

Anthropological History & Theory



G. Catlin - Beautiful Savannah in the Pine Woods of Florida, 1834-1835

TUR 1208H

M | Periods 3-5 (9:35AM - 12:35PM)

Instructor:

**Richard
Kernaghan**

Grinter 335 | kernaghan@ufl.edu

office hours:

Mondays 1-3:00 pm
(or by appointment)

This seminar explores critical research traditions and conceptual innovations of socio-cultural anthropology with the aim of demonstrating how reading, reflecting, and writing about them might inform our own work and collective contributions as scholars.

Socio-cultural anthropology entails a sustained engagement with the study of relations—or, as Marilyn Strathern has suggested, it draws on some relations to gain insight into *other* kinds of relations. The scope of that study and of its theorization is not limited, however, to academic worlds, much less to any small set of institutional sites or select body of traditions. Anthropological expertise is sparked through empirical encounters, which are singular in themselves yet always situated in specific settings that resonate the patterns of prior exchanges and the sedimentations they carry forth. The roots of anthropological inquiry are multiple – there are many anthropologies – so much so that their origins are arguably recursive:

emerging as if anew, time and again, from actual but not always retrospectively dateable, moments of inter- and intra-species interaction.

In this seminar we will undertake a slow, careful questioning of the terms *history* and *theory*, thinking through what they commonly presuppose, but with the purpose of delving into their expansive, and even adventurous, implications. We will familiarize and reacquaint ourselves with the histories and varied theoretical orientations of anthropological practice – if questionably and all too often, organized into national (Euro- and Euro-settler) streams. Doing that will be an important, on-going task, yet rather than attempting a chronological survey, our week-by-week discussions will follow a series of thematic interventions, framed around fundamental concerns and topics that are long-standing, yet can and do remain vibrant through contemporary refiguration.

Meanwhile, and in close conversation with our assigned thematic readings, we will build an archive of key resources, containing expert, if sometimes peculiar, reflections on the origins and agendas of socio-cultural anthropology, that each of us, individually and as a group, can refer to and examine, depending on the kinds of training and research projects we have chosen to pursue. Collectively, we will discuss how to work with and expand those resources. Seminar activities and assignments will also offer concrete opportunities to craft, hone and intentionally modify our own ties to the historical traditions and theoretical trajectories of anthropology we find most relevant and which we might most wish to claim and help grow.

* * *

Overview of Requirements: This class is run as an in-person seminar with active participation in all discussions and class activities expected. Each student will be asked to prepare and present a seminar report on one or more of the weekly readings at least once during the semester. Other major assignments include: an annotated “anthropological history” bibliography, an annotated “anthropological theory” bibliography, and a term paper.

* * *

Learning Objectives: In this class, students will:

1. Compare the intellectual traditions & institutional sites of socio-cultural anthropology
2. Collaborate in curation of online resources responsive to shared seminar priorities
3. Build an archive of bibliographic materials tailored to student’s own research agenda
4. Practice textual analysis & cross-genre interpretation
5. Persuasively demonstrate in writing, how one’s own work intersects and engages with histories and theoretical concerns of socio-cultural anthropology

Class Approach, Materials & Etiquette

This course will be collaborative in practice and in spirit. During this semester-long, mutually-supportive endeavour, we will engage, weigh, and compare assigned materials in order to deliberate with them and with each other. We will accomplish this by valuing reading in a robust sense, taking time to attend to explicit intensions and obvious meanings, all the while scanning for unanticipated angles of approximation. We will aim for a mode of critical inquiry that is generous, never satisfied with negating gestures, and always pushing to discover latent potentials that may not have been altogether apparent to the original authors or creators.

* * *

Texts: Most class materials (readings, films, etc.) can be accessed via the Canvas course site.

The following books have also been placed on Library Reserve:

Agamben, G. *The Sacrament of Language* (Stanford University Press, 2010)*

Cattellino, J. *High Stakes* (Duke University Press, 2008)

Hunt, N. *A Nervous State* (Duke University Press, 2016)

Treuer, D. *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee* (Penguin, 2019)*

Trouillot, M-R. *Silencing the Past* (Beacon Press, 2015)

Tsing, A. *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (Princeton University Press, 2015)

Uexküll, J. von. *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals & Humans* (Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2010)

Yusoff, K. *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* (University of Minnesota Press, 2018)

Note: red asterisks ** inserted above indicate limited electronic access. This may require adjusting how you prep for relevant class sessions. Alternatively, you can purchase the book.

* * *

Attendance: As a courtesy to all, please arrive punctually and remain until the end of class.

If you must miss a session, please inform me ahead of time (or as soon as possible) and share appropriate documentation. In such cases you are responsible for contacting a classmate to obtain notes on materials and topics covered while away.

Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are always excused; however, proper notification should still be provided.

Multiple unexcused absences (more than 2) may undermine academic performance and even risk failing the course. Students with perfect or near perfect attendance will, however, receive bonus credit. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

* * *

Evaluations

Final grades will be determined according to the following criteria/assignments:

Participation (& related class activities)	25%	Ongoing
Seminar presentation (& discussion prompt)	10%	TBA: sign up sheet
Seminar report	20%	TBA: sign up sheet
Term project abstract	5%	Oct 3
Annotated bibliography 1	10%	Oct 10
Annotated bibliography 2	10%	Nov 28
Final term project paper	20%	Dec 5

Participation: Your engagement with class-related activities and discussions will be assessed in terms of focus and consistency as well as other specific contributions you make to the overall success of the course. So please come to each session prepared to share your impressions, questions, and interpretations of all assigned materials. In-group activities will include providing feed-back on weekly seminar reports and collaborating on a working list of critical lineages and descendants that we can claim for/from socio-cultural anthropology. I likewise encourage you to visit office hours two or three times during the semester to talk about your progress in the course and plans for the final project.

Presentation & discussion prompt: During our first class, you will select a theme-week from the course calendar for the date you wish to guide discussion. You might therefore review the syllabus ahead of time, looking for two, or perhaps three weeks with topics and materials that closely align with your own interests and/or program of study.

On your assigned week, you should circulate a list of discussion points and questions *via Canvas* at least **24 hours prior to your seminar presentation** (in other words: *no later than 9am on Sunday*). Then, when class begins, you should open the session with a 10-to -15-minute presentation that provides an overview of that week's readings, before leading the class through a more in-depth group conversation. One excellent and efficient way to start off is by reading your written seminar report to the class (see below).

The Seminar Report is a short essay, 5-6 pages in length, that undertakes a close interpretation of one or more assigned texts. Writing a succinct, insightful essay has one overarching purpose: to help others better grasp what they have also read.

This assignment not only gives you a chance to practice the art of seminar paper writing, you will also receive constructive feedback from the class (instructor and peers).

While we will talk more about how to approach this assignment, here is some general advice:

a seminar report should not merely summarize but offer a well-crafted, spirited interpretation, which situates the required readings within the ideas and concepts of the course. It should outline specific concerns as well as hone questions. For that, an economy of language and a precision of one's written words is key.

The seminar report is due at the beginning of class on the week you have chosen to lead discussion.

Annotated bibliographies: These are two, and largely parallel, assignments. Your first bibliography should focus on the *histories* of socio-anthropology; your second on *theoretical* modes of inquiry. In each you should demonstrate how the individual texts selected are relevant to your research, while also explaining how they influence and support your arguments and/or project objectives. Each bibliography should begin with brief 250-word description followed by a list of at least 20 annotated entries. Ten of those entries should be scholarly works from our class: i.e., readings that are assigned, supplemental or drawn from the Canvas course archive.

Project abstract: In 250-300 words describe your research project, setting forth its major questions and contributions to socio-cultural anthropology.

The Term project essay is an opportunity to craft an original, persuasive, and creative engagement with the project you have already described in your abstract. The expected length is between 5500 & 7000 words. I encourage you to use this assignment pragmatically: for instance, you could prepare a grant proposal or write something else that will contribute to your professional development (e.g., a conference paper, journal article, publishable essay, or thesis chapter). That said, you are welcome to experiment with the form of your writing. You can include different kinds of representational media if you wish. Thus, you have many options and lots of leeway in terms of genre and style. Whichever representational route you ultimately decide to go with, please be prepared to justify the choices you have made.

All assignments should be submitted via Canvas: typed in a common 12pt font and double-spaced with one-inch margins and pages numbered.

Assignment Deadlines

- *seminar paper* - TBA
- *term project abstract* – 10/03
- *annotated bibliography 1* – 10/10
- *annotated bibliography 2* – 11/28
- *term project essay* – 12/5

Late policy: Apart from the term paper, I can accept any assignment handed-in for a grade up to one week (7 days) past their scheduled due date. Late assignments will, however, be docked 10 points (on a letter grade / 100-point scale). Unfortunately, there can be **no extensions for the term project essay**.

* * *

Academic Honesty: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code](#). Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments: 94-100=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 83-86=B; 79-82=B-; 76-78=C+; 72-75=C; 69-71=C-; 66-68=D+; 62-65=D; 59-61=D-; 58 and below=E (failing). Click [this link to consult current UF policies for grades and grading](#).

Course feedback: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#).

* * *

Additional UF Resources:

Health & Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#)

Academic

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- *Student Complaints On-Campus*: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information](#).
- *On-Line Students Complaints*: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).
- *Anthropology Library Guide*: <http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/c.php?g=147739&p=969917>

* * *

Please note: I may make minor adjustments to class readings or assignment requirements during the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.

course schedule

week 1 from intellectual traditions to institutional presents

8/29

Simpson, "On Ethnographic Refusal"

Raffles, "The Deepest of Reveries"

Martin, "Bidding "bon voyage" to la pensée sauvage"

Carroll, "What the Tortoise said to Achilles"

Deleuze, *What is Grounding?*: section 1

supplemental: Report of the Presidential Task Force on African & Native American History & the University of Florida, April 2022

week 2 "Florida" (in the recursive origins of anthropology)

9/5

no class: Labor Day

Dubcovsky & Broadwell, "Writing Timucua"

Palmer, "Tracing the Schoolhouse/Big House Legacy"

Sturtevant & Cattelino, "Florida Seminole & Miccosukee"

supplemental:

Goggin, "Osceola: Portraits, Features, & Dress"

Greene, "Being Indian at Fort Marion"

*Also please review other images in Week 2 archive
(Le Moyne, Bartram, etc.)*

week 3 peoples and their lands

9/12

Treuer, *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee*: Part 1

Marx, "On the Jewish Question"

Miller, "Seminoles and Africans Under Seminole Law"

Monaco, "Whose War was It?"

supplemental:

Treuer, *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee*: Parts 4 & 7 (and *passim*)

Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigeneous People's History of the United States*: Chapters 2 & 4

Roca & Martínez-Díaz, "The Institutionalization of Social Anthropology in Western Andalusia: A Struggle for a Decolonized Discipline"

week 4

Boasian texts

9/19

Boas, "The Study of Geography"

Bunzl, "Franz Boas & the Humboldtian Tradition"

Berman, "'The Culture as it appears to the Indian Himself'"

Bruchac, "My Sisters Will Not Speak: Boas, Hunt & the Ethnographic Silencing of First Nations Women"

Hurston, *Mules and Men* (excerpts)

Wilson, "Irving Goldman & the Spirit of Franz Boas"

Goldman, *Cubeo Hehénewa Religious Thought*: Introduction

supplemental:

Stocking, "Franz Boas & the Culture Concept in Historical Perspective"

Baker, "Rethinking Race at the Turn of the Century"

Ward, "Truths, Lies, Mules and Men"

week 5

species of sense

9/26

Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morality*: Essay II

Stewart, "Arresting Images"

Deleuze, "Instincts & Institutions"

Gibson, "The Theory of Affordances"

Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals & Humans*

supplemental: Clifford, "On Ethnographic Surrealism"

week 6

readings of time

10/3

Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*

Buck-Morss, "Hegel & Haiti"

New York Times special series: on Haiti & coerced reparations to enslavers

week 7

value, ledgers, risk

10/10

Marx, *Capital*, Vol 1, Book 1, Chapter 1

Weber, *Protestant Ethic & the Spirit of Capitalism*: Chapter 2

Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure"

Cattelino, *High Stakes*: chapters 1, 2 3, 5

supplemental:

E.P. Thompson, *Time, Work-Discipline & Industrial Capitalism*

Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace"

week 8

language, utterance, genre

10/17

Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, Part I

Volosinov, *Marxism & the Philosophy of Language* (Part II, 1-4; Part III, 1-3)

Bakhtin, "The Problem of Speech Genres"

Fanon, "The Negro & Language"

supplemental:

Malinowski, "An Ethnographic Theory of Language" (Div. III & IV)

Jakobson, "The Spell of Speech Sounds"

week 9

islands

10/24

Césaire, *A Return to the Native Land* (original 1939 notebook)

Glissant, *The Poetics of Relation* (excerpts)

Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness"

Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle"

supplemental:

Mills, *The Racial Contract*: Chapter 1

Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom"

week 10

archives, geologies...

10/31

Hunt, *A Nervous State* (selected chapters)

Yosoff, *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*

supplemental:

Leiris, "The Ethnographer Faced with Colonialism"

Clifford, "Tell us about your trip: Michel Leiris"

week 11

by order of kin

11/7

Deloria, *Waterlily*

Lévi-Strauss, "The Principle of Reciprocity"

Rubin, "The Traffic in Women"

Geertz, C. & Geertz, H., "Teknonymy in Bali"

Hurston, "Sweat"

supplemental:

Cotera, "Standing on the Middle Ground: Ella Deloria's Decolonizing Methodology"

week 12

myth

11/14

Lévi-Strauss, *The Story of the Lynx*

Gow, "Of the Story of the Lynx: Lévi-Strauss & Alterity"

supplemental: Hugh-Jones, "A courtship but not much of a marriage"

week 13

ritual, technics (or is it magic?)

11/21

Mauss, "Techniques of the Body"

Agamben, *The Sacrament of Language*

Goldman, "Winter Ceremonial (I & II)"

Taussig, "Viscerality, Faith, and Skepticism"

Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture & Speech*: Chapter 8

supplemental: Mauss, *Manual of Ethnography*: Chapter 4

week 14

on flourishing | toxic ecologies

11/28

Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*

supplemental: Cattelino, "The cultural politics of water in the Everglades & beyond"

week 15

final presentations

12/5

research projects & closing remarks