

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (01.070.101.01-12, Spring 2009)

Lecture Mon and Thurs 12:35-1:55, Hickman 101, and Section according to schedule

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Course Description This course is an introduction to the discipline of cultural anthropology, surveying many of the important areas of human society and culture that anthropologists study. The first part of the course considers the ways in which anthropologists have tried to understand culture through an application of the anthropological perspective, a distinctive way of looking at the world that makes anthropology a unique discipline. Awareness of the anthropological perspective means challenging our own assumptions and cultural preconceptions about ourselves, other peoples, and the world around us. We will also discuss techniques and philosophies of ethnographic data collection, and what these tell us about the study of culture. Then, using ethnographic case studies of cultures from around the world, the class will examine some critical areas of anthropological knowledge – with a particular emphasis on politics, law, family, and social inequality – to reveal our own cultural biases and explore other ways of living practiced by peoples around the world. The course concludes with a consideration of economic organization and globalization, and the processes that are changing the way we all live in the world today.

Course Objectives My principal goal in this course is for students to develop an appreciation for and understanding of cultural difference, and to gain a relativistic view of themselves and their own culture as one particular system among many. As the world becomes increasingly globalized and the boundaries between cultures blur, all of us can benefit from a perspective that sees no one culture or way of life as superior to another. By examining our own cultural practices and comparing them with those of other peoples, we can come to understand the roles of culture, power, and economics in shaping the taken-for-granted structures and meaning systems within which we live. Thus another goal of the course is to help students sharpen their critical faculties by developing an understanding of the variety of factors – including culture, history, power, politics, and social inequality – that influence and impact people's lives. Anthropology is uniquely capable of showing students the complexity inherent in all social life, and the impossibility of reducing explanation to single-factor causes.

Course Requirements Student grades will be based on 100 points divided as follows: three exams (20 points each), one short paper (15 points), the best three out of four pop quizzes (5 points each, 15 points total), and Section participation (10 points).

Exams: Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions that address material covered in lectures, Section discussions, films and course readings since the last exam. Exams will be taken using Scantron sheets. Exam III will only cover material from the last third of the course, i.e., it is not a cumulative exam.

Short paper: One three-page paper will be assigned, due the week of Thursday, April 23 (depending on your Section), worth 15 points, or 15% of your final grade. The grading criteria will be specified on the assignment sheet.

Pop quizzes: Four pop quizzes will be given *in Lecture* during the course of the semester; you may drop your lowest quiz grade, so that your three best quizzes count towards your course grade. ***No make up quizzes will be given.***

Course Rules

Attendance: You are required to attend all class meetings. We cover a lot of material in class, all of it potentially appearing on the exams, so missing any class session can be costly. ***Attendance at recitation Section is also required.*** You are allowed two unexcused absences during the semester; thereafter, *each unexcused absence from Section* will lower your grade by 5 points.

Lateness: Please come to class on time – it is very disruptive to professor and classmates when students arrive late to class. *Students arriving late to Lecture or Section will have to wait in the hall until such time as the instructor admits them to the classroom*, usually about 15 minutes after the start of class. Do not open the door if it is closed. Two late arrivals to Section count as one unexcused absence, which after two unexcused absences will count as

minus 5 points against your final grade (see “Attendance,” above). Students arriving more than 15 minutes late *will not be admitted to Lecture or Section*, which will count as an unexcused absence.

Exams: On exam days, you are **required** to bring **your student ID** and a **pencil**. NO CHEATING will be tolerated, and anyone found cheating will receive an “F” grade for the exam. Only TWO MAKE-UP TIMES will be scheduled for Exams I and II. To qualify to take a make-up exam during these times, you must contact your TA or Prof. Goldstein within **24 hours** of missing the exam, and have a letter from your Dean as proof of an excused absence (those defined by University rules, such as a documented medical problem). If you miss **Midterm Exam I or II** with an approved excused absence, you must take the make-up during one of the two scheduled make-up times -- no exceptions will be made. If you miss **Exam III** with an approved absence, you will receive a “Temporary” grade for the class and will have to take a different version of the exam during the first week of classes in September -- no exceptions will be made.

Pop Quizzes: If you are late to class and arrive after the pop quiz has started, or if you are absent from class on the day a pop quiz is given, whatever your excuse, you will not be able to take a make-up.

Short Paper: You must bring a typed, printed copy of your paper to your Section on the date it is due -- *no late papers will be accepted*. If you have to miss class on the day the paper is due, you must put a copy in your TAs mailbox (on the 3rd floor of the Ruth Adams Building) by the end of the class you missed. *No email attachments will be accepted*.

Films: If you miss a class where a film is shown, the films will be available on reserve for one week from the date of the class showing at the Media Center in the basement of Kilmer Library on Livingston Campus. The title and call number of each video are listed on the syllabus. Call ahead to make an appointment: 732-445-4980. There will be questions on all films on each exam.

Academic Integrity: All students must strictly adhere to the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy, which identifies and defines violations of cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and denying others access to information or material. Full definitions of each of these violations, as well as the consequences of violating the Academic Integrity Policy, are available as part of the student handbook. For details see:

<http://caar.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html#Integrity>

Classroom expectations:

- All cell phones must be turned off
- No playing games or cards
- No headphones or listening to music
- Be prepared to discuss
- No reading the newspaper or other non-course material
- Show courtesy to instructors and other students

Course Website: There is a Sakai website (<https://sakai.rutgers.edu>) that accompanies this course, from which students can download course materials (syllabus, readings, lecture outlines) and receive announcements. If you have trouble accessing the site, please consult your TA.

Course Readings: There are two sources for readings in this class, listed in the syllabus as follows:

CC - James Spradley & David McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Longman. 13th EDITION – this is the only edition that contains all the assigned articles. This book is available for purchase at both the Douglass Student Coop Bookstore and Rutgers University Bookstore.

SR – Sakai Readings. These are available through the course Sakai site under “Resources.” These readings are:

SR-1: Purdum, Elizabeth D., and J. Anthony Paredes. “Rituals of Death: Capital Punishment and Human Sacrifice.”

SR-2. Goldstein, Daniel M. “Desconfianza and Problems of Representation in Urban Ethnography.”

SR-3: Malinowski, Bronislaw. “The Essentials of the Kula.”

SR-4: Lappé, Frances Moore, and J. Collins. “Why Can’t People Feed Themselves?”

SR-5: Loewen, James W. “The Truth about the First Thanksgiving.”

SR-6: di Leonardo, Micaela. “The Female World of Cards and Holidays.”

SR-7: Nanda, Serena. “Hijra and Sathin: Neither Man nor Woman in India.”

SR-8: Smedley, Audrey. “Race and the Construction of Human Identity.”

SR-9: Spradley, James, and David McCurdy. “Law and Order.”

SR-10: Mountz, Alison, and Richard Wright. “Daily Life in the Transnational Migrant Community of San Agustín, Oaxaca, and Poughkeepsie, New York.”

SR-11: Friend, Tad. “The Perfect Gift.”

- SR-12: Tierney, John. "Tips from the Potlatch, Where Giving Knows No Slump."
 SR-13: Bestor, Theodore C. "How Sushi Went Global."
 SR-14: Williamson, Nathan. "Illegal Logging and Frontier Conservation."

Course Schedule

- R 22 Jan Introduction to the Course
- M 26 Jan What is culture? What is cultural anthropology?
 Read: CC pp. 2-6, CC-1 Spradley, CC-5 Gmelch, CC-33 Miner
- R 29 Jan What happens when different cultures encounter one another?
 Read: CC-3 Bohannon, CC-29 Fox, CC-34 Shandy
 Film, "Cannibal Tours" (2-2625)
- M 2 Feb Do we have culture?
 Read: CC pp. 298-302, CC-31 Gmelch, CC-32 Dubisch
- R 5 Feb What role do rituals play in organizing our worlds?
 Read: CC-30 Freed and Freed, SR-1 Purdum and Paredes
 Film, "Cricket the Trobriand Way" (Prof's copy)
- M 9 Feb How do anthropologists study other people?
 Read: CC-2 Lee, SR-2 Goldstein
- R 12 Feb What are some useful models for trying to understand culture?
 Read: SR-4 Malinowski
 Film, "Off the Verandah" (2-2520)
- M 16 Feb Do we need history to understand culture?
 Read: SR-4 Lappé and Collins; SR-5 Loewen
 Film, "The Last Tasmanian" (2-2000)
- R 19 Feb How does language shape the way we think about and act in the world?
 Read: CC pp. 52-55, CC-6 Boxer, CC-7 Tannen, CC-8 Boehlke
 Special presentation: Prof. Laura Ahearn, Rutgers University
- M 23 Feb What can this anthropology do for me?
 Read: CC pp. 380-84, CC-38 Patten, CC-39 McCurdy, CC-40 Omohundro
 Film: "Anthropology: Real People, Real Careers" (Prof's copy)
- R 26 Feb **Exam I**
- M 2 Mar Is kinship still relevant in the modern world?
 Read: CC pp. 172-75, CC-18 Scheper-Hughes, CC-19 McCurdy
- R 5 Mar How are families organized?
 Read: CC-20 Goldstein, CC-21 Wolf, CC-22 Shandy and Moe
 Film: "Daughter from Danang" (10-356)
- M 9 Mar Special presentation: The Chiapas Media Project
- R 12 Mar Why do gender distinctions seem to matter so much?
 Read: CC pp. 210-214, CC-24 Fernea & Fernea, SR-6 di Leonardo
 Special presentation: Ms. Emily McDonald
- M 23 Mar How does inequality appear in different societies?
 Read: CC-23 Bourgois, SR-7 Nanda

- R 26 Mar How do race and ethnicity operate in the world today?
 Read: CC-23 Fish, SR-8 Smedley
 Film: "Mirrors of the Heart" (2-1916)
- M 30 Mar What kinds of political and legal systems do we find around the world?
 Read: CC pp. 259-62, CC-27 Harris, CC-26 Sutherland, SR-9 Spradley and McCurdy
- R 2 Apr Why do people migrate, and what are migration's impacts?
 Read: SR-10 Mountz and Wright
 Special presentation: Ms. Simone Delerme
- M 6 Apr **Exam II**
- R 9 Apr Passover Holiday – No Class Today
- M 13 Apr How does the environment influence livelihoods?
 Read: CC pp. 83-87, CC-10 Lee, CC-13 Reed
 Film: "N!ai: Story of a !Kung Woman" (2-1638)
- R 16 Apr How are non-capitalist economic systems organized?
 Read: CC-14 Cronk, SR-11 Friend, SR-12 Tierney
 Film: "Ongka's Big Moka" (327)
- M 20 Apr How are capitalist economic systems organized?
 Read: CC pp. 135-38, CC-12 Nietschmann
 Special presentation: Mr. Sarasij Majumder
- R 23 Apr What is globalization?
 Read: CC pp. 340-43, CC-35 Gmelch, CC-36 Condry, SR-13 Bestor
- M 27 Apr How is the global economy organized?
 Read: CC-15 Ehrenreich and Hochschild, CC-17 Patten
 Film: "The Global Assembly Line" (2-1327)
- R 30 Apr What impacts does globalization have on local communities?
 Read: CC-9 Mellor, CC-16 Weatherford, SR-14 Williamson
 Special presentation: Mr. Dillon Mahoney
- M 4 May How have indigenous communities responded to globalization?
 Read: CC-37 Turner
 Film: "Amazon Journal" (2-2757)
- W 13 May Final Exam at 12:00 PM, Hickman 101