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Seney 322	Office Hours: Mon 9-9:30 & 2-4, Tues 2-3, Fri 1:30-2:30 and by appt
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INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY
Ant 101
(Writing Intensive)

Aims of Course: This writing-intensive course introduces students to the methods and interpretive frameworks of Anthropology, the comparative science of humankind in all of our species' remarkable biological and cultural diversity. We give particular attention to the nature of evidence and analysis in the varied subfields of anthropology--biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology and sociocultural anthropology (also known as ethnology). More broadly, we consider different approaches to what it means to be human, as well as the goals and responsibilities of the human sciences.

Course Requirements: This is a demanding course. I expect that each student will do at least an two hours of careful, thoughtful reading in preparation for each hour of class meeting, and that you will post intelligent commentaries on LearnLink at least once every week. In the early weeks of the course, you are expected to write careful observations of the social world around you; these observations should develop into an ethnographic journal kept over the rest of the semester. You should read critically. Feel free to challenge assertions or interpretations made in the readings, by the instructor, and by fellow students, provided your critiques are well-reasoned and constructively framed.

Your empirical observations and readings will form the basis of a series of short papers. Each essay should be carefully crafted, laying out a clear argument that draws on empirical data and theoretically-informed reasoning.

Grading is based on the following criteria:

Ethnographic Journal (including field observations): 10 per cent

Four 3 page essays: 40 percent (10 points each)

Two 5 page essays: 30 per cent (15 points each)

Take home examination: 10 percent.

Class participation (includes quizzes, and LearnLink postings): 10 percent

You are expected to come to class on time having read and thought carefully about the assigned readings. Please remember to bring hard copies of all the assigned readings for that day (including those you have printed out from electronic reserve) and to bring your notes on those readings. I advise you to bring relevant learnlink postings by fellow students as well. Pop quizzes may be given from time to time, without prior announcement.

Note on Writing and Plagerism. Plus/minus grading is used in this course and the Honor Code is always in course. Students must be scrupulous to avoid plagerism, and to give very precise and complete citations for any work used in any way. Always make it precisely clear to the reader through the use of quotation marks and citations which words, if any, are taken from some other source. Be very careful if you draw on any internet source to give the precise source of each and every word used. Lifting text from the web, without giving full and complete attribution, is considered an extremely serious violation of the honor code.

In all essays, please make specific references, as appropriate, with internal citations: for example, "A death may subvert a chief's plans to extend his fame through yam distribution (Weiner: 116)." Avoid direct quotations from the text whenever possible; I am much more interested in your paraphrasing of, and commentary upon, the authors' arguments than in your ability to quote directly.

Each paper must be typed, double spaced and in 10 or 12 point. Please append a bibliography.

You may revise two of the three-page essays (provided you turn in the revision within one week after it was returned to you). Note that a "revision" does not entail simply altering the sections where the instructor made a marginal comment; rather, if the essay is to be considered for a higher grade, it should, in most cases, be thoroughly reconceived and re-organized. You must append the original paper to the revised version, and include a note explaining what aspects of the essay you have reworked or rethought.

Attendance and Lateness Policy: Students are required to attend each class, on time. It is the student's responsibility to sign in on the sign in sheet at the front of the classroom. Missed in-class quizzes will not be re-administered, regardless of circumstances (including illness or family emergencies). Students will not be directly penalized for the first three classes that they miss (although they will miss the chance to take a quiz that day, if one is administered). For each subsequent class missed (regardless of cause) a grade level will be deducted from the student's course total (for example, a B+ will turn into a B). Eight absences

will be regarded as grounds for failing the course. One or more points will be deducted for each lateness or for leaving class prematurely.

Some of the readings are on electronic reserve. The following books are available for purchase in the College Bookstore:

Podolefsky and Brown. Applying Anthropology (AA)

Stringer. African Exodus

Lewin. Bones of Contention (*recommended only*)

Wolpoff and Caspari Race and Human Evolution

Jean Briggs. Never in Anger.

Weiner. The Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea

I. Theory and Observation: Anthropology as a Holistic Discipline

In this first unit we consider anthropology as a holistic, integrative science of humankind. What does it mean to be human? How do we come to “know” anything meaningful about humans and humanity, in the singular, in the collective, and in comparative perspective? How do we observe human beings, as physical beings, as purposeful, sentient actors, and as members of a “society” or “culture”?

Each reading for this initial section of the course will be tied to a specific observation exercise, to be conducted primarily on Oxford’s campus and in the neighborhood. You may wish to frame your observations as reports to the imaginary “Martian Academy of Sciences”: how would you explain human behavior to readers unfamiliar with humans?

Your observations should be as detailed as possible. Everything you observe may be of significance: the best descriptions are moment by moment. Please post at least one page on LearnLink for each observation.

At least one set of observations should take place in the college library, an important social space, using signed-out loaner wireless laptops. I encourage several students to make observations simultaneously in the library using wireless laptops, from different vantage points.

Your responsibility, eventually, will be to integrate the readings and the observations that you and your fellow students make. Do the observations conform to or differ from behavior described in the readings? Do the readings suggest specific elements or dynamics for your observations?

Friday, Aug. 31. **Introduction: What is Anthropology?**

*Post a Self-Introduction on LearnLink by 8/31 at 5 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 3. **Labor Day: No Class.**

Observation Exercise 1: Romance. Spend at least 20 minutes observing human social interaction, with particular attention to courtship, flirting, romantic and joking behavior. Please post at least one page of observations on Learnlink by Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. You must come to class on Wednesday, September 5 having read the Smuts and Small articles, as well as all your fellow students observations on LearnLink.

Wednesday, Sept. 5. **Love, Sex, Friendship: Evolutionary Perspectives**

Barbara Smuts. "What Are Friends For?" AA. Pp. 15-20

Meredith Small. "What's Love Got to Do with It?". AA. Pp.21-24

Observation Exercise 2. Eating. Spend at least 20 minutes observing people selecting food and eating in the cafeteria. (You may also wish to interview diners about the foods they are consuming.) Please post at least one page of observations on LearnLink by Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

Friday, September 7. **Food and Evolution**

S. Boyd Eaton and Melvin Conner. Ancient Genes and Modern Health. AA. Pp.48-51

Peter J. Brown. Culture and the Evolution of Obesity. AA. Pp., 189-199.

Monday. September 10. **Discussion: Evolutionary models of behavior.**

*Due at start of class: Short Essay #1. Drawing on data from three posted student observation pieces on LearnLink, write a three page essay on one of the following questions. Please be sure to append hard copies of all LearnLink postings that you draw upon.

- (A) To what extent are romantic interactions observed on campus like or unlike those of baboons, as described by Smuts? What evolutionary explanations might be proposed for the human interactions observed?
- (B) Does the work of Eaton, Conner and Brown, cast light upon the food choices being made by students in the cafeteria?

Observation Exercise 3. Greetings and Leave-takings. Pick an observation spot and describe in detail how persons greet one another and take their leave of one another. What verbal and non-verbal strategies are used? Do all participants appear to be following the same underlying rules in entering into, or disengaging from, social interaction? Please post at least one page on LearnLink by Tuesday, 9/11 at 5:00 p.m. and come to class the next day familiar with your fellow students' postings.

Wednesday, September 12. **Language: Greetings and Silence.**

Keith Basso. "To Give up on Words: Silence among the Western Apache." (on electronic reserve)

Observation Exercise #4: Body rituals. What do human beings do with their bodies on the Oxford campus? You might want to concentrate on clothing or adornment, or cosmetics, or sanitary practices. Please post one page of observations on LearnLink by Thursday, 9/13 at 5:00 p.m.

Friday, September 14. **Body rituals.**

Discuss Horace Miner. "Body Ritual among the Nacirema." AA. Pp. 120-123.
Terrence Turner. "The Social Skin." (on electronic reserve)

Monday, September 17. **Death and Memorialization**

Huntington and Metcalfe. Selections from Celebrations of Death "The Anthropology of Death Ritual (pp. 1-17) and "American Deathways" (pp. 184-211) On electronic reserve.

Wednesday, September 19. **Special Tour of Cemeteries in Oxford.** (with visiting historian David Blight)

At 9:35 this section of Anthro 101 will explore the Oxford campus Soliders' Cemetery (meet in front of Seney)

At 10:40 the other section of Anthro will explore the Oxford city cemetery, one mile north of campus (meet in front of Seney and drive to the cemetery)

Students are welcome, if their class schedule permits, to come on both tours.

Please post reflections on the cemetery tour(s) on LearnLink by Thursday, 9/20 at 5:00 p.m. Come to class having read the observations in both sections.

Friday, September 21. **The Past in the Present**

Maurice Halbwachs. "The Reconstruction of the Past" and "The Localization of Memories" (on electronic reserve)

*Due at start of class on Monday, September 24. Essay #2. Drawing on at least three posted observations (one of these may be your own) write a 3-page essay on one of the following questions:

- (1) To what extent does Basso's sociological explanation of silence among the Western Apache account for observed greeting behavior on the Oxford campus? Do ambiguous social relations between interlocutors lead to certain standardized forms of behavior?
- (2) Following the models of Turner and Miner, analyze a particular kind of "body ritual" on the Oxford campus. What kinds of social messages are communicated through the use of the body and its surfaces?
- (3) What light does the organization of cemeteries in Oxford shed upon our culture's conceptions of life and death?
- (4) How is memory socially produced and reproduced in the city of Oxford? Discuss Halbwachs' ideas in light of our visits to Oxford's cemeteries?

Part II. Human Origins: Debates in the Philosophy of Science.

In this section, we consider one of the most ferocious current debates in anthropology, the problem of the origins of anatomically modern human beings (*homo sapiens sapiens*). What is the evidence cited by proponents of the two major current theories, and what does this debate tell us about the nature of scientific thought? Students are encouraged to read Roger Lewin's *Bones of Contention* to get a sense of the larger intellectual history of paleoanthropology, the study of early hominids and humans.

Monday, September 24. **Lecture: Overview of Human Evolutionary Debates.**

Discuss: Robert Root Bernstein and Donald L. McEachron. "Teaching Theories: The Evolution-Creation Controversy." AA pp., 6-14.

Wednesday, September 26. Christopher Stringer. African Exodus. Pp. 1-84

Friday, September 28. African Exodus. pp. 85-178

*Post LearnLink commentary or questions about the reading by 9/28 at 5 p.m.

Monday, October 1. African Exodus. Pp. 179-250.

Due at start of class on 10/3. Essay #3. (Three pages). What is the strongest piece of evidence presented by Stringer in defense of the “Out of Africa” hypothesis? Why?

Wednesday, October 3. **The Multi Regional Origin Hypothesis.**

Friday, October 5. Wolpoff & Caspari. Race and Human Evolution. Pp. 1-56

Monday, October 8. Race and Human Evolution. Pp. 57-136

**Strongly recommended. Tuesday, October 9. Symposium in honor of anthropologist Ina Jane Wundram. 7:00 p.m. Student Center TV lounge.*

Wednesday, October 10. Race and Human Evolution. Pp. 137-212

Friday, October 12. Race and Human Evolution. Pp. 213-313.

Please hand in your ethnographic journal at the start of class (these will be returned after Fall break)

Monday, October 15. Fall Break: No Class.

Wednesday, October 17 Race and Human Evolution. Pp. 314-365.

Friday, October 19. In class debate: The Problem of Modern Human Origins.

*Due at start of class on Monday, 10/22. Essay # 4. (3 pages) Defend or critique the multi-origin hypothesis as presented by Wolpoff and Caspari.

Part III. Emotions and Culture: The Inuit Case.

Monday, October 22. Never in Anger pp.1-28

Wednesday, October 24. Jean Briggs. Never in Anger. pp. 28-74

Friday, October 26. View video: Nanook of the North. (note: Dr. Auslander will be attending a conference in Atlanta on this day)

Monday, October 29. Never in Anger. pp. 75-146.

Wednesday, October 31. Never in Anger. 147-224

Friday, November 2. Never in Anger. pp. 225-307

Monday, November 5. Never in Anger. 311-366.

Due at start of class, 11/7. Essay #5. Five page paper on Jean Briggs' Never in Anger. How does Briggs understand the relationship between emotions and culture? Are emotions the 'building blocks' of culture? Is the primary function of culture to repress or modify human emotions?

Part IV. Exchange and Social Life.

Wednesday, November 7. **Lecture on Marriage exchange systems.**

Friday, November 9. **Exchange and Reciprocity.**

Lee Cronk. Strings Attached. AA. pp. 228-233

Richard Lee. Eating Christmas in the Kalahari. AA. 223-227.

Monday, November 12. Annette Weiner. The Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea. 1-80

Wednesday. November 14. View video, The Trobriand Islanders.

Friday, November 16. Trobriand. 81-124

Monday, November 19. Trobriand. 81-124

Wednesday, November 21. Final Discussion of Weiner.

Friday, November 23. **No class; Thanksgiving Break.**

* Due at start of class on 11/26 , Essay #6. Five page paper on one of the following questions. Your principal source should be Annette Weiner's book, "The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea" (supplemented by the film of the same name). Your essay should demonstrate familiarity with, and thoughtful reflection upon, the entirety of Weiner's book.

1. Defend or critique the following proposition: "The principal function of exchange is to create, reinforce or extend interconnections between similar and dissimilar social units." Discuss in reference to at least two major Trobriand institutions, such as marriage, the harvest festival, the funerary process, or the kula.

2. What is the relationship between "women's wealth" and "men's wealth" in the Trobriands?
3. Explain the Trobriand proverb, "When you give too much, people worry" (Weiner: 115) with reference to at least two Trobriand institutions. Does this proverb apply to the modern United States as well as to the Trobriands?
4. Why do men engage in kula?

V. Ritual and Symbolism: The Ndembu Case

Monday, November 26. Victor Turner. *Forest of Symbols*. (FOS) "Introduction" (1-16); "Ritual Symbolism, Morality and Social Structure among the Ndembu" (pp. 48-59)

Wednesday, November 28. FOS. "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage" (pp. 93-111)

Friday, November 30. Video: tba (*nb. Dr. Auslander will be in Washington D.C. for the American Anthropology Association Meetings*)

Monday December 3, FOS. "Mukanda: The Rite of Circumcision" (pp. 151-279)

Wednesday. December 5. FOS. "Muchona the Hornet: Interpreter of Religion" (pp. 131-150)

Friday, December 7. **Gender Symbolism and The "Universality" Question.**

Sherry Ortner. "Is female to male as nature is to culture?" (on electronic reserve)

Monday, December 10. **Final class. Wrap up Discussion.** Please hand in your ethnographic journal at the start of the final class meeting. Take Home examination distributed in class. (Typed, short essay format)

*Monday, December 17 at 10:00 a.m. in Dr. Auslander's office: Final exam due (late exams will not be accepted).