and in 12-point font, Word Format. No PDF format**. Please follow the Anthropology Department citation style at [http://arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~ant/en/dept\\_thesis\\_style.php](http://arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~ant/en/dept_thesis_style.php). Late assignments will be penalized. If for valid reasons you need to have your assignment re-scheduled, please be sure to make a timely request.

The university adopts a policy of zero tolerance on plagiarism. Any use of another person's words or ideas, taken directly or paraphrased, without citing the source is plagiarism. This includes taking material from the Internet without citing the website. Please consult the university's policy on academic honesty at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

Students are required by university policy to submit soft copies of all papers to VeriGuide. Please check the website [www.cuhk.edu.hk/veriguide](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/veriguide) for information on how to submit papers through VeriGuide. Please submit a soft copy of your final paper (Word document) together with the signed VeriGuide receipt page

## Weekly schedule

### Week 1 (Sep. 8) – Introduction:

Marvin Harris. 2016 (1989). “Was there Life without Chiefs?” in *Conformity and Conflict: Reading in cultural anthropology*, 15<sup>th</sup> edition, edited by James Spradley and David McCurdy, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 238-245.

Mathews, G., 2020. “An Anthropologist at the Hong Kong Protests.” *American anthropologist*, 122(2), pp.391–393.

### Week 2 (Sep. 15) – Human rights: a credo or common resources?

Alain Supiot. 2003. “The labyrinth of human rights: Credo or Common Resources?” *New Left Review*, May June 2003, pp. 118-136

Abu-Lughod, L. 2013. The New Common Sense. In *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (pp. 54-80). Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: Harvard University Press.

### Week 3 (Sep. 22) – **Public Holiday—No Class.**

### Week 4 (Sep. 29) -- Why do people love their country? Do they?

Aleksander Hemon, “Door to Door,” *The New Yorker*, 15 October 2001, p. 170.

Kenzaburo Oe, “For a Lousy Battery,” *The New Yorker*, 15 October 2001, p. 123.

Anchee Min, “Footprints on the Flag,” *The New Yorker*, 15 October 2001, p. 181.

Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities* (1991). “Introduction,” pp.1-7; “Census, Map, Museum,” pp. 163-185.

#### Optional:

HKFP, 31 July 2021. “Olympic celebration sees Hong Kong police make first arrest under controversial national anthem law”, <https://hongkongfp.com/2021/07/31/olympic-celebration-sees-hong-kong-police-make-first-arrest-under-controversial-national-anthem-law/> (accessed 1 Sep 2021)

HKFP, 29 July 2021. “Internet backlash against Fila sportswear after Hong Kong badminton player seen drenched in sweat” reported by Rhoda Kwan, <https://hongkongfp.com/2021/07/29/internet-backlash-against-fila-sportswear-after-hong-kong-badminton-player-seen-drenched-in-sweat/> (accessed 1 Sep 2021)

### Week 5 (Oct. 6) – Should we talk about ‘Black Lives Matter’ or ‘All Lives Matter’?

Brook Bobb. 28 May 2020. “Do you understand now?": George Floyd is exactly who Colin Kaepernick’s been kneeling for all along, *Vogue Magazine*. <https://www.vogue.com/article/colin-kaepernick-kneeling-george-floyd>

Vargas, Joao. 2015. "Black Lives Don't Matter." Hot Spots, *Fieldsights*, June 29.

<https://culanth.org/fieldsights/black-lives-dont-matter>

Jafari Sinclair Allen and Ryan Cecil Jobson “The Decolonizing Generation: (Race and) Theory in Anthropology since the Eighties” *Current Anthropology* 75(2) 2016

### Week 6 (Oct. 13) **Class Suspended due to severe weather.**

### Week 7 (Oct. 20)– Is violence a cultural thing?

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Philippe Bourgois. 2004. “Making Sense of Violence.” In Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, eds. *Violence in War and Peace*, pp. 1-32. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

Lutes, Steven, and Michael J. Sullivan. 2004. “Violence by the Book: Redefining the Legitimate Use of Force in Municipal Policing.” In Myrdene Anderson, ed. *Cultural Shaping of Violence: Victimization, Escalation, Response*, pp. 135-146. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press.

#### Other readings:

Cheng, Sealing. "Pikachu's Tears: Children's Perspectives on Violence in Hong Kong." *Feminist Studies* 46, no. 1 (2020): 216-25.

New York Times, investigation: <https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/asia/100000006602584/hong-kong-police-protest-video-investigation.html> (accessed 2 Sep 2019)

Gan, Wendy. 2017. "Puckish protesting in the Umbrella Movement," *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 20(2) 162-176

### **Week 8 (Oct. 27) – Are women's bodies dangerous?**

Edgerton, Anna. And Sotirova, Ina. 2011. "Sex and the barrio: a clash of faith in Latin America." (REPORTAGE). *World Policy Journal*, Winter, 2011, Vol.28(4), p.34-41

Carole S. Vance and Ann Barr Snitow. 1984. "Toward a Conversation about Sex in Feminism: A Modest Proposal," *Signs*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Autumn, 1984), pp. 126-135

#### Other readings:

SCMP. 5 August 2015. "Skewered on US talk show 'Conan O'Brien', 'breast assault' case makes a boob of Hong Kong", reported by Laura Ma. <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-crime/article/1846744/skewered-us-talk-show-conan-obrien-breast-assault-case>

The Independent. 8 Aug. 2019. <http://theindependent.sg/hong-kong-police-in-hot-water-for-allegedly-ripping-off-female-protesters-underwear-and-exposing-her/> (accessed 20 Aug. 2019)

Fahmy, Amel, Mawaheb T El-Mouelhy and Ahmed R Ragab. 2010. "Female genital mutilation/cutting and issues of sexuality in Egypt," *Reproductive Health Matters*, Vol. 18, No. 36, Privatisation (November 2010), pp. 181-190

### **Week 9 (Nov. 3). Is living with the dead the foundation of our moral values?**

Stefan R. Landsberger, 1996. 'Mao as the Kitchen God: Religious Aspects of the Mao Cult During the Cultural Revolution,' *China Information*, Vol.XI, Nos 2/3, pp. 196-214.

Robert Weller, "Night of the Living Dead Fish." In *Discovering Nature: Globalization and Environmental Culture in China and Taiwan* (2006), pp. 19-42.

#### Other readings:

Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Living and the Dead." In *Tristes Tropiques* (1973), pp.230-246.

Sigmund Freud, "Obsessive Acts and Religious Practices." In *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach* (1958), W.A. Lessa and E.Z. Vogt, eds., pp. 185-190.

EJ Insight. 24 July 2019. <http://www.ejinsight.com/20190724-graves-of-lawmaker-junius-ho-s-parents-vandalized/>

HKPF. 7 Sept 2016. <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2016/09/07/no-tears-mao-witness-recalls-death-chairman-dynastical-shift-40-years-later/>

### **Week 10 (Nov. 10) -- Hong Kong Core Values: Which ones are they?**

Mathews, Gordon. 2000. "HK Identity Debate: "Where, beneath the claims of government, is my cultural home?" of "Ch. 4: What in the world is Chinese: On the cultural identities of Hong Kong intellectuals in the shadow and wake of 1 July 1997," in *Global Culture/Individual Identity: Searching for Home in Cultural Supermarket*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 121-165.

#### Other readings:

Mathews, Gordon. "The Hong Kong Protests in Anthropological Perspective: National Identity and What It Means." *Critique of Anthropology* 40, no. 2 (June 2020): 264–69. doi:[10.1177/0308275X20908303](https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X20908303).

### **Week 11 (Nov. 17)– Education for Who and for What?**

Levinson, B and Dorothy Holland. 1996. "Ch. 1: The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: An Introduction," in *The cultural production of the educated person: critical ethnographies of schooling and local practice*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. pp: 1-15.

Butler, J., 2017. "Academic Freedom and the Critical Task of the University." *Globalizations*, 14(6), pp.857–861.

#### Other readings:

SCMP, 20 Aug. 2015, "How my top school grades got me into top university courses: Four Hong Kong students explain the pressure to succeed", report by Shirley Zhao. <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/education-community/articl>

EDB, “Moral-National Education Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 to Secondary 6),  
[http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/moral-national-edu/MNE%20Guide%20\(ENG\)%20Final\\_remark\\_09102012.pdf](http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/moral-national-edu/MNE%20Guide%20(ENG)%20Final_remark_09102012.pdf)

Paul Morris and Edward Vickers. 2015. “Schooling, Politics and the construction of identity in Hong Kong: the 2012 ‘Moral and National Education’ crisis in historical context,” *Comparative Education*, 51:3, 305-326. DOI: 10.1080/03050068.2015.1033169

HKFP, 11 Aug. 2021, “Disbanded HK teacher’s union faces further state media attacks; Confederation of Trade Unions crosshairs,” reported by Selina Cheng, <https://hongkongfp.com/2021/08/11/disbanded-hong-kong-teachers-union-faces-further-state-media-attacks-confederation-of-trade-unions-in-crosshairs/> (accessed 1 Sep 2021)

### **Week 12 (Nov. 24) – Does Work dictate our Lifestyle and adulthood?**

Mann, Brenda. 2013. “You@Work: Jobs, Identity, and the Internet” In *Conformity and Conflict: Pearson New International Edition*, edited by Spradley, James W., and McCurdy, David W. United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited, pp. 203-210.

Schwartz, Berry. 28 Aug. 2015. “Rethinking Work”, *New York Times*, Sunday Review, Opinion.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/30/opinion/sunday/rethinking-work.html?ref=opinion>

Berger, Peter. 1964. ‘Some general observations on the problem of Work’ in *The Human Shape of Work*, edited by Peter Berger. New York: Macmillan. pp. 211-241.

### **Week 13 (Dec. 1) -- Leisure: Does our free time reflect our social class?**

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1987. “What makes a social class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups,” *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 32 (1987), pp. 1-17.

Gans, Herbert J. 1996. ‘The uses of poverty: The Poor pay all’ in *Mapping the Social Landscape: Reading in Sociology*, edited by Susan J. Ferguson. Mountain View: Mayfield Publishing Co. pp. 265-270.

#### Other readings:

Ma, Kit-wai Eric. 2001. ‘The Hierarchy of Drinks: Alcohol and Social Class in Hong Kong’ in *Consuming Hong Kong* edited by Gordon Mathews and Tai-lok Lui. Hong Kong: HKU Press. pp. 117-140.

Roberts, Ken. 2004. ‘Leisure Inequalities, Class Divisions and Social Exclusion in Present-day Britain’, *Cultural Trends*, Vol. 13, No. 50, June 2004, pp. 57-71.

Dong Jinxia. 2001. ‘Cultural Changes: Mobility, Stratification and Sportswomen in the New China’ in *Culture, Sport, Society*. Vol. 4, No. 3 (Autumn 2001). pp. 1-26.

AFP (Association of Foreign Press) via HKFP, 2021. “Actress hit with US\$ 46 million tax fine as China targets ‘chaotic fan culture’”, <https://hongkongfp.com/2021/08/27/actress-hit-with-us46-million-tax-fine-as-china-targets-chaotic-fan-culture/> (published 07: 33; 27 Aug. 2021); accessed: 1 Sep. 2021.

### **Week 14 (Dec. 8) – “Life versus Death”**

Long, Susan Orpett. 2003. “Becoming a Cucumber: Culture, Nature and the Good Death in Japan and the United States.” *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter, 2003), pp. 33-68.

Flemming, Rebecca. 2006. “Suicide, Euthanasia and Medicine: Reflections Ancient and Modern.” *Economy and Society*, Vol. 34, No. 2: 295-321.

Mathews, Gordon. 2013. “Death and ‘the Pursuit of a Life Worth Living’ in Japan,” in Hikaru Suzuki, ed., *Death and Dying in Contemporary Japan*, p. 33-48.

### **Week 15 (Dec. 15) – Final Essay Due**