

Emory University
Department of Anthropology

Anthropology 202
Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Fall, 2019
Mondays / Wednesdays 1:00-2:15pm
MSC Room N304

Discussion Section:
Wednesdays 4:00-4:50pm
MSC Room N302

Professor Bruce Knauff – bruce.knauff@emory.edu

Office hours: M 2:15-3:15pm

Graduate Student Audrey Jones (AJ) – audrey.marie.jones@emory.edu

Office hours: M 11:30-12:30, ANT 200

SYNOPSIS

This introductory course engages students with the depth and the breadth of human cultural diversity across different world areas in the present and in the past. We will address the nature and range of cultural orientations, including with respect to environment and economics, ethnicity and race, gender and sexuality, power and politics, and belief systems and religion. The course considers how cultural beliefs inform – and are sometimes at odds with – patterns of behavior. We will consider the global and long-term trajectory of human social and cultural change, including with respect to issues of inequality. We will also explore how global and international forces alternately constrain and fuel cultural differences. This course is appropriate for beginning students and for any student interested in expanding their understanding of social and cultural diversity and of humanity as a whole. This course is also a requirement for Anthropology majors, including those seeking either a BA or a BS degree in Anthropology.

Reading for this course includes an award-winning popular source book and cultural anthropology case studies, including one authored by the instructor, concerning societies in different parts of the world.

This course has no pre-requisites and is geared to the interests of any student who is seriously interested in the dynamics of cultural development, change, and diversity.

Books

Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. 2015. New York: Harper. ISBN 978-0-06-231611-0.

Bruce M. Knauft, *The Gebusi: Lives Transformed in a Rainforest World, 4th EDITION*. 2016. Long Grove, IL: Waveland. ISBN: 978-1-4786-3003-6.

Dinah Hannaford, *Marriage without Borders: Transnational Spouses in Neoliberal Senegal*. 2017. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. ISBN 978-0-8122-4934-7. [NB: 20% price reduction via UPenn press using promo code PH70]

Alice Goffman, *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City*. Chicago: University Chicago Press. 2015. ISBN: 9780226275406.

Honor Code: The honor code is in effect for this class. Please make certain that all written work is your own, not shared (except for group projects), and that any quoted or paraphrased material from public or published sources is acknowledged and cited appropriately. Closely paraphrased material from published sources must be cited by page number, and directly quoted material must be enclosed by quotation marks and cited by page number. Course books can be cited by simply indicating author and page number, e.g., (Jones, p. 45).

Missed classes and missed quizzes: Attendance will be taken at each class, including as registered by beginning-class quizzes. If you are absent at the beginning of class when attendance is taken, you will be marked absent for the entire class. If you have an unexcused absence and miss a quiz, you cannot make it up – but the two lowest quiz scores are not counted in calculating the course grade.

If you have an excused class absence, please self-certify this using the official form provided by OUE; please see the course Canvas website. Your signed form for excused absences should be emailed to the course TA.

If you have an excused absence for a class during which a quiz is given, an altered quiz can be taken in arrangement with the course TA pending your honor code pledge that you have not received any information about the quiz from students who have already taken it.

Class conduct: Please arrive on time. Cell phones, blackberries, iPhones, iPods, etc. should not be used for outside communication or browsing during class. Use of personal computers or tablets for purposes other than taking notes or as directed by the instructor is not in the interest of students and is not allowed.

Assignments and late penalties: Course assignments will be submitted via Canvas. Late assignments will have 0.25 point deducted per hour for the first 72 hours late = 6 points per day. Assignments more than three days late should be discussed with the TA.

Course Requirements

- (1) Attendance and class participation = 12 points.** Regular course attendance and reading the material in advance is key to success in this course. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting.
For each session with reading assigned, students are required to bring to class at least one question or quotation from the reading that they would be interested to have discussed by the class as a whole. Random calling on students to read and describe their question or quote will be used during class on most days to facilitate discussion. Students should bring the book currently being read to each class meeting.
- (2) Beginning class quizzes = 2 points each x 9 quizzes = 18 points.** Each quiz will be short, typically five multiple choice / true-false questions administered at the very beginning of class as indicated in the syllabus. NOTE: Eleven quizzes are scheduled in the course, but the lowest two quiz scores will not be used in calculating the final grade.
- (3) Source book theme essays = 6 points each x 3 = 18 points.** The three short theme essays concerning *Sapiens* are each a maximum of 550 words, submitted on Canvas per the syllabus. Theme questions to choose from for each theme essay will be provided. Concise and direct writing are important. Develop your own point of view or interpretation in answering your chosen question as supported by case example/s from the book. These should be presented and discussed as evidence that support your point of view, along with at least three relevant citations from different passages of the book.
- (4) Ethnography book assignments = 10 points each x 3 = 30 points.** Specific instructions will be given individually for each of the three assignments. Check the syllabus and posted files for further information. Due dates are listed in the syllabus.
- (5) Mini Ethnographic Project Report = 22 points.** Students will complete a short ethnographic investigation consisting of one ethnographic observation and two interviews. Project format is flexible and may include a traditional academic essay, webpage, video, or other means of representation. Further information will be posted as a separate file on Canvas.
- #1-5 above = 100 points**
- (6) Extra credit assignments.** Selected extra credit assignments will be announced and posted by the instructors during the course of the semester. Each extra credit assignment is worth 1 point. During the course of the semester, students can earn up to three points for the successful completion and submission on Canvas of extra credit assignments.

SYLLABUS

Aug 28, Wed

Welcome! Introduction to the course. Discussion of the course structure, syllabus, requirements, and readings.

Sept 2 Labor Day, no class

***Sapiens* Part One: The Cognitive Revolution**

Sept 4, Wed

Human evolution: the niche of Homo, language origins, and the spread of humanity

- Harari Ch 1: An Animal of No Significance
- Harari Ch 2: The Tree of Knowledge
- Quiz #1

Sept 9, Mon

Prehistoric foragers: the known and unknown of humanity's past; humans as 'conquerors'

- Harari Ch 3: A Day in the Life of Adam and Eve
- Harari Ch 4: The Flood
- Quiz #2

***Sapiens* Part Two: The Agricultural Revolution**

Sept 11, Wed

The Neolithic transformation: the origins of agriculture, the growth of human hierarchy, the importance of imagined orders, and the price of 'civilization'

- Harari Ch 5: History's Biggest Fraud
- Harari Ch 6: Building Pyramids
- Quiz #3

Sept 16, Mon

The advantages and oppressions of culture writ large: Writing, numbers, stratification, and disempowerment

- Harari Ch 7: Memory Overload
- Harari Ch 8: There is No Justice in History
- *Quiz #4*
- FLIPPED CLASSROOM / class debate:
 - *Is the rise of civilization indeed humanity's biggest fraud?*
 - *Is there really no justice in history?*
- *Sapiens* Theme Essay #1 due by midnight

***Sapiens* Part Three: The Unification of Humankind**

Sept 18, Wed

Empires on the march: Orders of domination, orders of money, orders of religion

- Harari Ch 9: The Arrow of History
- Harari Ch 10: The Scent of Money
- Quiz #5

Sept 23, Mon

Imperial cycles: Dynamics, dominations, justifications, and legacies

- Harari Ch 11: Imperial Visions
- Quiz #6

Sept 25, Wed

The development and spread and of religions – and of secular ideologies that worship humanity

- Harari Ch 12: The Law of Religion
- Harari Ch 13: The Secret of Success
- FLIPPED CLASSROOM / class debate
 - *Is the worship of humanity itself a religion?*
 - *If history is blind, is it also meaningless?*
- Quiz #7

Sept 27, Fri

- *Sapiens* Theme Essay #2 due by 5:00pm

***Sapiens* Part Four: The Scientific Revolution**

Sept 30, Mon

The connection and collusion of science and empire: The power of 'ignorance' since 1500 AD

- Harari Ch 14: The Discovery of Ignorance
- Harari Ch 15: The Marriage of Science and Empire
- Quiz #8

Oct 2, Wed

Western capitalism conquers the world: Business, colonialism, and the making of modernity

- Harari Ch 16: The Capitalist Creed
- Quiz #9

Oct 7, Mon

Industrialism, consumerism, and the costs (and benefits) of an unnatural future

- Harari Ch 17: The Wheels of Industry
- Harari Ch 18: A Permanent Revolution

- Quiz #10

Oct 9, Wed

Can humans be happy? The bliss of ignorance and the ignorance of bliss

- Harari Ch 19: And They Lived Happily Ever After
- Harari Ch 20: The End of *Homo Sapiens* [Note: Ch 20 is optional and will NOT be considered in Quiz #11]
- Afterward: The Animal that Became a God [Harari's 'Afterward' will be considered in class and in the quiz]
- Quiz #11
- FLIPPED CLASSROOM / class debate:
 - *Can progress bring happiness?*

Oct 11, Fri

- Sapiens Theme Essay #3 due by 5:00pm

Oct 14 – Fall Break, no class

Oct 16, Wed

The human experience of contemporary marginality and aspiration

Film: *Maria Full of Grace*

Oct 21, Mon

A rainforest people at the margins of the world: The Gebusi, Part One

- *The Gebusi* Part I: Entry + Introduction + Chs. 1-6.
- Mini ethnographic topic due in Canvas discussion by 4:00pm

Oct 23, Wed

Remotely modern: The specter of Gebusi development

- *The Gebusi* Part Two: Chs. 7-10

Oct 28, Mon

Further behind or further ahead?: Gebusi thrown back

Underdevelopment among the Gebusi and elsewhere

- *The Gebusi* Part Three: Chs. 11-12
- "The Famine Feast" – Gebusi 2016 [on Canvas]
- Short essay due on *The Gebusi* due by midnight

Oct 30, Wed

Challenges to progress and to marriage in Senegal – *Marriage without Borders* #1

- Hannaford Ch 1: *Bitim Rëw*
- Hannaford Ch 2: Precarity, Care Work, and Lives Suspended
- Hannaford Ch 3: Loneliness, Elegance, and Reproductive Labor

Nov 4, Mon

Transnational marriage: Married to the mobile in Senegal – *Marriage without Borders* #2

- Hannaford Ch 4: Mobility, Surveillance, and Infidelity
- Hannaford Ch 5: Sex, Love and Modern Kinship
- Hannaford Ch 6: Reunions
- Hannaford Conclusion: The Handmaiden of Neoliberalism

Nov 6, Wed

In-class discussion of *Marriage without Borders* with the author, Dinah Hannaford

- Bring at least one question to class to ask / discuss with Dr. Hannaford
- Assignment on *Marriage without Borders* due by midnight

Nov 11, Mon

The “dirty world” from voices on the street: *On the Run* #1

- *On the Run*, Chs. Introduction through Ch 4

Nov 13, Wed

Relationships and meaning in the face of struggle: *On the Run* #2

- *On the Run*, Chs. 5-7, conclusion & epilogue
- Mini ethnography abstract due by midnight

Nov 18, Mon

Class discussion of ethnography and ethics: *On the Run* #3

- Assignment on *On the Run* due by 5:00pm

Nov 20, Wed

Class discussion of the three ethnographies comparatively in relation to:

- (a) Research circumstances and methods of inquiry
- (b) The subject position of the author in each case
- (c) Gender relations of the people studied

Nov 25, Mon – No class: instructors gone to annual anthropology convention

Nov 27, Wed – Beginning Thanksgiving break, no class

Dec 2, Mon

Ethnographic project presentations #1

Dec 4, Wed

Ethnographic project presentations #2

Dec 9, Mon: Course wrap-up and Finale

Dec 10, Tues: Final ethnographic project submissions due 5:00pm