

Anthropology 501
Foundations of Anthropological Thought
Mondays 11:45am – 2:45pm
Anthropology Room 107

Emory University
Department of Anthropology
Spring 2013
Office hours: After class and by appointment

Professor Bruce Knauft

SYNOPSIS

This course focuses on the history and development of sociocultural anthropology, beginning with the origin of the field as a profession and its founding figures of the 19th century, and continuing to the present. Among other perspectives, the course engages important traditions in late 19th and 20th-century American anthropology, British Social Anthropology, and French Structural Anthropology, plus canonical theoretical figures such as Marx, Durkheim, and Weber. The course then traces the emergence of paradigms that helped define Anthropology during the second half of the 20th century, including symbolic, structural, and materialist orientations. It concludes by taking stock of postmodern, subaltern, and other defamiliarizing or post-paradigmatic developments, including also neo-empiricism and the post-positivist increase of "engaged" or "public" anthropology. Beyond a critical examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the dominant perspectives and paradigms in the history of the discipline, we will explore how anthropology's perspectives have sedimented, been recast, and also been reinvented over time. At larger stake is the relation between our trajectories of understanding and the trajectory of sociocultural change itself. An historical component is cultivated through student portrayals of signal events and developments that were transpiring at the time that different anthropological perspectives were being developed and disseminated.

Given the speed and scope of the course, reciprocating complementarity is necessary between selected textual and historical specifics, on the one hand, and connective themes and developments, on the other. Student work includes weekly reaction papers, in-class presentation and discussion facilitation, a mid-term analytic essay that compares and contrasts at least two major theoretical perspectives, and a final research paper.

TEXTS

Required Texts:

Erickson, Paul A. and Liam D. Murphy, Editors. 2010. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, THIRD edition*. Toronto: Broadview Press. Paperback ISBN: 971-1-4426-0069-0. **[Hereinafter "E&M"]**

McGee, Jon R. and Richard L. Warms, Editors. 2004. *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History: THIRD (not Fifth) Edition, if possible*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Paperback ISBN: 0-07-284046-3. **[Hereinafter "M&W"]**

Bohannon, Paul and Mark Glazer, Editors. 1988. *High Points in Anthropology, 2nd edition*. New York: Alfred Knopf. ISBN 0-394-37243-3. **[Hereinafter "B&G"]**

On-line readings to be posted on Blackboard.

At least one detailed ethnography to be chosen by each student on an individual basis.

Optional Reading:

Ericsson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2008. *A History of Anthropological Theory*. Toronto: Broadview Press. Paperback ISBN: 978-1-55111-871-0.

NOTE: The section introductions and/or introductions to authors in the three text readers can supply useful background information

COURSE STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

The readings and content of each week's seminar will be introduced during the final hour of class during the *prior* course meeting. Each ensuing week, two student facilitators open the class by delineating issues, interpretations, and questions for collective consideration. Initial discussion of these issues is then supplemented by further issues that other students wish to add to the discussion agenda. Discussion is moderated and added to by the instructor, who will typically also add a summary and analysis at the end of the first half of the class.

Following a break, the second half of class begins with a brief presentation by a third student concerning historical context, events, and developments that were transpiring at the time that the readings for the week were published and disseminated – either in the region of publication or the ethnographic venue/s to which they are primarily applied.

Each student submits a weekly reaction paper concerning the course readings. Reaction papers are 1-2 pages in length (ideally one page, but no longer than two double spaced pages) and must be turned in in hard copy at the end of class. Three “opt-out” weeks are permitted, including to cover any classes missed due to illness. “Opt-out” reaction paper weeks should be *non-consecutive*. Reaction papers are lightly / informally graded with “plus” (A/A+), “check” (A- or A-/B+) or “minus” (B+ or below).

Class presenters should make sure PDFs of the readings are available to the class **eight days** prior to the class for which they are due. (Books and articles can be borrowed from the instructor and returned one week BEFORE the due date of the readings.) Any difficulties in this regard should be brought to the instructor's attention prior to the class that precedes the reading due date.

A mid-term essay of no more than eight double spaced pages should compare and contrast two major perspectives (weeks of reading) in the course, with more summary treatment of a third week's perspective/s.

The final essay should apply at least two weekly perspectives from the second half of the course to a major ethnographic volume of relevance and value to the student's own research interests. (A single ethnography is preferred, but two may be chosen with justification.)

A one-page precis and/or outline of your essay *along with the reference for the ethnographic volume/s you are considering* is due in class on **April 15**. This precis will not be graded but can be responded to by the instructor. The final essay should be no longer than 15 pages double-spaced. Final essays are due in hard copy to the instructor's mailbox by **Monday, May 6 at 2:00pm**. No extensions, no incompletes!

Course grades. The final essay will count for 45% of the course grade, the 9 reaction papers for 15%, the mid-term essay for 20%, and class participation for 20%.

Anthro 501 seminar sessions

Class discussions as well as instructor presentations will consider:

- What is being argued, presented, or proposed by the authors in the week's reading?
- What text passages are particularly interesting, revealing, important, or disturbing?
- What is unclear in the reading/s? (Note: No questions are dumb questions.)
- What are the distinctive contributions/shortcomings of the week's readings?
- What other angles of perception, contemporary developments, or contextual factors shed light on the reading's contribution or legacy?

Notes and suggestions for mid-term essays and final papers

- start early; draft in advance; then boil down to meet short paper length and presentation time limitations. A "themes and variations" technique can be effective to assess a range of material
- students leading discussion are welcome to configure a division of labor to introduce different parts of the reading for a given class. Confer in advance with your co-presenter. Avoid presenting a lengthy protracted class presentation; aim for 3-5 minutes only, informal in style.
- uncertainty per readings can be foregrounded/explored rather than backgrounded.
- no reading beyond the course assignments is needed to prepare for written assignments or class presentations. Wikipedia, other on-line sources, and introductory sections from the text readers. can provide background as needed.
- all students should be active participants in class discussion. The class participation portion of the grade includes general student participation as well as facilitating discussion. Comments should be substantive and based on a considered reading and reflection.

SYLLABUS AND READING LIST

Week #1: Introduction: The roots and contemporary relevance of sociocultural anthropology

January 28

(A) Introduction and orientation. Get acquainted. Discussion of course goals, structure, and requirements. Reading and logistics. The importance and problems of teaching the history/foundations of sociocultural anthropology. The instructor's position/s.

(B) Instructor presentation: the pre-disciplinary roots and implications of Anthropology. Themes:

- the antiquity of representing Otherness. Herodotus and others.
- Anthropology's view of cultural diversity; beyond "enlightenment" or "romance"
- 18th century roots of philosophical anthropology. Kant and Herder. "What is humanity / what is human diversity"
- Culture as both the subject and the object of anthropological knowledge.
- from pre-disciplinary to "post"-paradigmatic anthropology?
- "Victorian Anthropology"

Week #2: Victorian Anthropology

February 4

The development of professional anthropology during the 19th and early 20th century. Darwinianism and early application of evolutionary theory to the development of human societies during the mid- and late 19th century. The impact of Victorianism and the invention / interpretation of primitivity.

Reading:

Darwin, Charles, and Alfred Wallace, 1858. "On the Tendency of Species to Form Varieties." In M&W.

Darwin, Charles, 1871. "General Summary and Conclusion to *The Descent of Man*." In E&M.

Tylor, Edward Burnett, 1871. "Primitive Culture." In B&G OR M&W OR E&M.

Spencer, Herbert, 1860: (1) "The Evolution of Society." In B&G AND (2) "The Social Organism." In M&W.

Morgan, Lewis Henry, 1877. "Ancient Society." In B&G.

Morgan, Lewis Henry, 1877. *Ancient Society*. [Preface and Contents only]. (PDF)

Counterpoint Reading:

Said, Edward, 1979. "Knowing the Oriental." In E&M.

Week #3: Marx and Marxists (in Anthropology)

February 11

Marx's life, philosophic background, principal works, and historical impact.
The structure of Marx's theory. Key theoretical concepts, dialectic and praxis, relations and modes of production, base and superstructure. Marx versus Marxists versus Marxism.

Reading:

Marx, Karl in *Karl Marx, Selected Writings, 2d ed.*, edited by David McLellan, Oxford U Press, 2000.

- (1) Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (early 1840s) pp. 84-95. (PDF)
- (2) The German Ideology (1844-45, with Frederick Engels), pp. 175-200. (PDF)
- (3) The Communist Manifesto (1848, with Frederick Engels), 245-262. (PDF)

McLellan, David

1975 Karl Marx. New York: Penguin. [Preface + pp. 20-59]. (PDF)

Wolf, Eric, 1982. *Europe and the People without History*.

- (1) Introduction. In E&M.
- (2) The Fur Trade, pp. 158-163 only. (PDF)
- (3) Afterward, pp. 386-391. (PDF)

Asad, Talal, 1987. "Are There Histories of People Without Europe?" In E&M.

Harvey, David, 1989. The Condition of Postmodernity. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. [Pp. 173-188.] (PDF)

Week #4: Boas and American Anthropology, 1880s to 1955

February 18

Boas and his legacy: four sub-fields in American anthropology; professionalizing the discipline. Particularism, cultural relativism, anti-evolutionism. Valorization of cultural diversity and critique of ethnic and racial discrimination.

Boas' intellectual legacy, e.g., Kroeber, Lowie, &tc. Problems of particularism and cultural complexity. Superorganic potentials and problems. The cultural discovery of language.

Reading:

Boas, Franz, 1896. "The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology." In B&G.

Boas, Franz, 1920. "The Methods of Ethnology," in B&G.

Boas, Franz

1940 Race, Language and Culture.

(1) Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants [pp. 60-75]. (PDF)

(2) Decorative Designs of Alaskan Needle-Cases [pp. 564-592]. (PDF)

Lowie, Robert, 1920, *Primitive Society.*

(1) The Determinants of Culture. In B&G.

(2) Conclusion. In E&M

Radin, Paul, 1927. "Right and Wrong." In M&W.

Kroeber, Alfred L 1915. "Eighteen Professions." In M&W.

Kroeber, Alfred L., 1923. "What Anthropology is All About." In E&M.

Kroeber, Alfred L. 1952. "The Concept of Culture in Science." In B&G.

Sapir, Edward, 1929. "The Status of Linguistics as a Science." In B&G.

Whorf, Benjamin Lee, 1941, "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language." In B&G.

Lewis, Herbert S. 2001. The Passion of Franz Boas. American Anthropologist 103:447-467. (PDF)

Week #5: French Anthropology 1890 - 1980: Durkheim/Mauss/Lévi-Strauss**February 25**

The development of sociological realism in Durkheim's, especially in *Rules of Sociological Method* and *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*.

French structuralism. Linguistic theory and semiotics vs. ethnography. Lévi-Straussian legacies and divergences from Durkheim: synchrony, collectivity, and the role of mental constructs. Gift exchange per Mauss. The legacy of French vis-à-vis American anthropology.

Reading:

Durkheim, Émile, 1895, *Rules of Sociological Method*.

(1) "Rules for the Explanation of Social Facts." In B&G.

(2) "What is a Social Fact." In M&W.

Durkheim, Émile, 1912. *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*.

(1) Introduction. In E&M

(2) "The Cosmological System of Totemism and the Idea of Class" in M&W

(3) Conclusion. In B&G.

Mauss, Marcel, 1925, *The Gift*

(1) Gifts and Return Gifts. In B&G.

(2) Excerpts from *The Gift*. In M&W.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1953. "Social Structure" in B&G

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1976. "The Story of Asdiwal." In B&G.

Counter-point reading:

Geertz, Clifford

1959 Ritual and Social Change: A Javanese Example. *American Anthropologist* 66:991-1012. [Reprinted in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 1973.] (PDF)

Week #6: British social anthropology, 1914 - 1975

March 4

English legacies of structure. Radcliffe-Brown's structural-functionalism vs. Malinowski's functionalism. The British relationship between ethnography and ethnology. The descent of groupings.

The classic legacy of British structural and functional anthropology. The continuing value of kinship and social organization (including for meaning/politics/power).

Reading:

Malinowski, Bronislaw, 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

(1) The Subject, Method, and Scope of this Inquiry. In E&M.

(2) The Essentials of the Kula. In M&W.

Malinowski, Bronislaw, 1939. "The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis. In B&G.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., 1952. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*.

(1) On the Concept of Function in Social Science. In B&G.

(2) On Social Structure. In B&G.

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R., 1958, "Social Structure." In E&M.

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R., 1924, "The Mother's Brother in South Africa." In M&W.

Evans-Pritchard, E. E., 1940. "The Nuer of the Southern Sudan." In M&W.

Gluckman, Max, 1956, "The License in Ritual." In M&W.

Turner, Victor W. 1974, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty: Religious Symbols of Communitas." In B&G.

Counter-point readings:

Asad, Talal

1973 Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. New York: Humanities Press. [pp. 9-19.] (PDF)

Said, Edward

1978 Orientalism. New York: Pantheon. [Pp. 1-28.] (PDF)

March 11-15 = Spring break

Week #7: Cultural Materialism

March 18

Material and environmental conditions and constraints of social and cultural development. Cultural materialism versus dialectical materialism. Cultural evolution vis-à-vis behavioral ecology, on one hand, and political ecology, on the other.

Steward, Julian, 1955. "The Concept and Method of Cultural Ecology." In B&G.

Steward, Julian, 1955. "The Patrilineal Band." In M&W.

White, Leslie, 1943, "Energy and the Evolution of Culture." In M&W.

White, Leslie, 1949, "The Symbol." In B&G.

Fried, Morton, 1960. "On the Evolution of Social Stratification and the State." In M&W.

Harris, Marvin, 1979, "Theoretical Principles of Cultural Materialism." In B&G.

Harris, Marvin, 1966, "The Cultural Ecology of India's Sacred Cattle." In M&W.

Rappaport, Roy A., 1967. "Ritual Regulation of Environmental Relations Among a New

Guinea People." In M&W.

Bourgois, Philippe, 1995. "From Jibaro to Crack Dealer: Confronting the Restructuring of Capitalism in El Barrio." In M&W.

Counter-point reading:

Sahlins, Marshall, 1976. *Culture and Practical Reason* [Preface + pp. 1-4]. (PDF)

Week #8: Anthropology as "Interpretive Science" -- from Max Weber to Clifford Geertz to Marshall Sahlins

March 25

Herder, Dilthey, and the ancestry of geisteswissenschaften. Interpretation, historicism, and organization in Weber. Ideal types and historical specifics. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

Mediating subjective and objective. Two Webers, or one?. Weber's legacy in American cultural anthropology.

Weber->Geertz and the interpretive legacy in anthropology. Geertz's intellectual trajectory. Culture as a symbolic system. Descriptive thickness. The tensions of anti-anti-relativism and the prelude of blurred genres.

Putting cultural logics in motion and in history. Sahlins' structure of conjuncture. The rise (and decline) of cultural Chicago.

Reading:

Weber, Max

2002 *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by Stephen Kalberg. Los Angeles: Roxbury (3rd edition). [Pp. 3-42]. (PDF)

Weber, Max

1978 *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press. "Basic Sociological Terms." [Pp. 3-25]. (PDF)

Weber, Max, 1922. "The Sociology of Charismatic Authority." In E&M.

Geertz, Clifford, 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In B&G OR E&M.

Geertz, Clifford, 1973. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight." In M&W.

Sahlins, Marshall, 1985. "Introduction to *Islands of History*." In E&M.

Sahlins, Marshall D.

1981 Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. [Pp. 67-72] (PDF)

Counter-point reading:

Roseberry, William

1989 Balinese Cockfights and the Seduction of Anthropology. In *Anthropologies and Histories*, pp. 17-29. (PDF)

Week #9: Where Are the Women?

April 1

From “wind in the palm trees” to “culture and personality” to “an anthropology of women” to “gendered anthropology” to “queer studies”: genealogies of gendered change in 20th->21st century anthropology.

Mead, Margaret, 1928. “Introduction to *Coming of Age in Samoa*.” In E&M.

Mead, Margaret, 1925. “Introduction to *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*.” In M&W.

Benedict, Ruth, 1930. “Psychological Types in the Cultures of the Southwest.’ In M&W.

Benedict, Ruth 1934. *Patterns of Culture*.

(1) The Integration of Culture. In B&G

(2) The Individual and the Pattern of Culture. In E&M.

Ortner, Sherry B., 1974. “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” In M&W.

Strathern, Marylyn, 1981. “Self-interest and the Social Good: Some Implications of Hagen Gender Imagery.” In E&M.

Gal, Susan, 1991. “Language, Gender, and Power: An Anthropological Perspective.” In E&M.

diLeonardo, Micaela, 1991. Gender, Culture and Political Economy: Feminist Anthropology in Historical Perspective. In *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge*. Edited by Micaela di Leonardo, pp. 1-48. (PDF)

Rubin, Gayle, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality.” 1984. Reprinted, *Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, 1993 [pp. 3-44]. (PDF)

Week #10: Bourdieu and practice theory**April 8**

Critical views of social practice. Bourdieu's intellectual context and trajectory. Scope of work. Objectivizing the subjective moment: critical agency. Attempted reflexivity. Mediating interpretive and critical theory. Beyond Bourdieu: Theory as habitus? The last creative gasps of modernist anthropology? Learning from practice.

Reading:

Ortner, Sherry B., 1984. "Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties." In E&M.

Knauff, Bruce M.

1996 Practices. *Genealogies for the Present in Cultural Anthropology*, ch. 4, pp. 105-136. (PDF)

Bourdieu, Pierre

1977 *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Pp. 1-30, 78-95, 143-158] (PDF)

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1982. "The Production and Reproduction of Legitimate Language." In E&M.

NB: April 15: Submit your one page summary and/or outline of final paper themes or topic!

Week #11: Foucault (1926-1984): A different genealogy?**April 15**

A different way of thinking about knowledge, power, and "life." Genealogy versus history. Progression of Foucault's oeuvre. Knowledge, Power/Resistance, Subjectivity.

Foucault in anthropology: selective appropriations. Ethnographic engagements and queering power. Foucault at the limit / the limit of Foucault.

Reading:

Foucault, Michel

1984 *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon Books. [Pp. 3-27, 76-97, 273-289, 333-339.] (PDF)

Foucault, Michel

1998 Maurice Florence [A pseudo-nonymous self-description by Foucault]. In

Michel Foucault, Volume 3: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology, pp. 459-465. Ed. James D. Faubian. New York: Free Press. (PDF)

Foucault, Michael

1983 The Subject and Power. In Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 209-226. (PDF)

Counterpoint reading:

Marshall Sahlins, *Waiting for Foucault, Still*, Pp. 1-40 & 48. (PDF)

Week #12: After Culture: POMO and No Mo' POMO in American Anthropology, 1980s-90s.

April 22

Postmodern moves and reflexive relativity. Experimentalism and counter-narrative evocation. Globalism, and multi-sitedness in 21st century ethnography.

Reading:

Knauft, Bruce, 1996. "Pushing Anthropology Past the Posts." In *Genealogies for the Present in Cultural Anthropology*, pp. 63-70 only. (PDF)

Clifford, James, 1986. "Partial Truths." In E&M.

Marcus, George E. and Michael J. Fischer, 1986. "A Crisis of Representation in the Human Sciences." In E&M.

Marcus, George E., 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography." *Annual Reviews of Anthropology*, vol. 24, pp. 95-117. (PDF)

Taussig, Michael T., 1987. *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*. [Pp. xiii-xiv, 3-11, 364-392.] (PDF)

Appadurai, Arjun, 1990. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." In E&M.

Week #13: Engaged Anthropology and the future of the discipline in the 21st century: "Brave New Field, Or, Coming Full Circle?"

April 29

Final class: From before to after modernity. Romance versus Enlightenment revised. Anthropology in the wake of master paradigms and master narratives. Instructor wrap-up. Stock-taking and festivities.

Reading:

Knauft, Bruce, 2006. Anthropology in the Middle. *Anthropological Theory*, 6:407-430.
(PDF)

Knauft, "Projecting Anthropology: Dialogues of Practical Engagement in Five World Areas."
(PDF)

Knauft, "Anthropology on the Curve of Engagement: Or, Before and After Anthropology's
Thirty Year's War." (PDF)

Monday, May 6 firm deadline:

Final papers due in hard copy to instructor's mailbox by 2:00pm.