INLS 690₂₃₉   INTERMEDIATE SELECTED / SPECIAL TOPICS

Everyday Life Information Practices

Fall 2016   School of Information and Library Science   1.5 credits
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

INSTRUCTOR: **Leslie Thomson**, MISt; lethomso@ad.unc.edu
CLASS TIME: **Fridays**, August 26 – September 30, **9 – 11.45 am**; Manning **303**
OFFICE TIME: **By appointment**; location TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores theoretical and empirical literature regarding the information practices of ordinary people in everyday life (i.e., "non-work") contexts. It also touches upon the methodological approaches used in such research, as well as the deciphering of what is 'informational' in any setting. Topics considered include:

- contextual elements (e.g., life worlds, stocks of knowledge, norms, values) shaping patterns of information practices in the everyday;
- use of newspapers, radio, television, the Internet, and non-conventional media to meet information needs;
- information practices arising from problem-driven/compromised and pleasurable/leisure-related everyday life situations (e.g., health, parenting, diversity, and hobby pursuits);
- barriers to information access and information poverty;
- public libraries and other institutional providers of everyday life information;
- techniques for investigating and presenting information practices in/from 'the field.'

COURSE GOALS

To instill a keen perception of and unique appreciation for the information dimension and richness in everyday human affairs, and to develop both the research and the analytical skills necessary to do so.

KEY INSTRUCTIONAL & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will leave INLS 690-239 with:
- awareness of the information practices paradigm and its consequences as a guiding lens for information research;
- recognition of the contributions of major everyday life information researchers;
- understanding of the scope of everyday life contexts, and ability to analyze the features of information and evaluate potential for change therein;
- knowledge of how to apply specialized, independently generated expertise about the information phenomena in an everyday life setting, and ideas as to how to carry these discoveries forward to their professional practice;
- working knowledge of methods and techniques appropriate for studying and designing for everyday life settings, and ability to use one—the horizon interview—to produce insights about information practices.

PREREQUISITES, REQUIREMENTS, & AUDIENCE

This is a graduate seminar, best suiting Master's students in first or second years of studies at SILS and/or considering their major paper topic, or ambitious undergrads. Students should be comfortable with theoretical and methodological discussions and have an interest in conducting original research into information phenomena in (a) non-work setting(s). Competency in laptop and class website use, and much initiative, intellectual curiosity, and creativity are needed. Outside of class meetings, 6-9 hours per week of additional individual effort are expected.

LEARNING CLIMATE & ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

As members of a highly diverse learning community, mutual respect among students and between students and instructor is expected. Remember that "SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value. We broadly define diversity to include race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation, and physical and learning ability," and cultivate and maintain an "academic environment that is open, representative, reflective, and committed to the concepts of equity and fairness" (SILS Diversity Statement). The instructor, the SILS Department Chair, and/or the Dean of Students are able to assist should any questions or concerns over classroom conduct arise.

Students with different learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. For accessibility or health considerations that may require special accommodation, feel free to approach the instructor and/or the Accessibility Resources & Service Office as early in the semester as possible, or as soon as possible. The AR&S staff are available by phone (919-962-8300) and email (accessibility@unc.edu) to assist with all necessary special arrangements.

COURSE CONDUCT & GRADING

The objectives of this course are achieved through a mix of lectures, guest speakers, multimedia, class discussions, pair/group work, readings, and written exercises. Classroom time is limited; every session covers important material. To this end, regular weekly attendance and thorough preparation are necessary. When class absence is unavoidable, students should notify the instructor as soon as possible and arrange note-taking/-borrowing with a classmate. Everyone is responsible for all work—including readings and written assignments—whether or not the relevant class session was attended. Readings are to be completed in advance of dedicated class sessions, which will most often run for 2.75 hours, with mid-class breaks. Arrive early to gather handouts; silence phones; and please refrain from Internet, email, and other forms of multi-tasking during class time.

Course grades will be determined by: 1) quality of written assignments; 2) demonstrated mastery of course materials and concepts; 3) level of participation (this takes many forms, including attendance, preparedness, speaking, and class website posting; see page 4 for the In-Class / Online Participation Rubric). Based on the Office of the Registrar grading system, individual assignment and overall course grades-minus any applicable late penalties (see page 4 for Late Policies)-will be scaled as:

	Graduate Students	Undergraduate Students
Superior Work (this grade is rare): unusual depth and command, with great originality	H	A
Satisfactory Work (this grade is common): meeting all course requirements	P	A- / B+ / B / B-
Unacceptable Work (this grade is rare): significantly substandard (under)graduate work	L	C+ / C /C-
Failing Work: seriously deficient performance unworthy of credit	F	D+ / D / F

Temporary grades (IN and AB) are treated as F until resolved.

HONOR CODE

"We all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and academic integrity… All suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported… and your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected" (UNC Honor Code).

The essence of academia is respect for the ideas of others. Dishonesty in academic affairs devalues the degree you are all striving toward. When ideas or materials of others are used in writing assignments, they must be properly cited (guidelines are distributed with assignments). With the exception of certain in-class exercises, all assignments in this course are independent; anything that is submitted (along with all substantive work behind it) is to be that of you alone.

ASSIGNMENTS

	Value	Requirements	Due Date
Weekly Reading Responses	15%	5 mini-posting tasks	ongoing – F* by 9pm Thursday prior
In-Class / Online Participation	15%	see rubric below	ongoing
Everyday Life Information Scholar 'Interview'	20%	~900-word polished paper	**09/09/16**, 9am session 03 – in DB*
Research Portfolio divided into components:			
Draft Topic / Literature Theme Ideas	1.67% for completion	~ 250 words for discussion (~ 750 words in final paper)	**09/02/16**, 9am session 02 – bring to class
Draft Methods / Info. Horizon Guide	1.67% for completion	~ 10 questions for discussion (~ 350 words in final paper)	**09/09/16**, 9am session 03 – bring to class
Draft Findings	1.67% for completion	~ 3-5 points for discussion (~ 850 words in final paper)	**09/23/16**, 9am session 05 – bring to class
Final Paper	45%	~2400-word polished paper	**09/30/16**, 12pm session 06 – in DB*

F* = as a post, in the appropriate class website forum   in DB* = in Sakai DropBox

LATE POLICIES

As the number of class sessions is limited, late penalties are in effect.
- **Weekly Reading Responses** and **Research Portfolio** *draft* components are graded 0% when late;
- **Everyday Life Information Scholar 'Interviews'** are graded minus 7.5% per day late, and a new 'day' starts at the time the assignment is due.
- **Research Portfolio Final Papers** are not accepted without prior negotiation with the instructor.

IN-CLASS / ONLINE PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

	Strong [H – P]	Developing [P – L]	Unsatisfactory [L – F]
Preparation	arrives with/posts notes, observations, and questions	sometimes arrives unprepared, and/or does not post	shows little if any indication of having prepared for class or read assigned materials
Listening	actively supports, listens, and/or engages	shows effort to interact, but is at times disinterested in peers' contributions	makes limited/no effort to interact with peers, and may exhibit disrespect
Contribution Quality	states comments and questions that are relevant and that show close readings and keen insight	participates constructively but unevenly, with comments and questions that may be irrelevant or lack depth	never participates or does so only when prodded and/or perfunctorily, showing little interest in peer contributions or course materials
Participation Frequency	participates actively and at appropriate times	participates sometimes, but fails to always be attentive	participates rarely and is generally disengaged
Impact on Sessions / Forums	moves discussion forward, enhancing group dynamics and contributing such that others benefit	sometimes advances discussion, sometimes making group dynamics better (but never worse)	fails to advance conversation with comments and questions, impairing group dynamics with participation

COURSE RESOURCES

All weekly readings will be posted in or linked from the class website. The text recommended (not required) for anyone pursuing everyday life information topics in their Master's papers or future work is:
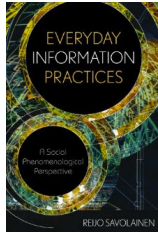
Everyday Information Practices: A Social Phenomenological Perspective
Reijo Savolainen
2008
Scarecrow Press

Segments of it will be assigned as weekly readings, posted in the class website (but also discouraged-ly-check-out-able from the SILS Library, ZA3075. S38).

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES & READINGS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE, WITH MORE 'EXTRA' ✪ READING SUGGESTIONS MADE IN CLASS)

Session 01 – 08/26: Welcome, & Introduction to Everyday Life Info. Practices

Pre-Class: Email your Background Questionnaire (it's your first Weekly Reading Response–an easy 3%!).

Readings: Savolainen, R. (2008). Chapter 1: Introduction. *Everyday Information Practices* (pp. 1-13). Lanham, MD.

First pass of: Savolainen, R. (2008). Chapter 3: Conceptualizing Everyday Information Practices. *Everyday Information Practices* (pp. 37-81). Lanham, MD.

Savolainen, R. (2010). Everyday Life Information Seeking. In Bates, M. J., & Maack, M. N. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (3rd ed.) (pp. 1780-1789). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

✪ Have you read this? If not, take a look; concentrate mostly on the *theory*, less on empirical results: Savolainen, R. (1995). Everyday life information seeking: Approaching Information Seeking in the Context of "Way of Life." *Library & Information Science Research, 17*, 259-294.

After Class: Select your everyday life information setting/topic & confirm it with the instructor.
Glean themes from ~3 representative pieces by a scholar suggested or okayed.
Bring your **Draft Topic/Lit. Theme Ideas** from these pieces next class as ~250 words.

Session 02 – 09/02: Everyday Life Info. Life Worlds, Horizons, & Pathways

Pre-Class: Post your Weekly Reading Response by 9pm Thursday, 09/01.

Due: Draft Topic/Literature Theme Ideas for discussion (~250 words).

Readings: Given, L. M. (2002). The academic and the everyday: Investigating the overlap in mature undergraduates' information-seeking behaviors. *Library & Information Science Research, 24*(1), 17-29.

(…continued on next page…)

Greyson, D. (2013). Information world mapping: A participatory, visual, elicitation activity for information practice interviews. *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 50*(1), 1-4.

Second pass of: Savolainen, R. (2008). Chapter 3: Conceptualizing Everyday Information Practices. *Everyday Information Practices* (pp. 37-81). Lanham, MD.

Thorough pass of: Sonnenwald, D. H., Wildemuth, B. M., & Harmon, G. L. (2001). A research method using the concept of information horizons: An example from a study of lower socio-economic students' information seeking behaviour. *The New Review of Information Behaviour Research, 2*, 65-86.

First pass of: ~3 representative pieces from a scholar related to your chosen everyday life setting/topic, as was noted for last session's 'After Class' work.

After Class: Continue to review your ~3 chosen pieces and refine your Lit. Theme Ideas.
Build Lit. Theme Ideas to your **Everyday Life Info. Scholar 'Interview,'** <u>due next class</u>.
Attempt to solidify your Draft Methods/Info. Horizon Guide.
Bring your **Draft Methods/Info. Horizon Guide** next class as ~10 questions.
Schedule (if you can) your Info. Horizon Interview.

Session 03 – 09/09:   Pleasure & Everyday Life Information: Part 1, Overview

Pre-Class: Post your Weekly Reading Response by 9pm Thursday, 09/08.

Due: Polished Everyday Life Information Scholar 'Interview' (~900 words).
Draft Methods/Info. Horizon Guide for discussion (~10 questions).

Readings: Kari, J., & Hartel, J. (2007). Information and higher things in life: Addressing the pleasurable and the profound in information science. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 58*(8), 1131-1147.

Either this one: Laplante, A., & Downie, S. J. (2011). The utilitarian and hedonic outcomes of music information-seeking in everyday life. *Library & Information Science Research, 33*(3), 621-637.
Or this one: Ross, C. S. (1999). Finding without seeking: The information encounter in the context of reading for pleasure. *Information Processing & Management, 35*, 783-799.

Linder, R., Snodgrass, C., & Kerne, A. (2014). Everyday ideation: All my ideas are on Pinterest. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 2411-2420.

Skim of: Savolainen, R., & Kari, J. (2004). Placing the internet in information source horizons: A study of information seeking by Internet users in the context of self-development. *Library & Information Science Research, 26*(4), 415-433.

After Class: Schedule (if not done already) your Info. Horizon Interview.
Conduct (if you can) your Info. Horizon Interview.

Session 04 – 09/16:   Pleasure & Everyday Life Information: Part 2, Leisure

Pre-Class: Post your Weekly Reading Response by 9pm Thursday, 09/15.

Readings: Chang, S.-J. L. (2009). Information research in leisure: Implications from an empirical study of backpackers. *Library Trends, 57*(4), 711-728.

Cox, A. M., & Blake, M. K. (2011). Information and food blogging as serious leisure. *Aslib Proceedings, 63*(2/3), 204-220.

Either this one: Fulton, C. (2009). Quid pro quo: Information sharing in leisure activities. *Library Trends, 57*(4), 753-768.
Or this one: Hartel, J. (2006). Information activities and resources in an episode of gourmet cooking. *Information Research, 12*(1), http://InformationR.net/ir/12-1/paper282.html.

Hartel, J. (2010). Leisure and hobby information and its users. In Bates, M. J., & Maack, M. N. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (3rd ed.) (pp. 3263-3274). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

After Class: Conduct (if not done already) your Everyday Life Info. Horizon Interview.
Look over and glean some first inklings of findings from your Interview data.
Bring your full **Interview data** and your **Draft Findings** of ~3-5 main points next class.

Session 05 – 09/23:   Problems, Barriers, & Everyday Life Information
…maybe even with a special guest!

Pre-Class: Post your Weekly Reading Response by 9pm Thursday, 09/22.

Due: Draft Findings for discussion (~3-5 main points).

Readings: More TBD—stay tuned!

Only pages 6-8 (from this paragraph "The following is an analysis of a collection of five related papers by Swan and Taylor…" to this bit "they 'make us pay attention to things in a new way,' and they are 'memorable' (pp. 43–44)") of: Hartel, J., & Thomson, L. (2011). Visual Approaches and Photography for the Study of Immediate Information Space. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology, 62*(11), 2214-2224.

After Class: Continue to analyze your **Interview data** based on our in-class work.
Prepare your **Final Paper**, <u>due next class</u>.
Ensure all **Draft components** (x 3) are also ready to <u>submit next class</u>.

Session 06 – 09/30:   Different Demographics & Everyday Life Information

Due: Polished Final Paper (~2400 words) + 3 Draft components (this is a full Research Portfolio).

Readings: Wildcard—choose pieces from a to-be-distributed bibliography, or suggest your own addition! Much everyday life info. literature is devoted to the information practices of people in different age or 'citizenship' groups, or other special populations. At the same time, there are many seminal everyday life pieces only discussed in lectures that you may want to explore further. This week is your chance!

ASSIGNMENTS

WEEKLY READING RESPONSES   DUE WEEKS 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5

Consist of 5 mini-posting tasks, one for each of Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Thus, each posting is worth 3% of your final grade. Weekly Reading Responses will either take the form of responses to assigned questions or will consist of your own thoughts, depending on the instructions you receive (see below for special Week 1 instructions). In either of these cases, feel free to refer to classmates' postings in your own. Please post your responses by 9pm the Thursday night *prior* to the relevant class (i.e., 12 hours ahead of class start-time) so that I (and other classmates who desire) will be able to see them. These responses need not be absolutely polished; however, refer to the 'Strong' column of the Participation rubric on page 4 for guidelines about the best structure for them. A 'Strong' response would probably entail about a 150-200-word posting each applicable week.

For Week 1, please return a completed Background Questionnaire (sent by email) to me. I might use some of this to introduce us in class generally and anonymously (but please note to me anything you would prefer not be shared in this way). Emailing a completed Questionnaire is your first 3 percent—done!

EVERYDAY LIFE INFORMATION SCHOLAR 'INTERVIEW'   DUE WEEK 3

Hart (1998) and Randolph (2009) summarize several reasons that scholars conduct a literature review, including: to distinguish what has been done from what needs to be done; to discover important variables relevant to the topic; to synthesize and gain a new perspective; to establish the context of the topic or problem; to rationalize the significance of the problem; to enhance and acquire the subject vocabulary; to understand the structure of the subject; and to place new research in a solid historical context.

The objective of this assignment is to bring you in contact with existing literature from our field that is pertinent to the everyday life topic of your Final Paper. In critically analyzing this literature and thinking about the questions below, you set yourself up well to lift/adapt several of the points that you make here as material to be supplemented in the literature review portion of your Final Paper. In preparation for Session 02, you are asked to take a first pass of ~3 representative pieces from an information science scholar (**either suggested or okayed** at the time your topic is confirmed) who has done work related to your chosen everyday life topic.

Based on your reading of ~3 pieces of this scholar's work, and careful consideration of the points they make, answer the questions below. Cut and paste these questions into a text document to ensure nothing is missed, and make each question **bold**. Your responses should consist of full sentences but still be succinct, no longer than a paragraph—try to treat ~900 words as an *upper* limit. Include in-text citations where appropriate and a full Reference list of works; APA is a good style to follow if you have no strong preference—this tutorial covers many of its details.

Questions:

01. What is the general topic that this scholar is interested in?
02. With what populations/in what situations has the scholar researched this topic?
03. What is his or her major inspiration for researching this topic—personal, timely, or otherwise? (If no reason is given outright, make an educated guess.)
04. Was much known about this topic at the time the scholar began his or her research? Are any preceding or contemporaneous scholars from the information science field who had/have a direct bearing on his or her research referenced?
05. What is the scholar's methodological approach when studying this topic?

06. Does the scholar's research result in any novel theory, or hint toward one that is still being worked out by him or her and/or others?
07. If this scholar had to pick some (1-5) of his or her most interesting insights and describe these to someone unfamiliar with information science, what do you believe these would be and how do you believe her or she would do this?
08. Do you have any critiques of this scholar's research, such as its limitations or assumptions, or any suggestions for areas that desperately need follow-up?
09. Briefly introduce a more recent or current scholar whose research this scholar might be excited to read. (Note: this need not be someone who does absolutely similar research, nor even someone from our field, but you should be able to provide some evidence of a clear connection.)

RESEARCH PORTFOLIO   (DRAFT COMPONENTS DUE WEEKS 2, 3, & 5)   DUE WEEK 6

Diane Sonnenwald's Information Horizon interview represents an important methodological advance in information behaviour/practices research. It and its later adaptations allow researchers to capture a visual conception of information seeking (and use and sharing) as these materialize in a particular setting, population, or around a given 'problem.' A small literature of new insights has resulted because of it.

The objective of this assignment is for you to design and conduct a small-scale, original, exploratory Information Horizon Interview study utilizing Sonnenwald's and others' approaches. It requires interaction with human subjects; UNC's IRB permits this interaction so long as your interview and the resulting data extend no further than this classroom. (If you are considering this assignment as a 'pilot' study for your Masters' project, please see the instructor.) You must follow UNC's protocols for the conduct of ethical research, which will be reviewed in class, when performing your Interview.

Several Draft components of this assignment are due along the way to your Final Paper; these are graded solely for completion, but you should use the opportunity to hash them out and discuss them in class to the fullest. These Drafts (x 3) are also to be handed in with your Final Paper, equaling a full Research Portfolio. The latter portion of each class session will be devoted to a Workshop that helps you construct your Research Portfolios. So, even though the numbered steps below look daunting, do not be overwhelmed! A general set of guidelines for this assignment is as follows:

01. Following Session 01's brainstorming of everyday life settings/topics, **select one** that you can explore via an Everyday Life Info. Horizon Interview. For now, it's enough that you know this as simply a variant of an interview. The crux of your inquiry will be determining the sources and techniques by which a person seeks (and/or uses and/or shares) information related to this topic. What *is* 'informational' in this area? An example study may be, "How does a knitter learn to make an intricate sweater?" Or, "What does an online gamer do to gather information and coordinate 'action' with team members?" Or, "How does a family member respond (informationally) to the diagnosis of another's illness?" Or, "What information plays a role in planning a wedding?" For these research questions, and others, it is important to **select a precise question (or tight question set) and accessible population** of one individual, preferably within meet-able distance (someone Skype-able would likely be okay, but require of you more coordination). **Confirm your topic** with the instructor, and **explore ~3 works by a related scholar. Write preliminary idea(s)**— ~250 words of a Topic and Lit. Theme Ideas—and **bring them to Session 02** to share.
02. By the close of Session 02, you will have read works from at least 3 scholars who utilize the Info. Horizon Interview (Greyson, 2013; Savolainen, 2008; Sonnenwald et al., 2001). The Workshop portion of Session 02 will be devoted to decomposing and live demo-ing (!) the approach, and there will be some time allotted to the initial construction of your own Info. Horizon Interview Guides (i.e., the questions you will ask your informant). **Keep**

thinking about and noting potential questions for your Interview and points to make in your own Paper's methodological statement. **Bring your ~10 best questions Session 03** to test. Rather than aiming for breadth in what you ask, aim for depth (i.e., do not necessarily attempt to span seeking, use, and sharing practices with your Interview, for such inclusivity will not have any effect in how your Final Paper is graded. Instead, just **be realistic about what your 'cutting points' are**).

03. In Session 03's Workshop, you will practice with your Info. Horizon Interview questions and refine your technique. Around this point, you should also be thinking about scheduling and conducting your one actual Interview. While this should really occur face-to-face, with more backend work on your part, you could conduct your Interview remotely and arrange for the resulting horizon diagram to be emailed to you. In either scenario, you will follow the appropriate procedures to acquire verbal consent from your informant, and it is highly recommended that you tape record and make thorough notes and take down quotations during and after **your Interview, which must occur before Session 05**. Time during Session 04's Workshop will be allotted to a crash course in analyzing/presenting your data. Use these tips to help you extract points or themes as Findings from your data (see 05 below for points that might guide you), and **bring ~3-5 of these and the horizon diagram from your Interview to Session 05**.

04. **Keep independently analyzing your data** (interview transcript or notes + horizon drawing); because of the compressed timing for this project and its exploratory spirit, your analysis process does not have to be overly formal, but follow some of the precedents set out in the works we cover. Aim to answer your original research question(s), and to refer to specific points from the Everyday Life Information Practices model (see 05 below for details). The Workshop portion of Session 05 will be devoted entirely to your continued analysis and to the polishing of your Final Paper.

05. **Write up and polish your Final Paper**—a report with a suggested length of ~2,400-words—with these sections: Introduction, Literature Review & Theoretical Framework (for everyone here, this is Everyday Life Information Practices, but you might briefly mention another too), Research Method, Findings, Discussion/Implications (e.g., for new services, designs, _or_ future research), and Conclusion (perhaps with Methodological Reflections). It is likely that you will **include the horizon diagram in and Interview questions** appended to your Final Paper. You will want to think about these points from Savolainen's (2008) model as you introduce, present, and discuss your findings, and to make direct reference to their role in your data:

    i. the contextual factors that surround your setting/topic and your informant (e.g., what is the situation in which information practices occur? does your informant have much prior experience in this area, or is he or she a novice? are there many social norms in this area? is your informant tightly attached to this area?) ;
    ii. the 'project' for which your informant 'wields' information (generic or specific, and its task(s));
    iii. the practice of seeking information sources (whether conventional or not) with regard to this project, the 'mode(s)' of this seeking (think McKenzie, 2003), and any barriers often encountered.

You might also speak to any of the following points from the model as you present and discuss your findings, but doing so is not a requirement (remember, 'cutting points'!):

    i. the practice of using information (e.g., judging/assessing it for learning, making a decision, or getting an idea) in terms of this project;
    ii. the practice of sharing information (e.g., passing information 'by proxy,' or in a community);
    iii. others especially important to you/your topic.

Include in-text citations and a Reference list; recall the APA tutorial if stuck.