

## ANG 5621 Fall 2012

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# Proseminar in Cultural & Linguistic Anthropology The Foundations of Anthropological Thought

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Fri. per 4-6 (10:40a-1:40p), Weim 1092

**Dr. Brenda Chalfin, Assoc. Professor, Anthropology & African Studies**

**Office hrs, 10a-12p Wed and by appt., Office 451 Grinter**

**Class email: anthro5621@gmail.com (fall 2012)**

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Proseminar in Cultural Anthropology is one of two foundational courses for students entering the Anthropology Graduate Program at UF. The other course is the Proseminar in Archaeology and Biological Anthropology offered in the Spring Semester. Both classes are required for all graduate students in the department, whatever their sub-discipline.

The class centers on the exploration of key issues relating to the emergence, development and continued relevance of the field of socio-cultural anthropology. In its most basic iteration socio-cultural anthropology revolves around a cluster of concerns:

- The problem of social order
- The problem of meaning
- The problem of history
- The problem of human difference/diversity
- The problem of representation

If we treat anthropology as a living organism, it is important to comprehend the origins and evolution of these problematics as well as their developmental trajectories. It is also crucial to consider the relevance of anthropological inquiry to the human condition: whether the persons who are the objects or the agents of anthropological research or more generally.

With an eye to both abiding concerns and shifting orientations, the class will take a thematic approach to the development of the discipline. In the course of understanding anthropology's past, our ultimate aim is to imagine—and eventually contribute to—anthropology's future. To do this, we ask: What are the founding questions of socio-cultural anthropology? What themes endure over time? Which ones are subject to challenge, transformation and revitalization?

On what sort of epistemes (systems of knowledge/knowing) does anthropology rely and what are their ontological implications? What strategies of representation does socio-cultural anthropology employ? Should socio-cultural anthropology be considered a unified field? What tensions and contradictions exist within the discipline? How are they resolved – or not? What are the current directions of the discipline? What new concerns and dilemmas do they bring to bear?

Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to address their own research interests in the context of class discussion, evaluation of course reading, and written assignments. The overarching aim of the class is to at once broaden students' understanding of the discipline, sharpen the capacity for critical analysis of ideas, and strengthen the foundations of their own path of scholarly inquiry.

### **Course Requirements**

**Participation (10%) and Attendance (5%)** Unexcused absence will result in reduction of grade. All students should also be prepared to play an active role in class discussions, in-class activities, and formulate an informed oral response to questions raised on the syllabus. To stimulate participation, students should come to class with a one page "quote sheet" recording 3-4 quotes from the reading they consider the most interesting, provocative or relevant. An electronic copy should be posted on the gmail site. These are required and will receive a 1% credit toward the participation grade.

**Class Raconteur (10%)** One written (3-5pp) summary and commentary on class discussion for a designated class to be posted on the gmail site prior to the next class meeting.

**Mid-term Analysis "One problem 3 ways" (25%):** 8-10pp. paper evaluating an anthropological 'problem' through 3 different theoretical perspectives. **DUE by 9a 11/11 (submit to bchalfin@ufl.edu)**

**Final Paper "Disciplinary Designs" (50%):** A 12 pp. written response to four out of seven questions evaluating the major developments and directions in the discipline. **DUE by 9a 12/13 (submit to bchalfin@ufl.edu)**

### **Course Reading and Texts**

Required Texts: Books may be purchased on-line or from the University of Florida bookstore in the Reitz Union.

- R.J. McGee and R. Warms eds., Anthropological Theory: an Introductory History, McGraw Hill, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> edition.
- F. Barth ed., One Discipline Four Ways, Chicago, 2005.
- L. Baker, From Savage to Negro, California, 1998.
- J. Clifford and G. Marcus, Writing Culture, 1986 or 2012 edition
- P. Rabinow and G. Marcus, Designs for an Anthropology of the Contemporary, Duke, 2009.

### Recommended Texts:

C. Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, Basic, 1973.

G. Marcus and M. Fischer, Anthropology as Cultural Critique, Chicago, 1986.

R. Behar and D. Gordon eds., Women Writing Culture, California, 1995.

H. Moore and T. Sanders eds., Anthropology in Theory: Issues in Epistemology, Blackwell, 2006.

Other reading material will need to be copied, scanned or downloaded by students and posted. A course pack may be made available for purchase from Target Copy (1412 Univ Ave) depending on student demand. Reading selections may be amended over the course of the semester. Primary, secondary and optional works will be mentioned in class.

### **Other Information and Resources**

UF Anthropology Department Policy: [web.anthro.ufl.edu](http://web.anthro.ufl.edu)

UF LIBRARY: <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/instruct/neworient.html>

UF Grading System: <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>.

UF Academic Honesty Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm>

UF Disability Services: <http://www.ufl.edu/disability>

UF Counseling Services: [www.council.ufl.edu](http://www.council.ufl.edu)

UF Student Mental Health Services: [www.shcc.ufl.edu/smhs](http://www.shcc.ufl.edu/smhs)

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

## **Course Schedule**

### **Class 1 (8/24): Examining the Discipline - The canon and its critics**

#### **Introduction**

How do we track the history of the discipline? Is it possible to specify a coherent path of inquiry? What contributions are remembered? Which ones have been suppressed? How can we read the anthropological canon with an eye to these critiques and alternatives? On what foundations should the anthropology of the present draw?

### **Class 2 (8/31): Anthropology's 19<sup>th</sup> Century Foundation: Evolution, Grand Theory and Comparative Inquiry**

To what extent was 19<sup>th</sup> century anthropology grounded in notions of evolution? What other theoretical perspectives and preoccupations informed the development of the field? What concerns did anthropology share with other social sciences of the day? How did anthropology incorporate different intellectual traditions?

P. Bowler, Evolution: The History of an Idea, pp. Chs 4 and 10, 1984, California.

H. Spencer, "The Social Organism," p. 11-27 in AT

E.B. Tylor, "The Science of Culture," p. 28-43 in AT

L.H. Morgan, "Ethnical Periods," p. 43-53 in AT

F. Barth, "The Rise of Anthropology in Britain," p. 3-10 in OD4

C. Darwin, "General Summary and Conclusion of *The Descent of Man*," p. 56-65 in P. Erickson and L. Murphy eds., Readings for a history of Anthropological Theory, 2006, Broadview. *The Origin of the Species*, 1859 (1996), Oxford

R. Parkin, "Durkheim and his era," p. 170-185 in OD4

E. Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, 1915, Free Press, pp. 235-245, 249-259 (skim)

E. Durkheim, "What is a Social Fact?" p. 69-79 AT

### **Class 3 (9/7): The American Turn: Race, Language and Culture**

How did American Anthropology emerge as a refutation of biological determinism? How did anthropology of this era intercede in both politics and popular culture? How do we account for the imprint of Franz Boas on American Anthropology? What are the broader foundations of the field? What other voices are part of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century conversation?

F. Boas, "The Methods of Ethnology," p. 121-128 in AT

F. Boas, "The Aims of Ethnology," p. 67-71 and "Anthropology," p. 267-281 in The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1974, Basic.

S. Silverman, "The Boasians and the Invention of Cultural Anthro," p. 257-274 in OD4

A.L. Kroeber, "Eighteen Professions," p. 129-135 in AT

L. Baker, From Savage to Negro, 1998, California, chs. 1-3, 5, 7, 8

G. Stocking, "Franz Boas and the Culture Concept," p. 195-233 in Race, Culture and Evolution, 1968, Chicago

G. Hernandez, "Multiple Subjectivities and Strategic Positionality: Zora Neale Hurston's Experimental Ethnographies," pp. 148-165 in WWC.

B. Evans, "Where was Boas during the Renaissance in Harlem?" in R. Handler ed., Central Sites, Peripheral Visions, 2006, Wisconsin (strongly recommended)

Optional:

L. Lamphere, "Feminist Anthropology: The Legacy of Elsie Clews Parsons," p. 85-103 in WWC

Kroeber, A.L., & Kluckhohn, C. (1952). *Culture: A critical review of concepts and definitions*. Harvard University Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology Papers 47. (skim)

Review of L.Baker's *Anthropology and the Racial Politics of Culture* Duke University Press, 2010.

**Class 4 (9/14): The Ethnographic Tradition**

Here we examine the emergence of ethnographic field research as a defining feature of anthropology. What are the founding tenets of ethnographic research? What are the historical conditions surrounding the development of ethnographic research? What were and remain the political entailments of this mode of inquiry. What ways of knowing does ethnographic research rely and forms of knowledge does it produce? How has ethnographic convention contributed to the making of region specific questions and modes of inquiry?

G. Stocking, "The Ethnographers Magic: Fieldwork in British Anthropology," p. 70-120 in Observers Observed, 1983, Wisconsin

B. Malinowski, "Subject, Method and Scope," pp. 1-25 in Argonauts of the Western Pacific, 1922, Dutton (1984, Waveland).

J. Clifford ed., Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography, 1986/2012, California, V. Crapanzano, "Hermes Dilemma," ML Pratt, "Fieldwork in Common Places," R. Rosaldo, "From the Door of his Tent," and "Forward to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition."

**Class 5 (9/21): Situational Analysis and Extended Case Study**

Do the methods of Gluckman and the Manchester School defy or repeat the conventions of earlier ethnographic method? What myths do they explode about 'ethnographic magic'? What are the limits of situational analysis as pursued by Gluckman? How might this method be updated and with it, the reading of "A Social Situation"?

B. Kapferer, "Situations, Crisis and the Anthropology of the Concrete: The Contribution of Max Gluckman," pp. 118-156 in T. Evans and D. Handelman eds., The Manchester School, 2006, Berghahn.

M. Gluckman, 1958. "Analysis of a Social Situation in Zululand." Rhodes Livingston Papers. No. 28. Humanities Press.

R. Frankenberg, 2002 (1982) "The Bridge Revisited," in The Anthropology of Politics: A reader, J. Vincent. Ed. Blackwell. (from Introduction in Custom and Conflict in British Society)

L. Schumaker, 2001, Africanizing Anthropology, Duke, selections.

Optional:

P. Cocks. 2001 "Max Gluckman and the Critique of Segregation in South African Anthropology, 1921-1940" Journal of Southern African Studies , 27/4: pp. 739-756

R. Frankenberg. 2005. "A Bridge over Troubled Waters, or What a Difference a Day Makes: From the Drama of Production to the Production of Drama," Social Analysis. 49/3: 166-184.

T. Asad, 1991. "From the History of Colonial Anthropology to the Anthropology of Western Hegemony." In George Stocking, ed., Colonial Situations: Essays on the Contextualization of Ethnographic Knowledge , Wisconsin. pp.314-324.

**NO CLASS 9/28 Dr. Chalfin at Borders & Mobility Conference in Copenhagen**

**Class 6 (10/5) : The Materialist Oscillation: Cultural Ecology, Marxism and Historical Materialism**

What preoccupations with 'grand theory' lay behind the materialist turn in socio-cultural anthropology? How do these materialist rubrics handle the problem of history? How do they explain or characterize culture? What is their relevant unit of analysis? Do these materialist outlooks invoke or deny Marx? Do they have a self-conscious or submerged politics? Can we discern any resemblance between the cultural ecology/cultural materialism of the past and the political ecology of today?

J. Steward, Ch. 1 & 2, pp. 11-43 in A theory of culture change: The Methodology of Multilinear Evolution, 1955, Illinois.

L. White, "Energy and the Evolution of Culture," p. 229-247 in AT

L. White, "Energy and Tools," in P. Erickson ed., Readings for a history of Anthropological theory. 2006. Broadview. (skim)

M. Harris, p. vi-xii, 78-114 in Cultural Materialism: the struggle for a science of culture, 2001 (1979), Altamira.

E. Wolf, "Plantation Systems in the New World," in Pathways of Power, 2001, California.

S. Mintz, "Introduction," Sweetness & Power, 1986, Penguin, p. xv-xxx.

K. Marx, "Outline of Historical Materialism," in Karl Marx: Essential Writings, F. Bender, ed., Westview, 1972, pp. 161-164

D. Donham, "Epochal Structures: Reconsidering Historical Materialism," p. 397-406, in AITE

D. Price 2001 "The Cold War Context of the FBI's Investigation of Leslie A. White" American Anthropologist 103(1):164-167. & 2007 "Buying a Piece of Anthropology, Part One: Human Ecology and Unwitting Anthropological Research for the CIA" Anthropology Today 23(3):8-13.

### **Class 7 (10/12) Structuralism and Symbolic Anthropology: Tracking the Linguistic Turn**

What is the nature of culture in structural and symbolic rubrics? What form does it take? What does it represent and resolve? What sort of cultural expressions yield to this mode of anthropological analysis. How does structuralist and symbolic anthropology deal with the question of human cultural particularism vs. universalism? How does it put anthropology in dialog with other fields? How do these approaches speak to existential concerns such as the problem of order or the problem of meaning?

A. Bernard, ed. "Structuralism," in Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology

C. Levi-Strauss, "Linguistics and Anthropology," p. 326-337 in AT

C. Levi-Strauss, "Structural Analysis in Linguistics and Anthropology," pp. 268-280 in AITE

W. Foley, 2005, "Do Humans have Innate Mental Structures?" in Complexities, S. McKinnon and S. Silverman eds., Chicago. pp. 43-63.

E. Leach, "The Human Animal," "The Structure of Myth"(53-75) "Words and Things," in Claude Levi-Strauss, 1970, Viking.

C. Levi-Strauss, Triste Tropiques, 1992 (1955), selections (skim)

R. Parkin, "Structuralism and Marxism," p. 208-220 in OD4

V. Turner, "Symbols in Ndembu Ritual," p. 493-510 in AT

V. Turner, "Liminality and Communitas," p. 94-111 in The Ritual Process, 1969, Cornell.

F. Saussure, "Signs in Language," in Culture and Society, 1990, Cambridge, pp. 55-65.

### **Class 8 (10/19): The Rise of Interpretive Anthropology: Clifford Geertz and his critics**

How does Geertz handle the culture concept? How does this differ from earlier approaches to culture? How does he address or resolve the problem of representation? How do we understand the controversies surrounding Geertz's work? What does Geertz's work imply about the force of ethnographic writing? Is Geertz's 'thick description' fundamentally different from Malinowski's mantra regarding cultural representation?

C. Geertz, Ch.1 & Ch. 15, The Interpretation of Cultures, 1973, Basic

W. Keane, "Anthropology," p. 59-89 in G. Steinmetz ed., The Politics of Method in the Human Sciences, 2005, Duke.

C. Peirce, What is a Sign? <http://www.marx.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/peirce1.htm>

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) [Entry on Peirce in the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics

Roscoe, P.B., 1995, "The Perils of 'Positivism' in Cultural Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 97: 492-504.

Martin, M., 1993, "Geertz and the Interpretive Approach in Anthropology," *Synthese* 97: 269-286

C. Geertz, Available Light, Princeton, 2000, selections.

### **Class 9 (10/26): Structure, Agency and Anthropology as Cultural Critique**

Are Marcus and Fischer suggesting that anthropology go down a new path or revive concerns of the past? How does their work suggest a synthesis of cultural investigation and political-economic analysis? Do we see earlier models for this approach? In what different ways is agency is in these analyses (Willis v. Comaroff v. Ortner, for instance)? How does the work of the Comaroffs, inspired by Gramsci, suggest a new understanding of culture and the process of cultural representation? What about the issue of interpretive authority?

G. Marcus and M. Fischer, Anthropology as Cultural Critique, 1986, Chicago. Ch.2 (skim),4, & pp. 132-151

P. Willis, Learning to Labor, excerpts, 1981, Columbia.

A. Giddens, 1984, The Constitution of Society, California. Ch. 1, pp. 1-39.

P. Bourdieu, "Structures and the Habitus," p. 407-416 in AITE or Outline of a Theory of Practice, pp. 73-93.

J. Comaroff, Ch. 1, Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance, 1985, Chicago.

S. Ortner, "Specifying agency: The Comaroffs and their critics," interventions, v. 3, n. 1, p. 76-84.

S. Ortner, 2006, "Power and Projects," in Culture Power and the Acting Subject (Duke), pp. 129-152.

S. Ortner, "Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal," Comparative Studies in Society and History, 1995, v. 37, n.1

L. Abu-Lughod, "Writing Against Culture," p. 137-162 in R. Fox ed., Recapturing Anthropology, 1991

E. Danzinger, 2005 "The Eye of the Beholder: Linguistic Classification and 'Natural' Experience," in Complexities, McKinnon and Silverman eds., Chicago. pp. 64-80.

### **(Distribution of Midterm Assignment)**

### **Class 10 (11/2): Turning Points: Anthropologies of the Contemporary**

**\*RESCHEDULE TO LATER IN DAY**

How do these works continue the project of critique described by Marcus and Fisher? Do they take this critique in new directions? Is it possible to accept these perspectives without discrediting the anthropology of the past? Does the focus on the political and material occlude other optics? What elements of grand theory can we discern? How do these works redefine both the subject and ends of anthropology? Is there a new paradigm afoot? What do these approaches say about the relevance of anthropology in the present and for the future? What do these works suggest about disciplinary coherence or dissolution?

M.R. Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness," p. 17-44 in R. Fox ed., Recapturing Anthropology, 1991.

F. Harrison, 1991, Decolonizing Anthropology, American Anthropological Association. WDC. selections.

A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, "Introduction," in Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science, 1997, California.

G. Burchell ed., The Foucault Effect, 1991, Chicago. selections.

J. Ferguson, 2002 (1994), "The Anti-Politics Machine" excerpt in The Anthropology of Politics. J. Vincent ed., Blackwell.

A. Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," Public Culture, vol. 2:2, 1990, pp. 1-24

J. Friedman, Globalizing Language: Ideologies and Realities in the Contemporary Global System. American Anthropologist. 105/4: pp. 744-752

S. Collier and A. Ong, "Global Assemblages, Anthropological Problems," p. 3-21 in Global Assemblage, 2005, Blackwell

M. Hardt and A. Negri, 2000. Empire, Harvard. Selections.

S. Collier and A. Lakoff, "On Regimes of Living," p. 22-36 in Global Assemblage, 2005, Blackwell.

B. Latour, "Objects too have agency," in Reassembling the Social, pp. 1-16, 63-86, 2005, Oxford.

**In lieu of class meeting, all students must schedule an appointment with Dr. Chalfin during week of Nov. 5 to discuss course progress and midterm preparation.**

**NO CLASS 11/9 UF HOMECOMING – Midterm due Sunday Nov.11, 5p. (submit to bchalfin@ufl.edu)**

**NO CLASS 11/16 American Anthropological Association Meetings**

**NO CLASS 11/23 Thanksgiving Holiday**

**NO CLASS 11/30 African Studies Association Meetings**

**Reschedule Class 11: FINAL READING AND DISCUSSION FOR FRIDAY DEC 7.**

Are the current adaptations of the discipline true to its founding tenets? How might you operationalize Marcus and Rabinow's notions of 'design studio' and 'timeliness,'? Does the genealogy they sketch strike you as accurate? Are there other ways of drawing connections and divides in our anthropological heritage? What other insights might you offer regarding the present and future of anthropology within and beyond the academy?

G. Marcus, 2009. "Introduction," Fieldwork is not what it used to be, J. Faubion ed., Cornell.p. 1-32.

K. Knorr-Cetina, Ch. 2, "What is a laboratory," Epistemic Cultures, Harvard, 1999, pp. 26-32.

P. Rabinow and G. Marcus, Designs for an Anthropology of the Contemporary, 2008, Duke. Selections.



C. Dole, 2011. "Revolution, Occupation and Love: The 2011 Year in Cultural Anthropology," American Anthropologist, 114/2, pp. 227-239.

C. Ball, "Boasian Legacies in Linguistic Anthropology," American Anthropologist, 114/2, pp. 203-216.

H. Baer, 2011, "Engaged Anthropology in 2011," American Anthropologist, 114/2, pp. 217-226.

**FINAL DUE DEC. 13 by 9a (electronic submission to bchalfin@ufl.edu)**