

# 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](mailto:kernaghan@ufl.edu)

office hours:

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

This class explores intellectual genealogies, institutional histories and conceptual innovations of Socio-Cultural Anthropology. Designed for master's and doctoral-level students, the course asks how returning to canonical texts, and to canon-breaking concerns, of the discipline—through careful *reading*, *reflecting* and *writing*—can better inform our training and contributions as scholars.

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**Summary of Requirements:** The class will be run as an in-person seminar with active participation expected in all discussions and activities. 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 bibliography (on histories and theories of socio-cultural anthropology) as well as a term paper on own's own research explored through the lens of relevant course concepts and themes.

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**Conceptual Overview:** 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.

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**Learning Objectives:** In this class, students will:

1. Compare major intellectual traditions & institutional sites of socio-cultural anthropology

2. Collaborate in the curation of online resources responsive to shared seminar priorities
3. Build an archive of bibliographic materials tailored to each student's 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 tendencies of socio-cultural anthropology

### **Class Approach, Materials & Etiquette**

Collaborative in practice and in spirit, during our in-class sessions we will value reading in a robust sense. Each week we will take time to attend to explicit intensions and obvious meanings in assigned texts, all the while scanning for unanticipated angles of approximation. While aiming for a mode of critical inquiry that is always generous and seldom satisfied with negating gestures, we will push to discover latent potentials that may not have been altogether apparent to the original authors or creators.

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**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:

Cattelino, J. *High Stakes* (Duke University Press, 2008)  
Césaire, A., *Original 1939 Notebook of a Return to the Native Land* (Wesleyan Univ. Press, 2013)  
Deloria, E.C., *Waterlily* (University of Nebraska Press, 2009)  
Khan, N. *River Life and the Upspring of Nature* (Duke University Press, 2023) \*  
Malinowski, B. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (Waveland Press, 1984)  
Ortiz, F. *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Duke University Press, 1995) \*  
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)

**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.

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**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 provide appropriate documentation (*except for religious holidays*). In such cases you are responsible for contacting a classmate to obtain notes on materials and topics covered while away.

In accord with university attendance policies ([click here to read](#)), absences for reasons of illness, religious holiday, and official university business are excused.

If the absence is planned, please notify me ahead of time and as early as possible.

If the absence is unplanned, then as soon as it is feasible for you to do so.

**Please note:** Since participation as well as assimilation of class materials depend upon attendance, multiple absences (4 & above) will undermine academic performance and may even risk failing. Students, however, with perfect or near perfect attendance will receive bonus credit.

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### Evaluations

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

<b>Participation (&amp; related class activities)</b>	20%	Ongoing
<b>Seminar presentation (&amp; discussion prompt)</b>	15%	TBA: sign up sheet
<b>Seminar report</b>	20%	TBA: sign up sheet
<b>Term project abstract</b>	5%	Oct 14
<b>Annotated bibliography</b>	15%	Nov 4
<b>Final term project paper</b>	25%	Dec 2

**Participation:** A grade will be assessed at the end of the semester based on the degree to which you have played an active and informed role in class discussions, contributing therein to the overall success of the course. Therefore, it is important to arrive at each session prepared to share impressions, questions and interpretations of all assigned materials. Participation also includes in-group activities, such as providing feedback on weekly seminar reports; and collaborating on a working list of critical lineages and descendants that we can claim for/from socio-cultural anthropology.

Finally, you are highly encouraged to meet with me individually in office hours to talk about your writing and on-going work towards the final project.

#### *participation grading scheme*

5% / 5 points - **i.** regular, punctual attendance

5% / 5 points - **ii.** attentive listening, informed contributions during in-class conversations

5% / 5 points - **iii.** sharing written questions and other in-group activities

5% / 5 points - **iv.** effective communication with instructor (i.e. email, office hours, etc.)

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 bibliography: Create a list of at least 20 annotated entries, using a standard recognized academic form of bibliographic citation (i.e. Chicago, Harvard, etc.). Ten of your entries must be scholarly works from our class: i.e., readings that are assigned, supplemental or drawn from the Canvas course archive. After each bibliographic of the 20+ entries, explain in several sentences how the cited work is relevant to your own research. Be as specific as possible. In which ways does the work support your arguments and/or project objectives?

Once you have compiled the annotated entries and put them in alphabetical order, craft a brief 250-word abstract providing an overview of your collection and set that description at the beginning of your document.

**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* & presentation – TBA
- *term project abstract* – 10/14
- *annotated bibliography* – 11/4
- *term project essay* – 12/2

**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). After that they will no longer be accepted, unless justified by mitigating circumstances (e.g. a documented accident, illness, etc.). *Please note:* For the final paper extensions are generally not granted, except in special, extenuating cases, as mentioned above, and in accordance with university policies (those policies may be consulted by clicking [here](#)).

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**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/](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#).

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### **Additional UF Resources:**

#### Health & Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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 Flexible Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)
- *Anthropology Library Guide*: <http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/c.php?g=147739&p=969917>

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**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

#### **cultures to canons**

(or “what can we expect from ethnology?”)

8/26

Krenak, “The Humanity We Think We Are”

Hurston, “Florida’s Farm Labor”

Simpson, “On Ethnographic Refusal”

Raffles, “The Deepest of Reveries”

**film:** *Reassemblage* (1983, Trinh T. Minh-ha)

supplemental:

Taylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. 1, Chapters 1 & 2

Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks*: Chapters VI & VII

Stocking, “Matthew Arnold, E. B. Tylor, and the Uses of Invention”

### week 2

#### **peoples and their lands**

9/2

**no class:** Labor Day

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

Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, Chapter 2: “A Brief History of Land, Meaning, and Membership in Iroquoia and Kahnawà-ke,”

Simmons, “Settler Atmospheric”

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Rose, *Dingo Makes Us Human*: Chapters 1-7, postscript.

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Asad (ed.), *Anthropology & The Colonial Encounter*, 9-19, 103-118.

supplemental:

Morgan, *Ancient Society*, Part I

Sturtevant & Cattelino, "Florida Seminole & Miccosukee"

Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot"

Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, Lect. 4: "Historical Discourse & its Supporters"

**week 3**

**the imponderabilia of others: strangers, hosts, parasites...**

9/9

Radcliffe-Brown, "On the Concept of Function in Social Science"

Deleuze, "Instincts & Institutions"

Malinowski, *Argonauts of Western Pacific*: intro; Chapters III, IV & V

Munn, "The Spatial Temporal Transformations of Gawa Canoes"

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Pitt-Rivers, "The Law of Hospitality"

Col, "The Poisoner and the Parasite"

supplemental:

Stocking, "The Ethnographers' Magic: Fieldwork in British Anthropology from Tylor to Malinowski"

Maine, *Ancient Law*, Chapter III: "Law of Nature and Equity"

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

**week 4**

**Boasian texts**

9/16

Boas, "The Study of Geography"

Bunzl, "Franz Boas & the Humboldtian Tradition"

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

Hurston, *Mules and Men* (excerpts)

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

supplemental:

Boas, "Human Faculty as Determined by Race."

Harrison, "The Du Boisian Legacy in Anthropology"

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

Ward, "Truths, Lies, Mules and Men"

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

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

**week 5**

**species of sense**

9/23

Mauss, *The Gift*: Introduction, Chapter 1, Conclusion

Weiner, "Inalienable Wealth"

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Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morality*: Essay II

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

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Gibson, "The Theory of Affordances"

Revolon, "Iridescence as Affordance"

supplemental:

Durkheim, "What is a social fact?"

Durkheim & Mauss, *Primitive Classification*

**week 6**

**readings of time**

9/30

Freud, "A Note upon the 'Mystic Writing Pad'"

Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*

Buck-Morss, "Hegel & Haiti"

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

supplemental:

Koselleck, "Historical Criteria of the Modern Concept of Revolution"

Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Chapter 3: Time and Space.

**week 7**

**value and valuation**

10/7

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

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

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

Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure"

supplemental:

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

Cole, "Fresh contact in Tamatave, Madagascar"

**week 8**

**utterance, genre, language**

10/14

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

Fanon, "The Negro & Language"

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Bakhtin, "The Problem of Speech Genres"

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

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Gluckman, "Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand"

supplemental:

Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, Part I

Jakobson, "Linguistics & Poetics"

Tambiah, "The Magical Power of Words"

**week 9**

**from islands to things**

10/21

Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco & Sugar*, ix-103; 267-309

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Glissant, *The Poetics of Relation* (excerpts)

supplemental:

Mintz, "Enduring substances, trying theories: the Caribbean region as *Oikoumene*"

Ferry, "The Birth of the Mineral Species 'Aguilarite' and What Came Next"

**week 10**

**by order of kin**

10/28

Deloria, *Waterlily*

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Rubin, "The Traffic in Women"

Strathern, "The World Outside"

Hurston, "Sweat"

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

TallBear, "Caretaking relations"

supplemental:

Lévi-Strauss, "The Principle of Reciprocity"

Ortner, "Is female to male as nature is to culture?"

Carsten, "Substance and Relationality"

**week 11**

**myth**

11/4

Boas, "The Growth of Indian Mythologies"

Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw & The Cooked*: Overture + Bororo Song

Turner, T. *The Fire of the Jaguar*: Part I + "The Crisis of Late Structuralism"

supplemental:

Viveiros de Castro, "Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism"

**week 12**

**nature, matter | shifting grounds**

11/11

**no class:** Veterans Day

Khan, *River Life and the Upspring of Nature*

supplemental:

Mueggler, "Reading, Glaciers & Love in Botanical Exploration of China's Borderlands"

Ferry, "Materiality & Substance"

Herodotus, *Histories*, Book II

**week 13**

**ritual, technique, trick**

11/18

Mauss, "Techniques of the Body"

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

Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon*, Chapter 7: Debris

Martino, *Magic: A Theory from the South*, Part I

Favret-Saada, *The Anti-Witch*

supplemental:

Mauss, *Manual of Ethnography*: Chapter 4

Taussig, "Viscerality, Faith, and Skepticism"

