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Department of Anthropology
Spring 2009
MW Noon-1:50 PM; STV2065

STV 2054C; 664-2307
Office Hours:
Tu 10-noon
W 9:30-11AM (Th vary)
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ANTHROPOLOGY 300

Nature, Culture, & Theory: The Growth of Anthropology

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: The nature of science, disciplinary inquiry and the changing intellectual, institutional and material context of the development of anthropology in the modern world. Identification of significant issues, schools of thought, and historic persons. Training in scholarly procedure, library research, bibliography, and professional format and style.

PREREQUISITES: At least one of: ANTH200, ANTH201, ANTH202, ANTH203. (Equivalent introductory courses may substitute.) Waiting list priority will be given to anthropology majors, with graduating seniors given first priority. **Students without prerequisites may be dropped from the roster, especially if there is high demand for graduating seniors.** (I also expect and assume a level of writing that would pass the WEPT exam.)

NATURE OF THIS COURSE: This course considers the discipline of anthropology as a part of (our) culture, and the history of anthropology as part of anthropological culture. It is my intention to introduce you to anthropological theory AND socialize you (somewhat!) as budding or potential anthropologists. It is important to me that you learn what resources may be available to you, including your peers and colleagues. I will consider this course successful if you discover how anthropology may be useful to you and your society, and just as importantly, how *you* can contribute to anthropology.

ANTH300 is one of only two upper division anthropology courses required of all majors. Together, ANTH342 The Organization of Societies, and this course provide the foundation for the upper division professional education. Both courses help tie the four fields (sociocultural, archaeological, biological/physical, and linguistic) together. ANTH342 is largely descriptive and *ethnographic* —i.e. focussing on anthropology at “ground level,” so to speak, with descriptions of social groups as they have been observed over time, or in actual day-to-day action. Ethnography is both informed by and contributes to *theory*, so here in ANTH300 our primary concern will be the development of the theoretical level. *Theory is the explanation of the causal relations among observed phenomena.* (We will explore various kinds of theory, scientific and otherwise.)

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

- Becoming familiar with the contributions and seminal figures which have significantly affected the development of the discipline of anthropology;
- Developing skill in critically reading and deconstructing theoretical writings in anthropology;
- Entering debate on fundamental questions concerning science and theory in general and anthropology in particular;
- Learning to function as discussants in oral presentations as part of intellectual exchange;
- Assessing the validity of anthropology’s ‘four fields’ approach;
- Developing contributions to your portfolios;
- Cultivating a social network among peers as the beginnings of further professional networks.

TEACHING MODE: Much research indicates that students learn least from lecture-and-take-notes formats and most from highly interactive and participatory formats. In a theory course of this sort, some lecturing will be inevitable. But wherever possible, students will take active roles as discussants of the *many* assigned articles, and often as collaborators in work groups. At times, exercises assigned to all students will generate materials for general discussion. For this reason, *your regular attendance is needed, and you will have to come prepared.* Otherwise, the quality of the class sessions will be noticeably diminished.

My philosophy of teaching includes close attention to the context of the class and the characteristics of the enrolled students—as individuals and as groups. ***Therefore, I reserve (and frequently exercise) my right to significantly alter planned activities and assignments for the course.*** Where possible, I will give advance notice. I understand that for those who plan (and work) ahead, or who juggle complex schedules, schedule changes can be difficult or frustrating. However, I have found that the effect of such flexibility is worth the costs, since students tell me they appreciate when the course is relevant to them and their situations.

SPECIAL NEEDS: If you have any special needs or accommodations, please contact the Disability Services for Students office in Salazar Hall. However, I may not be able to accommodate special needs if they are not brought to my attention early enough. **It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for special needs or accommodation issues in a timely manner, and certainly well before deadlines or exam dates.**

SSU POLICIES & PROCEDURES: Students are encouraged to review SSU policies and procedures regarding add/drops, cheating and plagiarism, grade appeals, access for students with disabilities and special needs, as well as the SSU vision statement regarding diversity. See: <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/policies/studentinfo.shtml>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- **Attendance is expected and required.** Excused absences require documented medical or work excuse. Participation is 10% of your final grade. **3 absences may reduce your final grade by 5% or more; 5 absences may reduce your final grade by a whole letter-grade (e.g., B ⇒ C).**
- Readings will involve books listed below, as well as additional handouts. We will be discussing reading materials in class, so I expect that reading assignments will be completed **before** the scheduled discussions.
- Additional required readings will be placed on reserve in the Jean & Charles M. Schultz Library.
- Students will bring to *each Monday class* a one-page (~250 word) written response to the readings (format will be discussed in the first sessions). Usually, these responses will be collected and graded. **Students will keep returned responses and may be required to resubmit them at the end of the semester.** Responses will count for 15% of the final grade. **NO LATE RESPONSES ACCEPTED.**
- There will be **two essay exams** and **one term project**, which involves a class presentation and a literature review and a proposal. **Each** of these three **is worth 25% of your final grade.** **Exam 1** will be due sometime about 18 March; **Exam 2** about 29 April. Final Exam session is Friday, 22 May, 11 AM-12:50PM (**note the time!**), which will be used for student presentations. Attendance is required (double penalty for absences). Please don't plan to leave before the 22nd (yes, the last day of finals, alas!).

REQUIRED TEXTS

McGee, R. Jon and Richard L. Warmes

2007 *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. 4th Edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-340522-3.

Wolf, Eric R.

1999 *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 0-520-21582-6.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Barrett, Stanley R.

1996 *Anthropology: A Student's Guide to Theory & Method*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. ISBN: 0802078338

Bernard, H. Russel

2002 *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 3rd Edition. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.

Tentative Reading Schedule – McGee & Warmes

- 1/26 Introductions/Overview
- 1/28 Theory, paradigms; Lett, Wolf
- 2/2 I.a 19th Century Evolutionism (A/B)*
- 2/4 I.a 19th Century Evolutionism, continued.
- 2/9 I.b Foundations of Sociological Thought (A/B)
- 2/11 II.a Historical Particularism (A/B)
- 2/16 Presidents' Day NO CLASS
- 2/18 II.b Functionalism (1-2-3)*
- 2/23 LIBRARY SESSION Schulz 2016 (you may want to bring a laptop) Weekly response still due!
- 2/25 II.c Culture & Personality (A/B)
- 3/2 III.a Reemergence of Evolutionary Thought (A/B)
- 3/4 III.b Neomaterialism (A/B)
- 3/9 III.c Structuralism (1-2-3)
- 3/11 III.d Ethnoscience and Cognitive Anthropology (1-2-3); Exam I distributed
- 3/16 Review
- 3/18 Exams Due

*Students are assigned random codes to guide reading assignments. Each student will have a numeric code (i.e., 1, 2, or 3) and an alphabetic one (A or B).

(1-2-3) indicates that there are a multiple of three of articles in a subsection. Students with a 1 code read every third article in the subsection, beginning with the *first* article. Students with a 2 code read every third article in the subsection, beginning with the *second* article. Students with a 3 code read every third article in the subsection, beginning with the *third* article.

(A/B) indicates that there are an even number of articles in a subsection. Students with an A code read every other article in the subsection, beginning with the *first* article. Students with a B code read every other article in the subsection, beginning with the *second* article.