

THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY ANTHROPOLOGY 441

Bates College
Fall 2018

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Pettengill 163
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Course Description

This course on the history of anthropological theory could also be considered a course on the anthropology of anthropological theory. It is both a course on the intellectual history of anthropology as a discipline and a course in which we subject the discipline of anthropology to the kind of analysis and interpretation anthropologists usually engage in while studying other cultures in other parts of the world. Instead of analyzing myths and rituals from other cultures, in this course we analyze the texts anthropologists themselves write to see what we can learn from them about the different perspectives anthropologists and members of Western European cultures more generally have adopted in their study of what have been variously referred to as "savage," "primitive," "tribal," "kinship-based," "non-literate," and "Third World" societies. Instead of asking what the work of Margaret Mead or Evans-Pritchard, for example, can tell us about the Samoans or the Nuer, we ask what it can tell us about American or British anthropology. By adopting a self-reflexive or critical stance we set the discipline of anthropology in its historical and cultural context. In that way we can better understand the different theoretical approaches that have dominated anthropology over the past century. Among the important approaches and topics we consider are: cultural evolutionism, historical particularism, British structural-functionalism, psychological anthropology, recent developments in the areas of ethnographic writing, anthropology as cultural critique, postmodernism, feminism, and globalization theory.

Learning Objectives

Students have an improved understanding of the history of anthropological theory.

Students have an improved understanding of the specific theoretical approaches we focus on in class.

Students have an improved understanding of the relationship between anthropological theory and ethnographic material in doing anthropological analysis.

Students have an improved ability to use appropriate theoretical material in their senior theses.

Required Books

Boas, Race, Language, and Culture

Benedict, Patterns of Culture

Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society

Said, Orientalism

Behar and Gordon, Women Writing Culture

Appadurai, Modernity at Large

Lyceum

Taylor, Primitive Culture, Part I: The Origins of Culture

Lavenda & Schultz, Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology

Lewis, "The Question of Orientalism"

Said & Lewis, "Orientalism: An Exchange" in The New York Review of Books

Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths" in Writing Culture

Clifford, "On Ethnographic Authority" in The Predicament of Culture

Marcus and Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts" in Siegel

Geertz, Works and Lives

Gordon, "Writing Culture, Writing Feminisms" in Inscriptions

Morales, "Concepts of Pollution" in Getting Home Alive

TOPICS AND READINGS

Sept. 6 Organization of the Course
The Anthropology of Anthropology

1. Evolutionism and the Use of the Comparative Method

Sept. 11 Tylor, Primitive Culture, Part I: The Origins of Culture (1871), Chapters I and II,
pp. 1-69

2. Senior Thesis Workshop: Part 1

Sept. 13 Session with Social Science Reference Librarian Laura Juraska on improving
Senior Thesis research skills (in Library)

Sept. 18 Reading will include a variety of prospectuses, grant proposals, senior theses, and
articles from various anthropology journals
Lavenda & Schultz, Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology, Chapter 12, "Theory
in Cultural Anthropology", pp. 185-203

3. A Critique of Evolutionism and the Comparative Method: Historical Particularism and the Concepts of Culture and Race

Sept. 20 In-class video: Franz Boas (1858-1942)

Sept. 25 Boas, Race, Language, and Culture
"The Aims of Ethnology" (1888), pp. 626-638
"The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology" (1896), pp. 270-
280
"The Methods of Ethnology" (1920), pp. 281-289
"Some Problems of Methodology in the Social Sciences" (1930), pp. 260-269
"The Aims of Anthropological Research" (1932), pp. 243-259

Sept. 27 **Rough Draft of Senior Thesis Prospectus due at 2:30 p.m.**

Sept. 27 Boas, Race, Language, and Culture
 "Review of William Z. Ripley, 'The Races of Europe'" (1899), pp. 155-159
 "New Evidence in Regard to the Instability of Human Types" (1916), pp. 76-81
 "Race and Progress" (1931), pp. 3-17

4. Senior Thesis Workshop: Part 2

Oct. 2 & 4 We will read and critique rough drafts of students' prospectuses

5. Patterns of Culture and the Origin of the Culture and Personality School

Oct. 9 Benedict, Patterns of Culture (1934), Chapters I-IV

Oct. 11 Benedict, Chapters VI-VIII (Omit V)

6. British Social Anthropology: Structural — Functionalism

Oct. 16 Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society (1952), Introduction and Chapters I, III, and IV

Oct. 23 Radcliffe-Brown, Chapters VIII, IX, and X

7. Anthropology and the Other: The Politics of Representation

Oct. 25 Said, Orientalism (1979), pp. 1-49
 In-class video: On Orientalism

Oct. 30 Said, pp. 49-73, 92-110

Nov. 1 Said, pp. 284-328
 Lewis, "The Question of Orientalism"
 Said and Lewis, "Orientalism: An Exchange." Also available online at:
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1982/aug/12/orientalism-an-exchange/>

Images of Orientalist Art:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=orientalist+art&espv=2&biw=1179&bih=876&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=e4yeVdObPI2WygTS2oPYBg&ved=0CB0QsAQ#tbm=isch&q=french+orientalist+art>

Anti-Orientalist Art? Or not? Lalla Essaydi's "Les Femmes Du Maroc:"

http://www.houkgallery.com/exhibitions/2011-03-10_lalla-essaydi/
<http://www.bates.edu/museum/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/y2010/lalla-essaydi-les-femmes-du-maroc/>
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/07/nyregion/07artsnj.html>

8. Writing Ethnography: Postmodernism in Anthropology

- Nov. 6 Marcus and Cushman, "Ethnographies as Texts"
 Clifford, "On Ethnographic Authority," in Predicament of Culture
 Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," in Writing Culture
- Nov. 8 Geertz, Works and Lives, Chapters 1, 4 and 6

9. A Feminist Critique

- Nov. 13 Gordon, "Writing Culture, Writing Feminisms" in Inscriptions, 1988. Available
 online at: <http://culturalstudies.ucsc.edu/inscriptions/volume-34/2598-2/>
 Behar, "Introduction," in Women Writing Culture, pp. 1-29
- Nov. 15 Behar, "Writing in My Father's Name," in Women Writing Culture, pp. 65-82
 Lutz, "The Gender of Theory," in Women Writing Culture, pp. 249-266
 Moralis, "Concepts of Pollution" in Getting Home Alive
- Nov. 27 Watch the video: Zora Neale Hurston: Jump at the Sun, available through the
 Bates Library at: http://fod.infobase.com/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=49796
 Hurston, Of Mules and Men, pp. xii-38; 183-189, and 287-297
 Hernandez, "Multiple Subjectivities and Strategic Positionality: Zora Neale
 Hurston's Experimental Ethnographies." In Women Writing Culture, pp. 148-
 165

10. Globalization Theory

- Nov. 29 Appadurai, Modernity at Large, Chapters 1 and 2
 Ads for Cola Turka and the Coca-Colonization
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWbEbCE1Pvg&list=RD5YsrKy2z2T8&index=4>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oi_LKnQmqLc&list=RD5YsrKy2z2T8&index=2
- Dec. 4 Appadurai, Chapter 3
- Dec. 6 Discussion

Course Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation in class discussion. Regular and valuable contribution to class discussion will raise a student's grade. Poor attendance will lower it.
2. For every class students will prepare three questions or topics for discussion raised by the readings. The questions should be typed and will be handed in after class.
3. Thesis prospectus and critiques of other students' prospectuses.

4. Two short papers (5 pages) analyzing the assigned readings. The first paper should deal with the work of Boas, Radcliffe-Brown, or Benedict; the second with the work of Said, Geertz, Clifford, Marcus and Cushman, Behar (Gordon, Lutz, Hurston, Hernandez), or Appadurai.
5. One long paper (10-15 pages) on a topic of your choice.
6. Take-home final exam.

Grading

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Final Exam	25%
Long paper	25%
Two short papers	25%
Class participation, written questions, thesis prospectus, exercises and peer response forms	25%

Schedule of Due Dates

Short papers are due at the beginning of class on the day the material analyzed is scheduled to be discussed.

Sept. 27 Senior Thesis Prospectus

Dec. 6 Long Paper

Dec. 11 Take-home final examination (**to be handed out on Dec. 6**)

(Late papers and exams will be graded down unless an extension has been granted.)

Papers

The long paper should be approximately 10-15 pages long. It should focus on one anthropological school, the work of one anthropologist, an important work of one anthropologist, or one concept that has been central to the history of anthropology. You are encouraged to choose a school, an anthropologist, a work, or a concept that we have not dealt with in class, such as French Structuralism (Durkheim or Levi Strauss), cultural ecology (Steward or Harris), interpretive anthropology (Geertz, Turner, or Douglas), medical anthropology (Kleinman), race (Montague), or post-processual archaeology (Hodder). You should deal with your topic as we deal with the class readings. Treat the text as a document from another culture. Ask what we can learn from the text about the culture of the anthropologist who wrote the text. Do not focus on the ethnographic content of the work. In other words, if you were to write about Margaret Mead's Coming of Age in Samoa, you would not be concerned with Samoan culture, but with American cultural anthropology or with psychological anthropology as practiced by Mead. You should examine the perspective or the paradigm of the anthropologist you write about. What, for example, does Mead take for granted? What are her assumptions? What are her questions? What are her methods? What for Mead constitutes an explanation?

The short papers should be approximately 5 pages long. They should focus on one idea, concept, term, or issue from the readings. They should deal with some of the same topics as the long paper, but in a much more restricted and focused manner. Make sure you do not just summarize the reading, but make a point, say something interesting, or offer an interpretation or analysis of some specific aspect of the readings. For example, you might analyze Tylor's concept of culture or progress or Boas' use of the term culture or his thoughts about anthropology as a science.

Please Note

1. All students are responsible for reading and understanding the Bates College Statement on Academic Honesty. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.
2. Please bring a hard copy of the assigned readings to class. Readings should be completed before class on the date indicated.
3. Your fellow students and I would appreciate it very much if you would arrive in class on time, refrain from getting up and leaving the room during the class hour, turn off your cell phones, and only use your laptops for taking notes. Anyone using a computer for purposes unrelated to the class will lose the privilege of using a computer in class. Thank you.
4. The classroom is a safe space. All questions asked in a respectful tone are welcome.