

COURSE SYLLABUS
THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY

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070:505
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RAB 313

REQUIRED TEXTS

Amit, Vered

2007 *Biographical Dictionary of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. Buy this inexpensively (\$5-\$10) by getting a used copy from some place like Amazon: http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0415223792/ref=tmm_hrd_used_olp_0?ie=UTF8&condition=used

Erickson, Paul and Liam Murphy

2013 *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory*, Fourth Edition. University of Toronto Press.

Waterston, Alisse

2013 *My Fathers Wars: Migration, Memory and the Violence of a Century*. Routledge.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The value of a discipline is precisely in its ability to account for its conditions of existence and thus as to how it arrives at its knowledge practices.

Marilyn Strathern. *Commons and Borderlands*

It is not the “actual” interconnection of “things” but the conceptual interconnection of problems which define the scope of the various sciences.

Weber, Max. *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*

This course examines the “anthropological canon”: the works of key shapers of the British, American, French, and German anthropological traditions. To help account for the discipline’s “conditions of existence,” it not only places major theorists and their foundational texts within a number of contexts—a history of ideas, a school of thought, a national tradition, and contemporaneous political and cultural currents—but also investigates the politics of this canon itself. Our goal is to explore the history of anthropological theory to better understand our own knowledge practices. As part of this effort, and to help establish the junctures and disjunctures in anthropology over time, we

will create an archive of intellectual “genealogies” of major theorists and major schools of thought. This will entail identifying the major problems each school addressed and that fueled its primary contributors’ investigations and the relationship of these central problems to the concepts and terms they developed and deployed, including their genesis, meaning, changing uses, merits, limitations, and significance to contemporary anthropology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Critiques and Class Discussion

60% of grade

You are required to prepare 11 **two-page** reading critiques, which you will present to the class weekly (although there are 12 weeks in which we will read critiques, you do not need to write a critique for the class for which you are preparing the required “intellectual genealogy” – see below). You will be given about 7-10 minutes within which both to present your ideas and present a few questions that the readings raise for you. Since you will read your critiques in class, please make them particularly interesting and clear and read them slowly and clearly as well.

You may write about the articles in whatever way you choose but you do need to draw them together in some way, mentioning all the primary sources and using the assigned secondary sources to illuminate and make connections about the particular issue or ideas on which your critique is focused. After the first critique, you should also try to make connections among, or comparisons to, the ideas or thinkers we have discussed in previous classes.

You will be given 15-20 minutes at the end of class to revise what you have written in light of the discussion that has occurred in class while the ideas are still fresh. It is this final version that I will see. Your revision must be posted by 10am on the Tuesday following the class in which it is due (it can be longer in its revised form but certainly should not be more than 3 pages).

Your class discussion of the reading material, especially your careful response to others’ critiques is a very important component of this part of your grade.

Intellectual Genealogy

10% of grade

The purpose of this assignment is to have the class build an archive that should help all of you in other classes, on field statements, and in teaching. Each student will be asked to prepare a genealogy once during the semester, doing outside research with the goal of preparing a genealogy of one of the various schools of thought or approaches we will cover. This should have 2 parts: in the first you should include the major theorists of the school (including but also going beyond those read for class) and a brief but essential biographical data about each thinker (e.g.: major publications, major contributions to ideas), using the Biographical Dictionary or some other source. Preferably you can present this as a schematic.

The second part should contain a list of the major terms (briefly defined) and how they fit into the school’s larger conceptual framework as well as **their significance in/for contemporary anthropology**. You will also need to present the major problems

addressed by this school and the trajectories it helped establish. You should be able to discuss these terms, problems, and trajectories in class. You will need to post your material by 3pm on the Sunday before the class meets. Student should suggest, via the sakai site, other terms, theorists, or ideas that can be added to the archive.

2 Quizzes

10% of grade

There will be two short (15-20 minutes) in-class quizzes that test your knowledge of the ideas and terms discussed in class and the readings. The posted “genealogies” will help you study for the quizzes.

Final Research Paper and Presentation

20% of grade

You are required to write a 10-12 page paper critical assessment of a particular “adjectival area” of contemporary anthropology of interest to you (e.g., medical anthropology, political anthropology, but also anthropology of the body, queer anthropology, anthropology of neoliberalism, etc.), raising the kinds of issues and questions with which you have become familiar during the course of the semester. Your research into the subfield should be evaluative, not only making sense of it by placing it within contemporary contexts and the history of ideas we have developed in this course, but also dissecting and assessing its strengths and weaknesses. You will be given 10-15 minutes the last day of class to present your paper; you may do it as a Powerpoint presentation or straightforward oral report but you will not be reading these as you did your critiques. **Your paper topics are due in class on Feb 17, 2014. Your paper is due in class on May 5, 2014.**

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK POLICY

Students are required to attend all class meetings (only one absence is allowable, and this only with a legitimate excuse such as serious illness). If you miss more than one class, you will jeopardize your standing in the course and may be asked to withdraw from it. I do not accept late work.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

Jan. 27 **What is (Anthropological) Theory? For that Matter, What is Anthropology?**

- “The End of Anthropology, Again: On the Future of an In/Discipline” by John Camoroff (posted)
- “Rearticulating Anthropology” by James Clifford. In *Unwrapping the Sacred Bundle: Reflections on the Disciplining of Anthropology* (posted)
- “Introduction” by Henrika Kuklick from *A New History of Anthropology*, edited by Henrika Kuklick (posted)
- “The Epistemology of Ethnography: Method in Queer Anthropology” by Margot Weiss (posted)
- Read both Hobart’s “For the Motion” and Rapport’s “Against the Motion” in *Cultural Studies Will be the Death of Anthropology* (posted)

Feb. 3 **British and US Victorian Anthropology: Social Evolutionism**

- “Introduction,” (pp. xiii –xiv), “Overview” Part I” (pp. 3-19) and “Conclusion” (pp. 575-579) by Paul Erickson and Liam Murphy in *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory*, edited by Paul Erickson and Liam Murphy (hereafter: EM)
- General Summary and Conclusion from *The Descent of Man* by Charles Darwin (EM)
- “The Organic Analogy Reconsidered” by Herbert Spencer (EM)
- “The Science of Culture” by E.B. Tylor (EM)
- “Ethnical Periods” by Lewis Henry Morgan (EM)
- “Progressivism: The Tap Root” by Wm. Adams. In *The Philosophical Roots of Anthropology* (posted)
- “Roots of Anti-modernism: the Crisis of Cultural Authority in the late Nineteenth Century” by Jackson Lears (posted)

II. THE CRISIS OF MODERNITY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL THEORY

Feb. 10 **The Crisis of Modernity: Foundations of Social Theory in Germany**

- Excerpt from *Civilization and its Discontents* by S. Freud (EM)
- “The Sociology of Charismatic Authority” by Max Weber (EM)
- “Bourgeois and Proletarians” by Karl Marx and F. Engels (EM)
- “Excerpt from the *Dialectic of History* by G.W.F. Hegel, access at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/hegel-summary.html>
- Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlook” by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, access at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01.htm>
- “The Return of Totemism in Childhood” by S. Freud from *Totem and Taboo* (posted)
- “Anthropology in Germany before the Second World War” by G. Schafft (posted)
- “German Anthropology during the Nazi Period” by A. Gingrich (posted)

Feb. 17 Trying to Hold it Together: From Social Theory to Structuralism in France

- “Intro: Elementary Forms of the Religious Life” by Émile Durkheim (EM)
- “What is a Social Fact” by Émile Durkheim (posted)
- “Nature of the linguistic Sign and Synchronic and Diachronic Law” by F. de Saussure (EM)
- “Structuralism in Anthropology” by E. Leach (EM)
- “The Structural Study of Myth” by Claude Levi-Strauss (posted)
- “The Gift” by Marcel Mauss (posted)
- “The Metamorphosis of Ethnology in France, 1839-1930” by Emmanuelle Sibeud from *A New History of Anthropology*, edited by Henrika Kuklick, 2008. (posted)
- “Pollution” by Mary Douglas (posted)
- **PAPER TOPICS DUE**

III. EARLY 20TH-CENTURY ANGLO-AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY: VANISHING PASTS AND ENDURING PRESENTS

Feb. 24 The Invention of U.S. Cultural Anthropology

- Part II: “The Earlier 20th Century” (pp. 95-104) (EM)
- “The Methods of Ethnology” by Franz Boas (EM)
- “The Individual and the Pattern of Culture” by Ruth Benedict (EM)
- “Coming of Age in Samoa” by Margaret Mead (EM)
- “What Anthropology is About” by Alfred Kroeber (EM)
- “Anthropology and the Search for Social Order, 1929-1945” by Thomas Patterson. In *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States* (posted)
- “The Science and Politics of Race in the Work of Franz Boas and WEB du Bois, 1894-1919” by Julia Liss (posted)
[if you are interested in the AAA’s stance on race, go to <http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp> and on immigration go to <http://www.aaanet.org/issues/press/upload/Georgia-Anti-Immigration-Law.pdf>]

Mar. 3 The Development of British Social Anthropology and the Post-Colonial Critique

- “Social Structure” by A.R. Radcliffe-Brown (EM)
- “The Subject, Methods and Scope of this Inquiry” by B. Malinowski (EM)
- “The Nuer of Southern Sudan” by E.E. Evan-Pritchard (posted)
- ““Knowing the Oriental” by Edward Said (EM)
- “Introduction” from *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* by Talal Asad (posted)
- “Imperialist Nostalgia” by Renato Rosaldo (posted)
- “Under Western Eyes” by Chandra Mohanty (posted)
- “The Horror: The Subject of Desire in Postcolonial Studies” (this is a book review essay) by Diane Nelson, (posted or access at http://www.english.wisc.edu/amclintock/writing/AA_review.pdf)

IV. THEORY IN ANTHROPOLOGY SINCE THE 1960S

Mar. 10 Some Legacies of Marx: Cultural Materialism, Cultural Ecology, Neo-Evolution, Political Economy, and Practice Theory

- “The Epistemology of Cultural Materialism” by Marvin Harris (EM)
- “Introduction” to *Europe and the People Without History* by Eric Wolf (EM)
- “Introduction” to *Islands of History* by Marshall Sahlins (EM)
- “The Concept and Method of Cultural Ecology” by Julian Steward (posted)
- “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” by Louis Althusser, posted or access at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>
- “Structures and the Habitus” by Pierre Bourdieu (posted)
- QUIZ

Mar. 17 Break

Mar. 24 Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology

- “Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties” by Sherry Ortner (EM)
- “Rituals of Rebellion” by Max Gluckman (EM)
- “Symbols in Ndembu Ritual” by Victor Turner (EM)
- “Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cock Fight” by Clifford Geertz (posted)
- “Thick Description” by Clifford Geertz (posted)
- “Betwixt and Between” by Victor Turner (posted)
- “Passages, Margins, and Poverty: Religious Symbols of Communitas” by Victor Turner (posted)

Mar. 31 Attend Wednesday workshop of April 2 in lieu of this class

- *My Father's Wars*, all

April 2 Wednesday Workshop (required): Writing Intimate Ethnography

- Guest Speaker: Alisse Waterston (CUNY, John Jay)

April 7 Feminist Anthropology

- “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” by Sherry Ortner (posted)
- “Introduction” by Irma McClaurin from *Black Feminist Anthropology* (posted)
- “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex” by Gayle Rubin (posted)
- “Can there be a Feminist Ethnography?” by Judith Stacey (posted)
- “Feminism in Anthropology” by Louise Lamphere (posted)
- “The Gender of Theory” by Catherine Lutz (posted)
- “On Shaky Ground” to Taking a Stand in a Post-feminist World by Fran Mascia-Lees and Pat Sharpe (posted)
- “Toward a Unified Theory of Class, Race, and Gender” by Karen Brodtkin Sacks (posted)

April 14 Scandalous Anthropology and Some Major Controversies

- “Counterinsurgency as a Cultural System” by David Edwards (EM)
- “How Napoleon Chagnon became our most Controversial Anthropologist” access at http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/17/magazine/napoleon-chagnon-americas-most-controversial-anthropologist.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
- Chapters 1, 3 and 4 by R. Borofsky in *Yanomami: The Fierce Controversy and What we can Learn from it*, pp. 3-21 35-52, and 53-60 (posted)
- “The Ghost of Caliban: Derek Freeman and ‘the Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead’” by Ron Robin in *Scandals and Scoundrels* (posted)
- “New Introduction” by Raymond Firth in *A Diary in the Strictest Sense of the Term* by B. Malinowski (posted)
- “The Primacy of the Ethical” by Nancy Scheper-Hughes (posted)
- “Moral Models in Anthropology” by Roy D’Andrade (posted)

These are all short:

- “Discord Over Scholar’s Tribal Research” by Nicholas Wade
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/26/science/national-academy-of-sciences-scholar-resigns-over-napoleon-chagnons-admission.html>
- “Open Letter to the President of the AAA” by Derek Freeman (posted)
- “Rethinking the American Dragon: A Reply to Freeman” by I. Brady (posted)
- “Indiana Jones is to Anthropology as Fred Flintstone is to Neolithic Life” by Leith Mullings, access at “<http://blog.aaanet.org/2013/02/19/indiana-jones-is-to-anthropology-as-fred-flintstone-is-to-neolithic-life/>”
- AAA Statement on Ethics”, access at http://www.aaanet.org/coe/Code_of_Ethics.pdf
- “The Tasaday Controversy”
<http://www.creationconcepts.org/resources/TASADAY.pdf><http://www.creationconcepts.org/resources/TASADAY.pdf>
- “Due No Harm” by Robert Albro and Hugh Gusterson, access at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120425/C4ISR02/304250001/Commentary-8216-Do-no-harm-8217-?odyssey=modnewsweilltextlFRONTPAGElp>
[if you want to read the AAA’s stance on this see:
<http://www.aaanet.org/about/Policies/statements/Human-Terrain-System-Statement.cfm>]
- “Writing his Life through the Other: The Anthropology of Malinowski
<http://publicdomainreview.org/2014/01/22/writing-his-life-through-the-other-the-anthropology-of-malinowski/>

April 21 Breaking it all Apart/Putting it Back together (again): Critiquing Humanism, Rethinking Modernity, and Theorizing Postmodernity, Globalization, and Neoliberalism

- excerpt from *The Genealogy of Morals* by F. Nietzsche (posted)
- “The Body of the Condemned” from *Discipline and Punish* by Michel Foucault (posted)
- “Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism” by Fredric Jameson (posted)
- “Time-Space Compression and the Postmodern Condition,” excerpt from *The Condition of Postmodernity* by David Harvey (posted)

- “Here and Now” from *Modernity at Large* by Arjun Appadurai (posted)
- “Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness” by Michel-Rolph Trouillot (posted)
- “Difference and Disjuncture in the Global Economic System” by Arjun Appadurai (posted)
- “Introduction: Neoliberalism by Exception, Exception as Neoliberalism” by Aiwha Ong (posted)

April 28 A Crisis in Representation: Reflexive Anthropology and “Writing Culture”

- “A Crisis of Representation in the Human Sciences” by G. Marcus and M. Fischer (EM)
- “Partial Truths” by James Clifford (EM)
- “Ethnographies as Texts” by George Marcus and Dick Cushman (posted)
- “The Erosion of Classic Norms” by Renato Rosaldo (posted)
- “Writing Against Culture” by Lila Abu-Lughod (posted)
- “Interpreting Charges of Sexual Harassment” by Fran Mascia-Lees and Pat Sharpe (posted)
- ““The Postmodernist Turn in Anthropology: Cautions from a Feminist Perspective” by Fran Mascia-Lees, Pat Sharpe, and Colleen Cohen (posted)
- Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference” by Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (posted)

QUIZ

May 5 Paper Presentations
FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS