

# Introduction to Anthropology

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## Grading

- Participation (15%)
- Weekly Papers (1.25% x 12)
- Short Essays (20% x 3)
- Ethnographic Exercise (10%)

## Books

[Link](#) to book 1

[Link](#) to book 2

[Link](#) to book 3

[Link](#) to book 4

## 09.06.17

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Precarity -- a word to think about. Instability changes the way you perceive the world.

Ecology is also precarious. You don't know what's coming--unexpected volatile problems.

Mushroom is a living thing, but it's also a commodity.

When the world is falling apart, what kind of things can you sustain?  
What is it mean to have a relationship with something or someone?

Social world is composed of self-contained individuals. We don't owe anything to each other. Model of **contract**--you give something i want, I

give you something I want

Utilitarianism--world is disconnected.

War.

Relations always transform the party that enters it.

Think about parent / child relationship. Ongoing circle of exchange

Mushrooms help us think about this relational concept.

Are we overly connected now? Where are we getting the electricity from?  
Clothes? etc.

Anthropocene--humanity itself has exceeded the geological force

We are simultaneously disconnected and connected

## Mushrooms are a good object to relate to

They gather the waste human has left behind--but it's also used as a gift

Matsutake cannot be reproduced--they're precarious

We should think about how capitalism works in this sense

If we look at Matsutake, we can see how capitalism extracts value

Matsutake has a different value in different cultures

The way she writes things are like mushrooms--doesn't have a linear progression but it's all over the place

Job & Growth vs. Environmentalism

## Progress

Jobs, etc, bring progress.

If we don't have progress (Like in Oregon), what do we have left?

What are the overlooked phenomenon happening with progress?

**Scalability** you can grow something without changing its main purpose  
More input -> More output // More slaves -> More sugar canes

Utilitarianism = Sugar Cane farm -- things are interchangeable self-contained units

If you look elsewhere, perhaps inside of scalable projects, you can find a dynamic called **Assemblage**

Assemblage can be found in Matsutake.

Assemblage creates phenomena that cannot be reduced to each of its parts.

ex// classroom

Classroom is a assemblage, where all things that are disconnected are gathered together. Chairs, blackboard, paper, etc

Emergent phenomenon inside the classroom is **learning**

- even if some students are missing, learning is possible
- even if there are no chairs, learning is possible

If you kept adding more and more to assemblage, it might make learning impossible.

Assemblage is non-scalable.

Another example can be an outfit.

Think about the origin, logo, design, labor, behind the clothings we're wearing

Assemblage can also be politic.

## **That's what Matsutake is doing**

Matsutake brings all the anthropological things together. Consumer market, southeast asian refugees, forests, white vietnamets, pickers, they all come together.

Assemblages **CONTAMINATE** each other.

This Anthropology classroom contaminates ME by changing the way I think

## **Ethnic Identity**

refugee camps in the northern forest -- Mien community

what does it mean to have an ethnic community?

- Mien
  - Hill, borderland people
  - they get mixed up during Vietnam war, they get mixed with hmong

What does it mean to be Mien after looking at the history?

They are the experiences and relationships that make them

All ethnic identities have history and motion

They are open ended--they're evolving from where they were

Tsing connects it with **smell**

Smell and tastings--their embodied history of culture and everything else can relate to ethnic identities

Cultures and ethnicities react differently to Matsutake-- americans find it very disgusting, but japanese find it lovely (autumn)

Tsing, as an American anthropologist, finds it astonishing.

She didn't like it at first, but grows to like it.

**People can grow and evolve, and change.**

Another assemblage example is: **party**

All parties have different emerging properties--interactions make up the mood

Same applies to parent/child relationship. It emerges.

**The relationship we enter into can change us and affect us--emerging property**

Assemblages doesn't scale, but does it evolve?

You may not know where to cut the connection of the assemblage--since they're connected.

However, diversity of assemblages form a market. What connects these consumers and buyers?

## Supply Chains

Chain that connects the market.

Economy doesn't separate from ecology. Economy comes from the nature's bounty.

ex// oil, slave plantation (people pre-existed before the production process)

ex// Macriados -- Mexican women already know how to sew before going in

## Salvage

We're always salvaging something to create value.

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for (int a = 0)
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