

Anthropology 3660
ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY AND CONTEXT
Fall 2018
TF 8:00-9:50 am

Instructor: Prof. Dean J. Saitta
Office: Sturm 105

Office Hours: T 12:00-1:00; also by appointment
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Course Objectives

This course introduces graduate students and advanced undergraduates to the intellectual perspectives, conceptual frameworks, and languages—i.e., the major paradigms and theories—that characterize contemporary anthropology. The course will provide:

1. An overview of the history of anthropology and the socio-political contexts in which anthropological paradigms and theories were developed,
2. Some intellectual tools with which to recognize and critically evaluate different theoretical approaches in anthropology,
3. An understanding of how and why anthropology has achieved its distinctive character as a social science, and
4. Direction for developing a Master's thesis/exhibit/paper project or Undergraduate final project that is anchored by what you determine to be the most useful theoretical perspective or approach.

Required Text

Patterson, Thomas 2001 *A Social History of Anthropology in the United States*. Oxford: Berg.

Other Course Readings

All course readings are available on the DU Course Portfolio site: <http://portfolio.du.edu/anththeory>

Evaluation

Final course grades will be based upon:

- 1) Class participation, including leading the discussion of at least two assigned articles. Graduate Students will have two each plus one assigned chapter in Patterson (15% of grade).
- 2) Four (4) short take-home writing assignments (60% of grade).
- 3) Final Assignment (25% of grade).
 - a. Graduate Students: A research paper that relates to your MA project.
 - b. Undergraduate Students: A research paper or a Final Take-Home Exam.

This course is a seminar. **Class discussion of articles will ordinarily be led by you, the students.** In some instances, class discussion may take the form of small collaborative groups or other participatory exercises and activities. Please note that a course of this sort works best when everyone is prepared to actively discuss the course material, and written work is submitted in a timely manner.

All readings are to be completed for the class day indicated. They are organized by due date on the Course Portfolio site. I suggest—but don't require—that you print them out so that you can annotate them for class discussion. I reserve the right to add, eliminate, or replace articles depending on how the course unfolds.

The portfolio of work accumulated in this course will form part of the basis for the Graduate Student Qualifying Exam in spring quarter. It is expected to serve as a useful resource for the required graduate class in Advanced Anthropology in winter quarter. It might also assist with preparation of the graduate thesis/paper and the undergraduate major's final project (if applicable).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Sep 11

Introduction: What is Theory and Why is it Important?

Historical Overview of Theoretical Traditions in Anthropology.

Sep 14

The Enlightenment Roots of Anthropological Theory.

Reading:

- Diamond, S. 1964 A Revolutionary Discipline. *Current Anthropology* 5 (5).

Assignment #1 is due.

Week 2

Sep 18

Library Research Workshop with University Librarian Jenny Bowers.

Meet in Anderson Academic Commons, Room 275 (Herold Instruction Room).

Sep 21

Cultural Evolutionism.

Readings:

- Patterson, chapter 1.
- Tylor, E. 1873. From: *The Science of Culture*.
- Morgan, L.H. 1877. Ethnical Periods. From *Ancient Society*.

Week 3

Sep 25

Dialectical and Historical Materialism.

Readings:

- Marx, K. and F. Engels 1888. Bourgeoisie and Proletarians. From: *The Communist Manifesto*.
- Eagleton, T. 2011 In Praise of Marx. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 10.

Sep 28

Historical Particularism.

Readings:

- Patterson, Chapter 2.
- Kroeber, A. 1915. Eighteen Professions. *American Anthropologist* 17.
- Boas, F. 1920 The Methods of Ethnology. *American Anthropologist* 22.

Week 4

Oct 2

Anthropology and the Search for Social Order, 1929-1945.

Readings:

- Patterson, Chapter 3.
- Benedict, R. 1928 Psychological Types in the Cultures of the Southwest. *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Americanists*.
- Mead, M. 1928 Excerpt from *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

Oct 5

Structural-Functionalism

Readings:

- Malinowski, B. 1933 The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis. *American Journal of Sociology* 44 (6).
- Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. 1940. On Social Structure. From *Structure and Function in*

Primitive Society.

Week 5

Oct 9

Cold War Anthropology.

Readings:

- Patterson, Chapter 4.
- Lewis, H. 2014 American Anthropology and the Cold War. From: *In Defense of Anthropology.*

Assignment #2 is due.

Oct 12

Neoevolutionism and Cultural Ecology.

Readings:

- White, L. 1949 Energy and the Evolution of Culture. From: *The Science of Culture.*
- Steward, J. 1955 The Concept and Method of Cultural Ecology. From: *The Theory of Culture Change.*

Week 6

Oct 16

Cultural Materialism.

Readings:

- Harris, M. 1979. Theoretical Principles of Cultural Materialism. From *Cultural Materialism.*
- Wolf, E. 1982. Materialists vs. Mentalists: A Review Article. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24 (1).

Oct 19

Marxist and Feminist Anthropology.

Readings:

- Leacock, E. 1978 Women's Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Evolution. *Current Anthropology* 19(2): 247-255.
- Bender, B. 1978 Gatherer-Hunter to Farmer: A Social Perspective. *World Archaeology* 10(2): 204-222.

Assignment #3 is due.

Week 7

Oct 23

Idealism and Interpretive Anthropology.

Readings:

- Levi-Strauss, C. 1967. The Scope of Anthropology, from *The Scope of Anthropology.*
- Geertz, C, 1973. Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. From: *The Interpretation of Cultures.*

Oct 26

Anthropology in the Neoliberal Era: Postmodern Anthropology.

Readings:

- Patterson, Chapter 5.
- Clifford, J. 1986. Introduction: Partial Truths. From *Writing Culture.*

Week 8

Oct 30

Postcolonial Anthropology.

Readings:

- Said, E. 1979 Knowing the Oriental. From: *Orientalism*.
- Colwell, C. and T.J Ferguson 2010 Intersecting Magisteria: Bridging Archaeological Science and Traditional Knowledge. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 10 (3).

Nov 2

Global/Historical Political Economy.

Readings:

- Wolf, E. 1982. Introduction. From: *Europe and the People Without History*.
- Roseberry, W. 1994. Marxism and Culture. From: *Anthropologies and Histories*.

Week 9

Nov 6

Practice Theory.

Readings:

- Bourdieu, P. 1970 The Berber House or the World Reversed. *Social Science Information* 9 (2)
- Bourdieu, P. 1980 Structures, *Habitus*, Practices. From: *The Logic of Practice*.

Assignment #4 is due.

Nov 9

Anthropological Theory for the 21st Century.

Readings:

- Sahlins, M. 1999 What is Anthropological Enlightenment? Some Lessons from the 20th Century. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 28.
- Lewis, H. 2014 The Misrepresentation of Anthropology and its Consequences. From: *In Defense of Anthropology*.

Distribute Final Essay Assignment for Undergraduates.

Week 10

Nov 13

Anthropological Theory, Practice, and the Public.

Readings:

- Borofsky, R. 2011 Defining Public Anthropology. *Center for a Public Anthropology Blog*, May 11.

Nov 16

Individually Scheduled Tutorials for advice and feedback on Final Research Paper or Essay (I'll be available all day).

Week 11

Nov 19

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER OR ESSAY ASSIGNMENT IS DUE.