

## FOUNDATIONS OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THOUGHT WID SECTIONS SYLLABUS

ANTH 2008, Fall 2016  
Professor Sarah Wagner  
Tu, Th 9:35-10:50 am  
MPA 305

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Office: 301 HAH  
Office Hours: Tu 11:30-1:30  
or by appointment



“Anthropology affords me intellectual satisfaction: as a form of history, linking up at opposite ends with world history and my own history, it thus reveals the rationale common to both. In proposing the study of mankind, anthropology frees me from doubt, since it examines those differences and changes in mankind which have a meaning for all men, and excludes those peculiar to a single civilization which dissolve into nothingness under the gaze of the outside observer. Lastly, it appeases that restless and destructive appetite I have already referred to, by ensuring me a virtually inexhaustible supply of material, thanks to the diversity of manners, customs and institutions. It allows me to reconcile my character with my life.” - Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*

### **Course Description**

This is a course on the history of anthropological thought from the mid-nineteenth century until the present. It explores how anthropology as a discipline has changed over time—from the construction of its subject matter to the ideas and social theory shaping its inquiry and methods. In tracing the influence of three national traditions (American, British, and French), we will map a genealogy of scholarship across individual anthropologists and schools of research. We will also tie these developments and key figures to wider historical forces (colonialism, industrialization, the rise of capitalism, world wars, nationalism, migration, etc.), examining how anthropological research and knowledge connect to the world outside academia.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

As a result of completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the foundational schools of thought within the discipline of anthropology.
2. Explain key concepts associated with these schools of thought or theoretical models.
3. Outline the trajectory of anthropology's treatment of “culture” and “society,” as it relates to different strands of social and political theory.
4. Evaluate an abstract argument for its structure and thesis.
5. Apply the theoretical model learned to a given cultural practice or social group.

## **Course Requirements and Grading Criteria**

Grades are based on the following components:

- Written assignments (25%)
- Participation (10%)
- Discussion section (10%)
- Midterm exam (25%)
- Final essay (30%)

**Written assignments:** There will be several written assignments, both short essay assignments and in-class exercises on material covered in the lecture. Please note that there are no make-up written assignments without official documentation of an excused absence (see below). You are responsible for obtaining from your classmates all material covered during any missed class.

One written assignment (on early anthropology and representing difference) will involve peer review. Each student will review another student's paper and will provide substantive comments. Students will then submit both copies of the original draft (with reviewer comments) and a final revised draft.

**Participation:** The class participation grade is based on participation in lecture discussions and attendance. *After three missed classes, the participation grade will be lowered a half grade with each additional absence.* Excused absences require official documentation, e.g., a note from your physician. In accordance with university policy, please notify me during the first week of the semester if you will be absent from class on a day (or days) of religious observance.

**Discussion section:** This grade will be based on participation, attendance, and the occasional in-section exercise. As with lecture, excused absences require official documentation.

**Midterm exam:** Covering material from the assigned reading, lectures, films, and class discussion, the midterm exam will consist of definitions, short-answer questions, and an essay integrating textual analysis. As with the written assignments, you cannot make up an exam except in the case of an emergency, which, as noted above, requires official documentation.

**Final essay:** The final essay will be a similar to a take-home written exam, responding to a prompt (you will choose one essay question from among several posed). This will be a peer-reviewed exercise. Detailed instructions will be provided on November 22, and the essay is due on December 13.

## **Course Texts**

Marcel Mauss, *The Gift* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1967)

Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (New York: Penguin, 1992)

Max Weber, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2001)

Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984)

All other readings will be posted in weekly folders on Blackboard. They are marked in the course schedule below with a **[B]**.

## Additional Course Information

### **Academic Integrity:**

All students must practice academic integrity. This means doing your own work, and when you use the words and ideas of others in any written work, you must: 1) identify direct quotations with quotation marks; and 2) indicate the source of ideas that are not your own by using social sciences notation form. If you have any questions at all about what this means, you should speak to the instructors. You should also consult the university's academic integrity policy, which states that "Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." For the remainder of the code, see: <https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>.

In this course if you commit a breach of academic integrity on any assignment or exam, you will receive a zero for that assignment or exam. This infraction will be reported to the University's Academic Integrity Council. You will be clearly notified by the instructor in person OR by email before the Council is informed.

### **Support for Students outside the Classroom**

#### *Disability Support Services (DSS)*

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>

#### *Mental Health Services (UCC) 202-994-5300*

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:

- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
  - confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
- <https://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/>

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

### **Part One: Anthropology's origins**

Tu 8/30 – Introduction: genealogies of thought, and how to read theory

Th 9/1 – Evolutionary theory and its anthropological turn

 Charles Darwin, excerpts from Chapter IV, "Circumstances favorable to natural selection," pp. 101-109 and "Summary of the chapter," pp. 126-130 in *On the Origins of Species* (1859); the original text can be found at: <http://darwin-online.org.uk/> [B]

 Herbert Spencer: "Progress: Its Law and Causes," *The Westminster Review*, Vol 67 (April 1857), pp. 445-447, 451, 454-456, 464-65. The excerpts can be found at: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/spencer-darwin.asp> [B]

(Th 9/1 cont.)

- George W. Stocking, Chapter 6, "The Dark Skinned Savage: The Image of Primitive Man in Evolutionary Anthropology," in *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

Tu 9/6 – Victorian anthropology's object of study; cultural evolutionism

- George Stocking, Chapter Three, "Travelers and Savages: The Data of Victorian Ethnology," pp. 78-109 in *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1987). [B]
- E. B. Tylor, Chapter I, "The Science of Culture," pp. 1-25 in *Primitive Culture* (1871) (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1920). [B]

**\* Written exercise on reading theory due**

Th 9/8 – The "science" of measuring and mapping racial difference

- Stephen Jay Gould, "Introduction" in *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: Norton, 1996). [B]
- Lee Baker, "Ascension of Anthropology as Social Darwin" and "Anthropology in American Popular Culture," pp. 26-80 in *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). [B]
- Elizabeth Alexander, "The Venus Hottentot," in *The Venus Hottentot: Poems* (St. Paul, MN: Grey Wolf Press, 1990). [B]

 **Film:** *Life and Times of Sara Baartman: "The Hottentot Venus"* (53 min).

**Recommended:** Nicolas Wade, "Scientists Measure the Accuracy of a Racism Claim," *New York Times*, June 13, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/14/science/14skull.html> [B]

## **Part Two: The emergence of the culture concept in American anthropology**

Tu 9/13 – Boas' critique of cultural evolutionism

[Guest lecturer - Dr. Richard Grinker]

- Franz Boas, "The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology" (1896), pp. 270-280 in *Race, Language, and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). [B]
- Clarence C. Gravlee, H. Russell Bernard, William R. Leonard. 2003. "Boas's Changes in Bodily Form: The Immigrant Study, Cranial Plasticity, and Boas's Physical Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 105(2): 326-332. [B]
- Corey S. Sparks, Richard L. Jantz. 2003. "Changing Times, Changing Faces: Franz Boas's Immigrant Study in Modern Perspective" *American Anthropologist* 105(2): 333-337. [B]

Th 9/15 – American expansionism and the triumph of man over nature: the American Museum of Natural History

- Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-1936." *Social Text*, No. 11 (Winter, 1984-1985) pp. 20-64. [B]
- Rudyard Kipling's "White Man's Burden" [B]

**\* Written exercise (essay) on early anthropology and representing difference: DRAFT DUE FOR PEER REVIEW**

Tu 9/20 – Mead's study of Samoan adolescence

- Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* [1928], Chapters I, VI, VII, and Appendix II (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001). [B]

(Tu 9/20 cont.)

**\* PEER REVIEW DUE of written exercise on early anthropology and representing difference**

Th 9/22 – Boasian culture continued

- Edward Sapir. 1924. "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" *American Journal of Sociology* 29 (4): 401-429. [B]
- Ruth Benedict [1934], Chapter 3, "The Integration of Culture," in *Patterns of Culture* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), pp. 45-56. [B]

**\* FINAL DRAFT DUE of written exercise on early anthropology and representing difference**

**Part Three: Functionalist anthropology from across the pond**

Tu 9/27 – Preface: Durkheim and the study of society

- Emile Durkheim, "What is a Social Fact?" pp. 1-13 in *The Rules of the Sociological Method*. Ed. by Steven Lukes; trans. by W.D. Halls (New York: Free Press, 1982). [B]

Th 9/29 – Malinowski: Method and theory

- Bronislaw Malinowski, "Introduction," p. 1-25 and "Essentials of the Kula," pp. 81-104 in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, 1984). [B]
- Bronislaw Malinowski, *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*, pp. 80-89; 155-158 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1967). [B]

Tu 10/4 – *Do ut des*: the social bonds of reciprocity

- Mary Douglas, "Forward," pp. vii-xviii in *The Gift* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1967).
- Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2.

Th 10/6 – Radcliffe-Brown and the concept of structure

- Radcliffe-Brown, "Introduction," p. 15-31 in *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (1924). (New York: Free Press, 1952). [B]
- \* Written exercise on *The Gift***

Tu 10/11 – Structural functionalism: Evans-Pritchard's segmentary lineage system

- Thomas Hobbes, Chapter XIII "Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, as concerning their Felicity and Misery," pp. 183-189 in *Leviathan* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982 reprint). [B]
- E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "Time and Space" in *The Nuer*, (1940) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963). [B]

Th 10/13 – EP continued

- E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "Political Organization," in *The Nuer*. [B]

Tu 10/18 – **Midterm exam**

**Part Four: The problem of mind and meaning**

Th 10/20 – Weber and the historical force of ideas

- Max Weber, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Part I (Chapters 1-3) (New York: Routledge, 2001).

Tu 10/25 – No class (Fall break)

Th 10/27 – Lévi-Strauss and structuralist theory

- Claude Lévi-Strauss, Part I and II, pp. 1-70; Part VI, pp. 199-246; Part VII, "A Writing Lesson," pp. 294-304; and Part IX, "A Little Glass of Rum," p. 383-393 in *Tristes Tropiques* (New York: Atheneum, 1974).

\* **Written exercise on Weber**

Th 11/1 – Lévi-Strauss continued

- Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Nature and Culture," "The Problem of Incest," and "The Universe of Rules," pp. 3-41 in *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969). [B]
- Edmund Leach, "Oysters, Smoked Salmon, and Stilton Cheese," in *Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989). [B]

\* **Written exercise on *Tristes Tropiques***

Th 11/3 – Cultural order, structure, and ritual symbols

- Victor Turner, "Liminality and Communitas," In *The Ritual Process* (New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction, 2009), pp. 94-130. [B]
- Marshall Sahlins. "Introduction" and "Supplement to the Voyage of Cook," in *Islands of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. vii-31. [B]

### **Part Five: A glimpse of anthropology deconstructed; critical theory applied**

Tu 11/8 – Marx

- Karl Marx, "Capitalism, Alienation, and Communism," in *The Grundrisse*, pp. 292-3; and Part I, Section 4, "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof," pp. 319-329; Part IV, Chapter XV, "Machinery and Modern Industry," pp. 403-419 from *Capital, Volume One*, in *The Marx Engels Reader* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978). [B]

Th 11/10 – Modes of production

- Eric Wolf, "Introduction," pp. 3-23 and "Modes of Production," pp. 73-100 in *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). [B]
- William Roseberry. 1982. "Balinese Cockfights and the Seduction of Anthropology," *Social Research* 49(4): 1013-1028. [B]
- **Recommended:** Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture," p. 3-30 and "'Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight,'" pp. 412-442 in *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). [B]

\* **Final essay instructions handed out**

Tu 11/15 – Gender, culture, knowledge examined

[Guest lecturer: Dr. Attiya Ahmad]

- Marilyn Strathern. 1987. "An Awkward Relationship: The Case of Feminism and Anthropology" *Signs* 12(2): 276-292.
- Donna J. Haraway, "Gender for a Marxist Dictionary: The Sexual Politics of a Word," in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991), pp. 127-148.

(Tu 11/15 cont.)

- Catherine Lutz, "The Gender of Theory." In *Women Writing Culture/Culture Writing Women*, Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 249-266.

Th 11/17 – Gender continued: identity ascribed, resisted, performed

- 🎬 **Film:** *Paris Is Burning* (53 min).

Tu 11/22 – On resistance

- Antonio Gramsci, "The Intellectuals" and "On Education," pp. 3-33 in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds. and transl. (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

**\* DRAFT of final essay due for peer review**

Th 11/24 – No class (Thanksgiving)

Tu 11/29 – Power/knowledge/subjectivity - the contributions of Michel Foucault

- Paul Rabinow, "Introduction," pp. 3-27 in *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).
- Michel Foucault, "Docile Bodies," and "Panopticism," pp. 179-187 and 206-213 in *The Foucault Reader*.

**\* PEER REVIEW of final essay due**

Th 12/1 – Biopower and bare life

- Michel Foucault, "The Right to Death and the Power over Life," pp. 258-272 and "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century," pp. 273-298 in *The Foucault Reader*.
- Giorgio Agamben, "Introduction," "The Paradox of Sovereignty," "Homo Sacer," "Biopolitics and the Rights of Man," in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

**\* In-class written exercise on Foucault**

Tu 12/6 – Practice and performance

- Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 91-114
- Erving Goffman, "Introduction" in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959), pp. 1-16.

Th 12/8 – Final review and wrap up

**The final essay is due on Tuesday, December 13 by 12:00 pm.**