

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
ANT 2410 – Spring 2013



sections 3121, 4098, 4099, 4108, 4114 & 4123

Lecture: Tuesdays 8-9 (3pm-4:55pm) WEIM 1064

Discussion: Thursdays

4098 - R 4 (10:40am-11:30am) LEI 0242

4099 - R 5 (11:45am-12:35pm) LIT 0203

4108 - R 6 (12:50pm-1:40pm) LIT 0237

4114 - R 7 (1:55pm-2:45pm) LIT 0235

3121 - R 8 (3pm-3:50pm) LIT 0201

4123 - R 9 (4:05-4:55pm) LIT 0235

Instructor: Dr. Richard Kernaghan
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Turlington Hall B121
Office hours: Wednesdays 2-5pm
or by appointment

TA: Yang Jiao
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Tuesdays & Fridays
1:30-2:30pm (TUR B346)

TA: Jamie Lee Marks
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Weds. 1:30-2:30 (TUR B346)
Fridays 1:30-2:30 (TIG 302)

Description:

Cultural anthropologists study the distinctive ways people create, negotiate and make sense of their social worlds. Through research in places both far away and near to home, anthropologists examine the factors that influence and determine social belonging and exclusion, whether based in gender, kinship, religion, political economy or historical constructions of race, ethnicity and citizenship. The scope of cultural anthropology is thus broad, and its practitioners pursue a variety of approaches as they explore diverse human phenomena. This class will provide an introduction to the discipline through a consideration of several everyday themes that hold an important place in the intellectual tradition of anthropology and are of vital relevance today.

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to increase students' familiarity and comfort with anthropological notions—such as reciprocity, personhood, the sacred—and to show how these same concepts can increase critical awareness and understanding of our own lives as unfolding across multiple communities. In so doing, the course aims to enhance sensitivity to social differences, while also underscoring the moral and ethical dimensions entailed by ethnographic research. This course will furthermore be an opportunity for each of us to hone our interpretative skills so that we become ever more perceptive as readers, accomplished as writers and generous as participants in group discussions.

Required Texts:

Augé & Colleyn. *The World of the Anthropologist* (Berg, 2006)
Clastres. *Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians* (Zone Books, 1998)
Gonzalez. *Unveiling Secrets of War in the Peruvian Andes* (University of Chicago, 2011)
Biehl. *Vita* (University California Press, 2005)

All other class readings can be downloaded from the Sakai course page.

Summary of course structure and requirements:

On Tuesdays the entire class will meet in WEIM 1064 for a lecture including your own questions and comments. Frequently we will then screen an ethnographic film or documentary. On Thursdays the class will split up into section groups for in-depth discussion of readings and films, course concepts and projects. Discussion sections are led by Yang and Jamie Lee—our wonderful Teaching Assistants.

During the semester you will be asked to complete four ethnographic experiments and to compose two brief response papers on specified readings. There will also be a mid-semester in class exam, a 6-page term project paper, and numerous pop quizzes.

Class etiquette:

Please arrive to all sessions punctually with that week's assigned materials in hand. It is important that you have carefully reviewed all required readings *prior to class*, so you will be in a position to share your informed questions, impressions and interpretations.

We strongly request that you refrain from leaving in the middle of class. If you know ahead of time you will need to depart early, then please sit next to the door so that you can minimize disruption. On lecture days there will be a 10-minute break mid-session to stretch legs, get a drink at the water fountain or use the restroom.

Laptops may be used to take notes during the Tuesday lecture but *not* in the Thursday discussion section. Kindly turn cell phones to silent for the duration of class.

Evaluations – Final course grades will be determined in light of five criteria:

○ **Participation & pop quizzes (10%)**

Participation will be evaluated based on various measures of the degree to which you have played an active, informed role in class. These measure include volunteered commentary and questions, attendance and quizzes. You are also encouraged to meet with Dr. Kernaghan or with your assigned TA in office hours to talk about course content or your ideas and plans for the final project.

○ **Two ethnographic experiments (10%)**

These are brief exercises in the observation of some contemporary setting of social life, including explorations of personal memory. For each exercise you will be asked to craft a 300-word report of your findings and reflections.

○ **Two short writing assignments, 650-700 words each (20%)**

Short writing assignments are synthetic response papers in which you are asked to address a question derived from the readings. They will give you an opportunity to develop and demonstrate a good grasp of the material.

○ **Mid-semester in class exam (25%)**

The midterm will test your familiarity with specific readings as well as major concepts that have emerged in class discussions during the first half of the semester.

○ **Term project paper with supplementary ethnographic journal (35%)**

The *term paper* is a 1600-1800 word ethnographic exploration of one of four class themes (Names, Gifts, Secrets or Death) through the lens of *a personal experience of your own or of someone who you know well*. As part of your research and in preparation for writing the final paper you are required to keep fieldnotes (research journal, diary, scrapbook, etc.) and submit them at the end of the semester. The specific details of the research can be worked out in consultation with Dr. Kernaghan or your TA. We encourage you to be creative in your approach and in selecting the exact form your final paper will take.

A concise and compelling 250-word abstract outlining the objectives of your project is due on March 14. The term paper and accompanying fieldnotes must be handed in no later than the last day of class (Apr. 23).

Papers for this class must be submitted twice: first through Sakai, using the Turnitin review service; and then, in printed/hard copy form to the TA *by the beginning of class* the day they are due. With the exception of quizzes and exams, all assignments must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins and pages numbered.

Attendance: If you must miss class, please inform your TA ahead of time (or as soon as possible) and present appropriate documentation. It is your responsibility to contact a classmate to obtain notes on the materials covered while away. Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are always excused; however, proper notification should still be provided.

Please note: Since participation as well as assimilation of vital class materials depend upon attendance, multiple absences (4 & above) will necessarily undermine academic performance. Students who have a high number of absences risk failing the course. On the other hand, students with perfect or near perfect attendance will receive bonus credit.

For official UF Policy on attendance and absences please consult:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Assignment Deadlines and Exam date:

- 1) ethnographic exercises: Jan. 17, Feb. 14
- 2) reading response papers: Feb. 7, Mar 28.
- 3) mid-term in class exam: Feb. 26
- 4) final paper abstract: Mar. 14
- 5) term paper: Apr. 23

Late work & make-up exams: All assignments must be submitted *by the beginning of class* on the due date. Short assignments handed in late but still within one week of the original due date will be docked a letter grade. After one week, they will no longer be accepted. No extensions will be granted for the research paper. Make-up exams will be allowed only for excused absences. There will be no second chances to take missed quizzes.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. All work submitted for a grade must be free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations of one's own effort. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question. In such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students.

If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. These are available online at

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studenthandbook/studentrights.php#academichonestyguidelines>

ADA Statement: “Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the [Disability Resource Center](#) to assist in planning accommodations.”

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments and exams: 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).

Regarding university grading policies, be advised that a grade of C- is not valid for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or for college basic distribution credit. For questions about minus grades, please see <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>.

You may consult current UF policy on how grade point averages are calculated at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>.

Additional UF Resources:

Reading & Writing Center (Broward Hall, 392-0791)

Career Resource Center (Reitz Union, 392-1601)

University Counseling Center (301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575),

Student Mental Health (Student Health Care Center, 392-1171), and

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (Student Health Care Center, 392-1161)

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

Course Schedule

week 1

What is cultural anthropology?

1/8

introductions

film: *First Contact* (Connolly & Anderson)

1/10

Williams, "Culture"
Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (selected vignettes 1)

backdrop reading: Augé & Colleyn, pp. 1-44

I. Ethnography

week 2

strangers & estrangements

1/15

Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (selected vignettes 2)
Simmel, "The Stranger"
Mauss, "Bodily Techniques"

recommended:

- Giridharadas, "Getting in (and out of line)"
- Fortes, "Strangers"

film: *Nanook of the North* (Flaherty)

1/17

Leiris, "The Sacred in Everyday Life"
Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (selected vignettes 3)
Raffles, *Insectopedia*: "Beauty"

exercise one due

backdrop reading: Augé & Colleyn, pp. 44-80

week 3

fieldnotes

1/22

Augé, "Memories"
Augé & Colleyn, pp. 81-95: "The Field"
Ottenberg, "Thirty Years of Fieldnotes"

recommended:

- Clifford, "On Ethnographic Surrealism"
- Moore, "Explaining the Present"

short films:

Binary Selves (Erica Lord)
The Cut-Ups (Burroughs)

1/24

Bowen/Bohannon, *Return to Laughter*, Ch. 4
Burroughs, "The Cut-Up Method of Brion Gyson"

backdrop reading: Augé & Colleyn, pp. 96-131

II. NAMES

week 4

personhood

1/29

Benjamin, "In the Sun"
Clastres, *Chronicle of the Guayaki*, Ch. 1: Birth
Scott, "The Creation of Surnames"

film: *108 Cuchillo de Palo* (Renate Costa) [first half]

recommended:

- Romero, "A Culture of Naming That Even a Law May Not Tame"
- Morris, "What's in a Name (Part I)"
- Frazer, "Personal Names Tabooed"

1/31

Bodenhorn, "Calling into Being"

week 5

classing people and things

2/5

Clastres, *Chronicle*, Ch. 4: The Grown-Ups
Agamben, "Magic & Happiness"

recommended:

- Wines, "In a Land of Homemade Names, Tiffany Doesn't Cut It"
- Raffles, *Insectopedia*, pp. 141-161

film: *108 Cuchillo de Palo* (Renate Costa) [second half]

2/7

Levi-Strauss, "The Individual as Species"

paper 1 due

III. GIFTS

week 6

moral community

2/12

Mauss, *The Gift*: Introduction
Clastres, *Chronicle*, Ch. 5: Women, Honey & War; Ch. 6: Killing

recommended:

- Emerson, "Gifts"
- Boas & Hunt, "The Potlatch"

short films:

Dances of the Kwaliutl (Gardiner & Heick)
Blunden Harbor (Gardiner & Heick)
Night Cries: A rural tragedy (Tracey Moffatt)

2/14

Ferraro, "Trueque"

exercise 2 due

recommended:

- Baudelaire, "Counterfeit money"

week 7

fortune (or crime)

2/19

Caillois, "The Myth of Secret Treasure in Childhood"
Taussig, "The Sun Gives without Receiving"

recommended:

- Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure"

film: *Manufactured Landscapes* (Burtynsky)

2/21

Newell, "Estranged Belongings"

week 8

Exam and final project preparations

2/26

In-class Mid-term

2/28

term project planning session

Spring Break

3/5 & 3/7

NO CLASS

IV. SECRETS

week 9

magnifying life

3/12

Simmel, "Secrecy"
Canetti, "Secrecy"
Caillois, "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia"

recommended

o Raffles, "Excess"

guest lecture (tbc): Richard Freeman

3/14

Van Tilburg, "Interviews of the Unspoken"

project abstract due

week 10

the unsaid

3/19

Gonzalez, *Unveiling Secrets of War*, Chs: I, II, III
In class review of the *Piraa Causa* paintings

3/21

discussion

week 11

public secrecy

3/26

Gonzalez, *Unveiling Secrets of War*, Chs: VII & VIII
In class Q & A with the author (via skype)

3/28

discussion

paper 2 due

V. DEATH

week 12

dying: personal & impersonal

4/2

Raffles, "Death"
Hurston, "Zombies"
Hertz, "A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death"

recommended:

- Wilenz, "A Zombie is a Slave Forever"
- Zimmer, "Deciphering the Tools of Nature's Zombies"
- Mauss, "the idea of death suggested by the collectivity"

4/4

Seremetakis, "The Ethics of Antiphony"

week 13

dead to the social

4/9

Biehl, Vita: Intro

film: *Forever* (Honigmann)

4/11

Biehl, Part I

week 14

language & subjectivity

4/16

Biehl, Part II

film: *Maquilapolis* (Funari & De la Torre)

4/18

Biehl, Part IV

week 15

concluding remarks

4/23

Biehl, Part VI

term project due