

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ANTHROPOLOGY 2222G
DEBATES IN SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

COURSE OUTLINE
WINTER TERM 2018

Professor: Adriana Premat
Class times and Location: Monday 2:30-5:30 pm, SSC-2257
Office: SSC 3425
Phone: 519-661-2111, extension 85100
Office hours: Tuesdays 2:30-3:30pm
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Teaching Assistant: Nicholas Wees, nwees@uwo.ca

Course Description

This course introduces students to key concepts and methods in anthropology via an overview of key ongoing debates within our discipline. This approach allows us to consider different perspectives on topics of common concern in a manner that demonstrates how the "foundations" of anthropology are continually being revisited, contested and revised in ways that are essential to maintaining the discipline's vitality and relevance.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify and describe key debates that have guided the evolution of anthropological thinking.
- Compare and assess the merit or flaws of different anthropological perspectives on the same topic.
- Understand the role that debate based on empirical data plays in anthropological (and all scholarly) thinking and practice.
- Elaborate and communicate their personal perspectives on the debates covered in the course via tutorial discussions and a written essay.

Prerequisite: Anthropology 1020 E or 1025F/G

Required Texts:

- Course readings will be made available through OWL.

Course Requirements

Reading Quizzes (best 8 out of 10 quizzes at 2.5% each)	20%
Midterm	25%
Essay	25%
Final Exam	30%

Course Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined, with links to the full policies, at:

http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course_information/academic_policies.html.

Course Readings

The readings listed in the schedule of activities are an integral part of the class and will come up during lectures, class debates, quizzes and the final exam. All required readings are available through the OWL website. On average, you should be prepared to read from 20-30 pages per week.

Audiovisual Material

The video clips that will be shown in this class have been carefully selected to encourage class discussion and are considered an integral part of course content. They constitute the basis for organized class debates on key topics covered during lectures and will be covered in the exams.

Tutorials and Lectures

A portion of the class will be dedicated to debating weekly readings. To facilitate the exchange of ideas, the class will be divided into two groups that will participate in 10 in-class tutorials that will take place after the professor has lectured on the weekly topic. One of the groups will stay with the professor in SS2257 and the other will go to SSC 3102 with the teaching assistant. After the in-class tutorial, the class will come together again for debriefing and concluding remarks from the professor.

Quizzes

Students will write 10 online quizzes based on assigned readings before the beginning of each tutorial session. These quizzes will be completed via a laptop or cellphone using OWL. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are connected to OWL at the start of each class. Each quiz will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Only students in attendance will complete the quizzes. There will be absolutely no accommodation for missed quizzes but note that only your best 8 quizzes will be used to calculate the final grade for this portion of the course.

Final Exam

Please, note that the date for the final exam is yet to be determined but will be scheduled during the exam period so please, ensure that you are not away from campus during that time.

Essay

Students will be required to submit a 5-6 page essay on a topic assigned by the professor. Instructions for this assignment will be provided to the class by week 5. It is expected that the student will place a hard copy of this essay in the departmental assignment drop box by the specified deadline.

The penalty for unexcused lateness for a late assignment is 5 % each day. If you were to submit your paper 2 days late, the grade which would have otherwise been assigned to that paper would be reduced by 10%. For example, a paper which would have received a grade of 90% would instead be assigned a grade of 80% if it were submitted 2 days late.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

WEEK 1, JANUARY 8 INTRODUCTION

WEEK 2, JANUARY 15 IS ANTHROPOLOGY A SCIENCE?

Required readings:

- Ingold T., ed. (1996) “1998 Debate: Social Anthropology is a generalizing science or it is nothing”. In *Key Debates in Anthropology*, pp. 15-22 and 29-44 (read introduction, motions by Keith Hart and Judith Okely and debate) London: Routledge.
- [Kuper](#), A. and J. Marks (2011) “Anthropologists Unite!” *Nature* 470(10): 166-168.

WEEK 3, JANUARY 22 HUMAN NATURE?

Required readings:

- [Laden](#), G. (2013) Are Anthropologists a Dangerous Tribe? Anthropologists Battle over the Nature of Fierceness *Slate*.
- Welsch, R. and K. Endicott., eds (2013) Are Humans Inherently Violent? In *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Anthropology*, pp. 15-39.
- Ingold. T. (2011) Culture on the Ground: The World Perceived through the Feet. In *Being Alive*, pp.33-50. New York: Routledge.

WEEK 4, JANUARY 29 IS CULTURE A USEFUL CONCEPT?

Required readings:

- Brumann, C. (1999) Writing for Culture: Why a Successful Concept Should Not Be Discarded. *Current Anthropology* 40(S1): S1-S27.

WEEK 5, FEBRUARY 5 PASSIVE OBJECTS OR ACTIVE SUBJECTS?

Required reading:

- Nader, L. (1997) Controlling Processes: Tracing the Dynamic Components of Power. *Current Anthropology* 38(5): 711-738.

WEEK 6, FEBRUARY 12

MIDTERM

February 19-23
READING BREAK

WEEK 7, FEBRUARY 26
WHAT TO DO WITH INVENTED TRADITIONS AND IDENTITY POLITICS?

Required readings:

- Conklin, B. (1997). Body Paint, Feathers, and VCRs: Aesthetics and Authenticity in Amazonian Activism. *American Ethnologist*, 24(4), 711-737.
- Brosius, P. (1999) Analyses and Interventions: Anthropological Engagements with Environmentalism. *Cultural Anthropology*. 40:3: 277-309 (only read Introduction, Trends, Essentialized Images, Circulation of Images and Conclusion pgs.277-8, 280-1, 285, 287-9.

[Film](#) *The Couple in the Cage*:

WEEK 8, MARCH 5
WORLD VIEWS OR LIFE WORLDS?

Required readings:

- Welsch, R. and K. Endicott., eds (2013) Does Language Shape How We Think? In *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Anthropology*, pp. 188-214.
- Ingold T., ed. (1996) "1990 Debate: Human Worlds are Cultural Constructed". In *Key Debates in Anthropology*, pp. 97-101 (read motions by Tim Ingold and Roland Littlewood) London: Routledge.

WEEK 9, MARCH 12
MATERIALITY MATTERS

Required readings:

- De León, J. (2012) "Better to be Hot than Caught?": Excavating Conflicting Roles of Migrant Material Culture. *American Anthropologist* 114(3): 477-495.

[Video](#) clip: *Undocumented Migration Project*.

Note: Please, try to attend the Gehman Lecture by De León on Friday.

WEEK 10, MARCH 19
HAVE WE LOST OUR PLACE IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD?

Required readings:

- Walsh, A. (2004). In the Wake of Things: Speculating in and about Sapphires in Northern Madagascar. *American Anthropologist*, 106(2), 225-237.

- Mintz, S. (1998) The Localization of Anthropological Practice: From Area Studies to Transnationalism. *Critique of Anthropology* 18(2): 117-133.
- Lindstrom L. and Stromberg P. (1999) Beyond the 'Savage Slot', *Anthropology News* 40(8): 9.
- [Miller](#), D. (2016) The Internet: Provocation. *Correspondences, Cultural Anthropology website, April 4, 2016*.

[Video clip](#): *Web 2.0 The Machine is Us/ing Us*

**WEEK 11, MARCH 26
THE LIMITS OF CULTURAL RELATIVISM**

Required readings:

- Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others. *American Anthropologist*, 104(3), 783-790.
- Wesch, M. (2007), A Witch Hunt in New Guinea: Anthropology on Trial. *Anthropology and Humanism*, 32: 4-17.

**WEEK 12, APRIL 2
GETTING (TOO?) INVOLVED?**

Required readings:

- Gonzalez, R. (2007) Towards a mercenary anthropology? *Anthropology Today* 23(3):14-19.
- Kilcullen, D. (2007) Ethics, Politics, and Non-State Warfare. *Anthropology Today* 23(3): 21.
- McFate, M. (2007) Building Bridges or Burning Heretics? *Anthropology Today* 23(3): 22.
- Bourgois, P. (2011) Lumpen Abuse: The Human Cost of Righteous Neoliberalism. *City and Society* 23(1):2-12.
- Farmer, P. (2004) An Anthropology of Structural Violence. *Current Anthropology*, 45(3): 305-325.

Film: Excerpt from [Bending the Arc](#).

WEEK 13

ESSAY DUE NO LATER THAN APRIL 8

EXAM PERIOD

FINAL EXAM (TBA)