

Course Syllabus

ANTHROPOLOGY 3AC

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Fall 2014

Tu/Th 11:00-12:30

Dwinelle 155

Professor Charles Hirschkind

113 Kroeber

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Professor's Office hours: Tuesday, 1PM-3PM

Head GSI: Rosa Norton

Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the basic concepts, ideas, issues, and debates in cultural anthropology. As we will explore in the beginning of the course, the discipline of anthropology emerged at an historical moment in the late 19th century when the pragmatics of colonial administration became linked to the scientific ambition to document the varieties of human existence, when romantic exoticism became entwined with humanist universalism. Since the discipline's inception, anthropologists have dedicated themselves to exploring human societies in all of their diversity: the distinct cultures, politics, economies, and environments by which people have given shape to different ways of living, working, speaking, and understanding. While our scope in this class will be global, and will lead us to examine in some detail the heterogeneity of cultural forms found in non-Western societies, we will pay particular attention to various forms of politics, economics, and culture that exist within the US.

Student Responsibilities

Attendance: Attendance at discussion sections is required, and attendance records will be kept by your GSI. You are expected to participate actively in discussion section. Section attendance and participation will constitute 15% of your grade. If prolonged illness or emergencies require you to miss several sections, GSIs will expect you to provide advance notice and documentation. In addition, attendance at

lectures is strongly encouraged. Many of the questions that will appear on the midterm and final exam will be drawn directly from lecture material. If you miss lectures, you are jeopardizing your success on exams.

Preparation

All reading assignments should be completed before your section meeting for the week indicated on the class schedule below. If possible you should finish readings before the lecture as well; this will make the presentation much easier to follow.

Collegiality

It is expected that students will be attentive and respectful of their fellow students and of their instructor and GSIs. Please arrive at the lecture on time, and wait until it has concluded before leaving. Sometimes a film will run slightly longer than the time allotted: please stay for the conclusion of the film. If you must leave, please keep in mind that others are watching and trying to listen, and exit as quietly as you can.

Grading

There will be both a midterm and final exam. Both exams are composed entirely of short essay questions. The in-class midterm exam will be held on *Tuesday, October 7th* and will draw from all of the material covered prior to that date in class lectures, guest lectures, discussion sections, readings, films, and videos. The final exam, scheduled for *Wednesday, December 17th*, from 8:00am-11:00am, will encompass everything covered since the midterm.

In addition to the exams, you will need to write: A) A *Response Paper*, two double-spaced pages long, in which you discuss one of the assigned texts. In this paper, you will not simply summarize the text, but engage with it: take issue with an argument made by the author, elaborate on the importance of the analysis presented, draw a parallel with other texts, arguments, or issues discussed in the class. During the second week of class, your GSIs will select two of the course readings, one of which you will discuss in your Response Paper. The Paper will be due in lecture on *Tuesday, September 23rd*. B) A *Research Project*. Your GSI will explain how these projects are to be carried out. They will be due in lecture on *Tuesday, November 25th*.

Overall grade calculus:

Discussion section participation: 15%

Response paper: 10%

Ethnographic research project: 20%

Midterm exam: 20%

Final exam: 35%

Required Readings

The following books are required and may be purchased at the ASUC Bookstore:

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1976. *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic*. Oxford University Press, USA; Abridged edition.

Kincaid, Jamaica. 2000. *A Small Place*. Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux.

The remainder of the required readings for the course are compiled in the ANTHR 3AC COURSE READER, available at:

Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way.

Schedule of Readings/Films

WEEK 1: Introduction to Class: An Anthropological Perspective?

Thursday, August 28th:

Syllabi, Enrollment, Course Description

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WEEK 2: The Practice of Anthropology

Tuesday, Sept. 2nd:

Miner, Horace. 1956. "Body Ritual among the Nacirema." *American Anthropologist* 58:3: pp. 503-507.

Boas, Franz, "The Methods of Ethnology." *American Anthropologist*, N.S., vol. 22 (920): 311-322.

Thursday, Sept. 4th:

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description." In The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-32.

WEEK 3: Culture, Race, Biology

Tuesday, Sept. 9th:

Franz Boas (1931) "Race and Progress." In Race, Language, and Culture. Chicago:

Univ. of Chicago Press, 1940, pp. 3-17.

W.E.B. Dubois, *Dusk of Dawn*, Chapter 5, "The Concept of Race," pp. 625-651 in WEB DuBois: Writings, Compiled by Nathan Higgins, 1986, NY NY: Library of America.

Film: The Stories We Tell

Thursday, Sept. 11th:

Sahlins, Marshall. 2001. "Critique of the Vulgar Sociobiology." In The Use and Abuse of Biology. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

WEEK 4: Colonial Contexts

Tuesday, Sept. 16th:

Asad, Talal. 1973. "Two European Images of Non-European Rule." In Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. London: Ithaca Press.

Thursday, Sept 18th:

Said, Edward. 1994. Orientalism. New York: Vintage Books. (Introduction and Afterward).

WEEK 5: Development and Debt in the Postcolony

Tuesday, Sept. 23rd:

Kincaid, Jamaica. 2000. A Small Place. Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux. (Pages 1-52)

Response paper due in lecture

Thursday, Sept. 25th:

Kincaid, A Small Place. (Pages 52-81)

Film: Life and Debt

WEEK 6: Reason and Religion

Tuesday, Sept. 30th:

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977). (Chapters 1-2).

Film: Strange Beliefs

Thursday, Oct. 2nd:

E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, (continued): Chapters 3-4.

WEEK 7: Critique of Capitalism

Tuesday, Oct. 7th: IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Thursday, Oct. 9th:

Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich. 1967 [1848]. The Communist Manifesto. Penguin Classics: London. (Chapter 1, "Bourgeois and Proletarians").

WEEK 8: Cultures of Capitalism

Tuesday, Oct. 14th:

Taussig, Michael. 1983. The Devil and Commodity Fetishism. Raleigh: University of North Carolina Press. (Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-38).

Thursday, Oct. 16th:

Taussig, Devil (continued): Chapter 5, pp. 93-111; Chapter 7, pp. 126-139.

WEEK 9: Globalization, Media, Performance

Tuesday, Oct. 21st:

Feld, Steven, 2000. "Sweet Lullaby for World Music." Public Culture 12 (1): 145-171.

Thursday, Oct. 23rd:

Cowie, Jefferson and Boehm, Lauren. 2012. "Dead Man's Town: "Born in the USA, Social History, and Working-Class Identity." In Bruce Springsteen, Cultural Studies, and the Runaway American Dream. K. Womack, J. Zolten, M. Bernhard, eds. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Press, pp. 25-44.

WEEK 10: Anthropology of the Senses

Tuesday, Oct. 28th:

Brown, Karen McCarthy. 2001. Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Introduction, Chapter 2)

Thursday, Oct. 30th:

Brown, Karen McCarthy. 2001. Mama Lola (Chapters 3-4)

Film: Les Maitres Fous

WEEK 11: Science and Gender

Tuesday, Nov. 4th:

Butler, Judith. 2001. "Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Transsexuality." GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies 7.4: 621-636.

Thursday, Nov. 6th:

Ann Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are not enough," The Sciences March/April 1993, pp. 20-24.

Film: Sex Unknown

WEEK 12: Language

Tuesday, Nov. 11th: **HOLIDAY**

Thursday, Nov. 13th:

Williams, Raymond. 1978. "Language." In Marxism and Literature. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (pp. 21-44)

Thomson, David S. 1975. "The Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis: Worlds Shaped by Words." In Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology(twelfth edition), Spradley and McCurdy, eds. Pearson: New York. (pp. 63-75).

Borges, Jorge Luis. "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" Trans. Alastair Reid. In Borges, a Reader. (pp. 111–122)—this reading is optional.

WEEK 13: Making up People

Tuesday, Nov. 18th:

Hacking, Ian. 1999. "Kind-Making: The Case of Child Abuse." In The Social Construction of What? Harvard: Harvard University Press. (pp. 125-162).

Thursday, Nov. 20th:

Dumit, Joseph. 1997. "A Digital Image of the Category of the Person." In *Cyborgs and citadels: Anthropological Interventions in Emerging Sciences and Technologies*, Downey, G. L., Dumit, J. eds. School of American Research, Santa Fe, N.M.

WEEK 14: Regulating Moral and Medical Health

Tuesday, Nov.25th:

Foucault, Michel. 1979. Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. New York: Vintage Books, pp. 3-31.

Ethnographic Research Project Due in Lecture

Thursday, Nov. 27th: HOLIDAY

WEEK 15: Discipline

Tuesday, Dec. 2nd:

Foucault, Discipline: pp. 135-169.

Thursday, Dec. 4th:

TBA

WEEK 16: READING WEEK

Final Exam: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17th, 8am-11am