

Department of Anthropology
ANTH 9003B: ANTHROPOLOGY AND COLLABORATION:
ANTHROPOLOGY WITHOUT HIERARCHY
COURSE OUTLINE
Winter 2018

INSTRUCTOR: Regna Darnell
OFFICE: Social Science Centre 3331
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 4:30-5:30
(whenever office door is open or by appointment)
PHONE: 519-661-2111 - x85589 – UNRELIABLE, USE E-MAIL
E-MAIL: rdarnell@uwo.ca

CLASS TIME/PLACE: Tuesday 1:30-4:30, SSC 3227

Credit Value: .5

REQUIRED TEXTS:

I have not ordered particular texts since the books are easily available from Amazon or on-line. Let me know if you have trouble finding them. Additional articles may be assigned for discussion in response to interests of students in the class and posted on Owl when possible. Students who are familiar with the discussion items may prefer to pursue the topic in greater depth in the same or related texts.

PLAN OF THE COURSE:

I believe that graduate courses should be structured around one or two problematics that apply across a range of topical and ethnographic areas. Seminar discussion around a few seminal theoretical readings allows students from a variety of disciplines and sub-disciplines to fill in the evidence for a particular aspect of the questions discussed according to their own interests and backgrounds. Class presentations are critical because shared knowledge and diverse background experience facilitate creative critical thinking.

The conditions of power that have underwritten Anthropology's history of colonialism are not going to go away. Nonetheless, many contemporary anthropologists have worked to produce a countervailing relational mode of research that is dialogic, co-constructed and emergent. Such a relational ontology acknowledges the embodied realities of all interlocutors, respecting both the materiality and intractability of the world and the contingency and contextuality of our ability to know it. Much of the logic and vocabulary of the social sciences, including anthropology, carries unrecognized baggage of evolutionary hierarchy with its accompanying sense of entitlement.

Critiques of the anthropological concept of culture have abounded for decades. Anthropologists recognize culture in the plural but struggle to put the individual who is grounded in culture back into the equation. We will recuperate Edward Sapir's distinction between "genuine" and "spurious" cultures and revise the traditional humanities definition of culture as belonging only to a few, whether by education, temperament or class background. The intention that motivated anthropologists to pluralize "culture" was to recognize the common humanity and value of all societies and their ways of life. In the same spirit, we will experiment with expanding the definition of "civilization" to include all societies without imposing a common metric for its definition. The result might be the possibility of "genuine" conversation across cultural boundaries setting aside assumptions of incommensurability and relative value.

I have chosen some sources that will orient us to this kind of range for discussion in class. You will be expected to do the reading and be prepared to evaluate it in terms our emerging paradigm. The last portion of the course will be devoted to presentations of research papers on individual topics. Students will differ considerably in their backgrounds both by discipline and theoretical tradition. Assessment will be in relation to student learning rather than competition with peers. We will practice a pedagogy of collaboration based on the strength of intersecting perspectives.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

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| January 9 | Changing Scientific Paradigms (evolution, relativism, complexity)
READINGS: Thomas Kuhn, <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i>
Richard Lewin, <i>Complexity</i> |
| January 16 | The Implicit Baggage of Hierarchy: Trees & Arbors, Bricoleurs & Engineers
The Legacy of Structuralism – Darnell on Levi-Strauss, from <i>HOAA</i> .
READINGS: Deleuze and Guattari, <i>A Thousand Plateaus</i> , Introduction;
Chapter on Language, one other chapter of your choice. |
| January 23 | The Baseline of Human Sociality in Face-to-Face Interaction
READING: Benedict Anderson, <i>Imagined Community</i>

3 page essay due in class on the baggage of hierarchy from your position |
| January 30 | "Genuine Culture" and the Universality of Civilization
READINGS: Edward Sapir, "Culture, Genuine and Spurious"
Darnell, <i>Invisible Genealogies</i> , chapter on Paul Radin
James Tully on dialogic approach to political thought
Michael Asch, "On Finding a Place to Stand" |
| February 6 | Collaborative Research and Ethnographic Method; Walpole Island First Nation
READINGS: Darnell, in Tully, Borrow and Asch ed.
Selections from Elizabeth Povenelli, Sylvie Poirier, TJ Ferguson |
| February 13 | Public Discourse, Politics and Collaboration
READINGS: Isabelle Stengers, <i>Cosmopolitics</i> (Selections)

Each student will choose a legal case of cross-cultural mis-communication for discussion and circulate a one-page summary due in class . |

February 20	READING WEEK
February 27	GUEST LECTURER: Joshua Smith, Assoc. Editor, Franz Boas Papers "Theory, Ethnography, Activism in Anthropology" Inaugural Darnell Distinguished Lecture (readings may be assigned; other festivities)
March 6	A Standpoint-based Paradigm for Human and Natural Environment READINGS: Gregory Bateson, <i>Steps Toward an Ecology of Mind</i> Nancy Turner, <i>Ancient Pathways, Ancestral Knowledge</i> (Sel.)
March 6	The Non-necessity of Binaries: Epigenetics and Plasticity READINGS: D&G, <i>Anti-Oedipus</i> (sel), Felix Guattari, <i>Chaosmosis</i> Rosi Braidotti, <i>The Posthuman</i> ; Death of the Author Douglas Hofstadter, <i>Goedel, Escher, Bach</i> (dialogues) Donna Haraway, <i>Simians, Cyborgs and Woman</i> (Sel.)
March 13	Metaphor, Meaning and the Impossibility of Translation READINGS: George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, <i>Metaphors we Live By</i> Darnell, conference proposal on land and language
March 20	Class Presentations
March 27	Class Presentations
April 3	Class Presentations
April 10	Summary and Discussion
	FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS (due date negotiable with advance permission)

EVALUATION:

Class Participation (including attendance)	10%
Short Essay (3-5 pages)	10%
Discussion Case	10%
Class Presentation (on paper topic)	20%
Final Paper	50%

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. describe the characteristic methods of ethnographic fieldwork and theoretical reasoning;
2. identify anthropological threads in a range of related disciplines;
3. apply theoretical concepts to a critical interpretation of anthropological and other texts;
4. analyze the underlying assumptions of ethnographic and theoretical writing in the context of their production;
5. integrate materials from different disciplinary and sub-disciplinary sources;
6. demonstrate skills of critical thinking through collaborative teamwork within the class;
7. infer patterns of relationship between the particular and the general, with a healthy appreciation of complexity and tolerance for ambiguity;

ADDITIONAL MATTERS:

Late papers will be marked down by 2% each day or 10% per week for two weeks. Papers will not be accepted thereafter. All exceptions require documentation of medical or compassionate accommodation confirmed by the Dean's Office.

Extended absences (including failure to participate in team preparation and presentation) and late essays or assignments require documentation. Please consult the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: (<http://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>). Request for medical or non-medical accommodation should be directed to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office and not to the instructor.

No electronic devices will be permitted during the final exam. Laptop computers may be used in class for purposes of taking class notes or relevant information retrieval only. Cell phones should be turned off.

Academic offenses are taken seriously and students are responsible for reading and understanding the definition of scholastic offenses:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turn-it-in.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Student support services and student development services can be found at <http://www4.registrar.uwo.ca>.