

Introduction to Anthropology

Anthropology Department (01:590:101:91)

Summer 2020 – Section 1

Instructor: Andrés M. F. González-Saiz

Anthropologist – Los Andes University, Colombia.

M.Res in Social Anthropology – Goldsmiths, University of London, UK.

Ph.D candidate in Cultural Anthropology – Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, USA.

E-mail: amg474@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

Hours: Available by appointment.

M-T-W-Th: 1-2:50 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a general overview of the four subfields of anthropology (Biological/Physical Anthropology, Archeology, Linguistic Anthropology, and Social/Cultural Anthropology), a discipline studying social and physical practices and behaviors characteristic of humankind. Not just a historical exploration of the foundation of the discipline, this course encourages the students to analyze contemporary issues such as war, spirituality, and the material production of commodities (like fashion and technology), and their influence both in Global North societies and in those communities living in the farthest corners of earth.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of the course students will:

- Identify the theoretical contributions of the four subfields of anthropology to expand our understanding about human beings.
- Learn about various cultural traditions, aesthetic movements, social conflicts, and other social and political paradigms of different human groups from all around the world.
- Develop critical thinking skills to recognize and challenge stereotypes and myths about cultural diversity and structural inequalities.
- Understand the nature of the interdependent world we live in and that events that happen elsewhere do have an impact on the U.S and vice versa.

COURSE MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead we will rely on a range of materials, including texts, excerpts, articles from scholarly and popular media sources, websites, films, and video lectures. All readings will be available on the Canvas course site. **Keeping up with assigned readings is essential for success in the course.** Students are responsible for accessing printed materials from Canvas (if you're not yet familiar with the Canvas system, there is a link there that provides instructions under the tab "info for site members").

GRADING CRITERIA

Your course grade is based on an aggregate, or total number of points adding up to 100%. I provide all students with detailed feedback on each assignment to help identify their strengths and weaknesses in their coursework. Grades are registered on the Canvas site, so you will be able to see your grades as they are posted. Assignments and due dates are contained in the syllabus.

Grades will be based on:

Précis (4)	40%
Symbolic analysis	30%
Ethnographic exercise	30%

Final grades will be calculated according to the following grade policy:

A	93-100	C	70-76
B+	89-92	D	65-69
B	81-88	F	64 and below
C+	77-80		

Précis (40%) – See “How to Write A Précis- A Rough Guide” by Prof. Ghassem Fachandi in Resources on Canvas. Response papers are due at 6:00pm the evening before class.

Symbolic analysis (30%) – Students will present a short paper (500-1000 words) single-spaced analyzing anthropological features in a documentary film.

Ethnographic exercise (30%) Students will conduct a short ethnographic exercise of their quarantine experience registering their observations in a journal. Use of the course material is highly encouraged for the final paper. The students will present a short paper (1000-2000 words) single-spaced about their own experiences of self-isolation.

COURSE POLICIES

In order to foment the best learning environment possible, there are several guidelines that each student should follow. **Reading assignments should NOT be taken lightly.** All changes to the course schedule made in class are the responsibility of the student. The Canvas site will provide the most up-to-date listing of the schedule. The instructor will be available by appointment to meet with any student over skype, based on the preferences of the student.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Academic Integrity and Conduct

Students are expected to know and follow the Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>) as well as the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy (http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/46/2014/12/AI_Policy_2013.pdf).

The Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct is based on the premise that all members of the Rutgers University community are expected to:

1. Behave in an ethical and moral fashion, respecting the human dignity of all members of the community and resisting behavior that may cause danger or harm to others through violence, theft, or bigotry.
2. Adhere to the civil and criminal laws of the local community, state, and nation, and to regulations promulgated by the University.
3. Observe established standards of scholarship and academic freedom by respecting the intellectual property of others and by honoring the right of all students to pursue their education in an environment free from harassment and intimidation.

Thus, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in their own work, refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community and foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility within the university community.

Just In Case Web App

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/
CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/
The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / www.scarletlisteners.com/

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

COVID-19 Guidelines:

As COVID-19 transmission continues to rapidly increase within the state, the region, and our community, we want to provide you with some guidance and information about the steps we are taking to keep our environment as safe as possible.

More than 4,000 individuals in New Jersey, including some of our students and staff are confirmed with COVID-19. Needless to say, even more individuals will be identified with the virus in the coming days and weeks. Fortunately, many of the cases will be mild in nature.

With regard to employees and students who are physically on campus -- Employees and students who test positive for COVID-19 and are physically on campus or in Rutgers facilities should contact Occupational Health and Student Health directly to report the case and seek guidance. Contact information for these offices can be found in this email below the signature.

The Occupational Health and Student Health offices will then evaluate these individuals and the risk of exposure to others in accordance with the NJ Department of Health and CDC Risk Assessment Guidelines. As appropriate, Occupational Health and/or Student Health will speak to those who are deemed to be close contacts of the individual, and potentially at risk. Those who are not contacted will have been deemed to not be at-risk.

COURSE SCHEDULE

1st Unit: Conceptual foundations

1.1. Syllabus and course discussion 5/26:

Write a Précis about your own understanding of what Anthropology is. Creativity is highly encouraged!!!

Listen to the complete BBC 4 podcast series From Savage to Self. You can do that via the webpage (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06zjhfx/episodes/player>) using a smartphone, tablet or computer. Or via your preferred podcast client. Write a one-page response paper (double spaced) on what you think Anthropology is.

Class discussion:

What do you think anthropology is and does?
Why are you interested in in this particular discipline?

Who are you?

1.2. What is Anthropology? The four-field approach 5/27:

Essential readings:

Kottak, Conrad Phillip

2018 Chapter 1: What is Anthropology? *In* Window on humanity: a concise introduction to anthropology. 5th edition. Pgs. 1-18. New York: McGraw Hill.

Park, Michael Alan

2010 Chapter 1: Doing Anthropology. *In* Introducing Anthropology: An Integrated Approach, 5th edition. Pgs. 3-20. New York: McGraw Hill.

Suggested readings:

Barth, Frederik, Andre Gingrich, Robert Parkin, and Sydel Silverman.

2005 *One Discipline, Four Ways British, German, French, and American Anthropology.* The Halle Lectures. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Class discussion:

Why do you think it is important for you to learn about other cultures?
How does knowing about other ways of life influence our understanding about ourselves and our own societies?

1.3. Producing anthropological knowledge: On Methods 5/28

Essential readings:

Kottak, Conrad Phillip.

2018 “Chapter 3: Doing Anthropology.” In *Window on Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Anthropology*, 5th ed., Pgs. 41–66. New York: McGraw Hill.

Park, Michael Alan.

2010 “Chapter 2: How Anthropology Works: Methods of Inquiry.” In *Introducing Anthropology: An Integrated Approach*, 5th ed., Pgs. 21–36. New York: McGraw Hill.

Suggested readings:

Malinowski, Bronislaw.

1922 “Introduction: The Subject, Method and Scope of This Inquiry.” In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Pgs. 1–20. London: Routledge.

Class discussion:

What are the most important methodological contributions of anthropology to the social sciences?

How do you do anthropology during a global pandemic?

2nd Unit: Biological anthropology

2.1. The tree of life: Evolutionary theory in a nutshell 6/1

1st Précis due 6:00 pm (1800h) on the evening before class

Essential readings:

Lewin, Roger.

2005 “Part One: Human Evolution in Perspective.” In *Human Evolution: An Illustrated Introduction*, 5th ed., Pgs. 1–36. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Suggested readings:

Lewin, Roger, and Robert A. Foley. 2004. “Chapter 1: The Growth of the Evolutionary Perspective.” In *Principles of Human Evolution*, Pgs. 1–26. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Watch: Sir David Attenborough – Charles Darwin and the Tree of Life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qabl5eIba2g>

Class discussion:

What is the purpose of evolution?

How does anthropology was influenced by evolutionary theory?

2.2. The great leap in human evolution 6/2

Essential readings:

Klein, Richard G., and Blake Edgar.

2002 “Chapter 1: Dawn at Twilight Cave.” and “Chapter 2: Bipedal Apes.” In *The Dawn of Human Culture*, Pgs. 11–27 and 29–61. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Suggested material:

Clever Monkeys – BBC 2 Sir David Attenborough

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSVF4CuXYno>

Horgan, John

2016 “War Scholar Critiques New Study of Roots of Violence.” *Scientific American*

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/cross-check/war-scholar-critiques-new-study-of-roots-of-violence/>.

Class discussion:

Can we understand contemporary humans through the study of primates?

Are we naturally inclined to do certain things?

2.3. Q/A Session 6/3

Write a Précis about your opinion about evolutionary theory. Use the relevant course material to support your argument.

3rd Unit: Anthropological theories of culture

3.1. From Social Darwinism to Cultural Relativism 6/4

Essential readings:

Spencer, Herbert.

1876 “The Comparative Psychology of Man.” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 5: 301–316.

Wells, D. Collin

1907 “Social Darwinism.” *American Journal of Sociology* 12 (5): 695–716.

Suggested readings:

Spencer, Herbert

1882 “Progress: Its Law and Cause.” *Humboldt Library of Popular Science Literature II* (17): 233–285.

Class discussion:

Can the “survival of the fittest” be applied to human societies?

Is “adaptability” the same as “development”?

3.2. What is culture? 6/8

2nd Précis due 6:00 pm (1800h) on the evening before class

Essential readings:

Park, Michael Alan.

2010 “Chapter 4: Themes of Anthropology: Culture.” In *Introducing Anthropology: An Integrated Approach*, 5th ed., Pgs. 63–93. New York: McGraw Hill.

Bloch, Maurice

1991 “Language, Anthropology and Cognitive Science.” *Man* 26 (2): Pgs. 183–198.

Suggested readings:

Kottak, Conrad Phillip

2018 “Chapter 2: Culture.” In *Window on Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Anthropology*, 5th ed., 19–40. New York: McGraw Hill.

Class discussion:

What is culture?

Why do you think cultural differences exist?

4th Unit: Language, social structure, and power dynamics:

4.1. The lives of the others: Preparations for an ethnographic exercise 6/9

Write a Précis on your own understanding of culture and its interest for social sciences. Use relevant course materials to expand your argument.

Watch: The lives of others / Das leben der anderen (2006) – Dir. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck

4.2. Linguistics and structuralism 6/10

Essential readings:

Lévi-Strauss, Claude.

1958 “Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology.” In *Language in Culture and Society*, edited by Dell Hymes, 40–53. Harper & Row.

Saussure, Ferdinand de.

1959 “The Object of Linguistics.”, “Nature of the Linguistic Sign.”, and “Linguistic Value.” In *Course in General Linguistics*, edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, 7–17, 65-70, 111-122. New York: Philosophical Library.

Suggested readings:

Peirce, Charles Sanders. 1955. “Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs.” In *The Philosophical Writings of Peirce*, edited by Justus Buchler, 98–119. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

Class discussion:

What are the most important contributions of linguistics to the field of anthropology?

What is a social structure?

4.3. Marxism and anthropology 6/11

Essential readings:

Taussig, Michael T.

1980 “Chapter 1: Fetishism and Dialectical Deconstruction.”, “Chapter 2: The Devil and Commodity Fetishism.”, and “Chapter 5: The Devil and the Cosmogonesis of Capitalism.” In *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*, 30th anniversary, 3-12, 13-40, and 93–111. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Suggested readings:

Lenin, V. I. [1913]1963. "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism." In *Collected Works*, 19: March-December 1913:23–28. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Class discussion:

What does Taussig mean by commodity fetishism?

How do Marxist theory conceptualize social relations within our contemporary societies?

4.4. Symbolic anthropology: The thrive for an ethnographic thick description 6/15

3rd response paper due 6:00 pm (1800h) on the evening before class

Essential readings:

Geertz, Clifford.

1973 "Chapter 15: Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight." In *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 412–453. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

Turner, Victor W.

1973 "Symbols in African Ritual." *Science* 179 (4078): 1100–1105.

Suggested readings:

Turner, Victor.

1975 "Symbolic Studies." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 4 (1975): 145–61.

Class discussion:

What is a rite of passage?

What are some of the rituals from our contemporary societies?

4.5. Symbolic analysis 6/16

Watch: Liberation Day (2016) – Morten Traavik and Uģis Otte

4.6. Q&A Session 6/17

Write a symbolic analysis paper about some of the symbols, rituals, or other practices you observed in the film. What do you think they mean for that particular group of people? Use this paper to explore the use of symbols in our own societies.

5th Unit: Critical studies and comparative analysis:

5.1. Gender and sexuality in comparative analysis 6/18

Essential readings:

Kottak, Conrad Phillip.

2018 "Chapter 14: Gender." In *Window on Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Anthropology*, 5th ed., 328–351. New York: McGraw Hill.

Nordstrom, Carolyn.

2009 "Girls Behind the (Front) Lines." In *Cultures of Fear: A Critical Reader*, edited by Uli Linke and Danielle Taana Smith, 189–200. London: Pluto Press.

Suggested readings:

Mead, Margaret.

2001[1928] *Coming of age in Samoa: a psychological study of primitive youth for western civilization*. New York: William Morrow Paperbacks.

Hodgson, Dorothy.

1999 "'Once Intrepid Warriors': Modernity and the Production of Maasai Masculinities." *Ethnology* no. 38 (2):121-150.

2011 "'These Are Not Our Priorities.'" Maasai Women, Human Rights, and the Problem of Culture." In *Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights*, edited by Dorothy Hodgson, 138-157.

Class discussion:

Are gender and sexuality the same thing?

Do other cultures have teenagers?

5.2. Racial and ethnic structures in the U.S. and beyond 6/22

Symbolic analysis paper due 6:00 pm (1800h)

Essential readings:

Park, Michael Alan.

2010 "Chapter 8: Human Variation: Biological Diversity and Race." In *Introducing Anthropology: An Integrated Approach*, 5th ed., 179–205. New York: McGraw Hill.

Wade, Peter.

2008 "Race in Latin America." In *A Companion to Latin American Anthropology*, edited by Deborah Poole, 177–92. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Suggested readings:

Omi, Michael, and Howard Winant.

2015 "Part I: Paradigms of Race: Ethnicity, Class, and Nation." In *Racial Formation in the United States*, 3rd ed., 19–102. New York: Routledge.

5.3. War, colonialism, and imperialism: Ethical challenges in contemporary anthropology 6/23

Essential readings:

Ferguson, R. Brian. 2011. "Full Spectrum: The Military invasion of Anthropology." In *Virtual War and Magical Death: Technologies and Imaginaries for Terror and Killing*, edited by Neil Whitehead and Sverker Finnström, 85-110. Durham: Duke University Press.

Suggested readings:

Ferguson, R. Brian, and Neil L. Whitehead

1992 "The Violent Edge of Empire." In *War in the Tribal Zone: Expanding States and Indigenous Warfare*, edited by R. Brian Ferguson and Neil L. Whitehead, 1–30. Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press.

González, Robert J.

2012 "Anthropology and the Covert: Methodological Notes on Researching Military and Intelligence Programmes." *Anthropology Today* 28 (2): 21–25.

McFate, Montgomery.

2005 "Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship." *Military Review* no. 85 (2):24-37.

Class discussion:

What is the relationship between anthropology and colonialism?

What are some ethical and political issues about contemporary anthropological research?

5.4. Q&A Session 6/24

Write your response paper about the importance of comparative studies in anthropology. Use the course materials to expand your argument.

Ethnographic exercise due Friday June 26th 6:00 pm (1800h).

4th response paper due Friday June 26th 6:00 pm (1800h)

END
