

ANTH 383
History of Anthropological Theory
Professor R.L. Upton – 221 Asbury Hall
Fall semester 2013 – 12:30 – 3:20pm Wednesdays
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Throughout my career I have learned how useful the theoretical orientations of early anthropologists and social thinkers can be in helping interpret my research findings and addressing contemporary issues. As each new generation reads the history of anthropological theory, we come to understand that even the writings of “dead white men” can provide new insights, and their writings can complement and deepen our understanding of newer theoretical approaches that are “hot off the press”.

~ Louise Lamphere (p. 253 In Erickson & Murphy 3rd ed.)

...[A]nthropology is a collection of answers to fundamental questions about human existence...

~ (page 3 in Erickson & Murphy 4th ed.)

Course Description

One of the things that anthropologists do, and are particularly well-suited to do, is **trace kinship**. We trace kinship across multiple dimensions, across cultures and across what others might think or see as immutable boundaries. We study kinship and kinship is a kind of social history. A way of thinking about where we have come from and what it means to be “us”. In that sense, I want you to think about this course, not only as a requirement for the major, a milestone along your path to graduation, but as a kind of kinship chart that will help elucidate the paths, thoughts and theoretical movements in Anthropology in the past several centuries. This course will help you trace your intellectual genealogy and help you to understand past and current theories, debates in the field and where you find yourself situated in that midst.

It is important to know your intellectual roots. You want to emerge from this course being well versed in the theories and intellectual giants in anthropology. More practically, from our perspective here at DePauw, it is important that you learn your intellectual roots so you may grow and develop your own work, branching out and building upon what you learn in this class in your methods as well as in your senior seminar project. Think about it – you cannot begin to develop a well-crafted and sophisticated thesis/article/dissertation if you do not have the tools with which to do so. That means you can have all the great ideas about research topics and experience across cultures that you can garner, but if you do not have the methodological tools or the theoretical tools in your kit, that how can you bring your knowledge and experience to

the academic arena in a sophisticated manner? On whose shoulders are you standing? Ie: what theories inform your thinking about what you experience and observe? How does this differ or support what others have said before you?

This course examines key ideas, thinkers, and theoretical movements in anthropology from the late 19th century to the present. We take as a serious starting point the idea that any idea or thinker or paradigm shift occurs in particular contexts and that those contexts necessarily inform and influence those events. We want to study where we come from, but let us not lose sight of history and social movements around the globe that influence the paths that particular theorists and topics in the discipline pursued. We investigate an important idea throughout the course – what is the relationship of anthropology to both history and theory – can you have one without the other and what have we inherited in our contemporary pursuits of anthropology? Please keep this in mind as we make our way through some of the formative pieces in the development of anthropology.

Texts

Douglas, Mary. (2002 ed.) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. Routledge.

Erickson, Paul A. and Liam D. Murphy eds. (2013). *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory*. Fourth Edition. University of Toronto Press.

Mauss, Marcel. 1990 (1950 orig pub). *The Gift: Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Routledge.

Schneider, David M. (1968). *American Kinship: A Cultural Account*. University of Chicago Press.

* Other readings may be assigned on occasion in addition to these texts and will be found on Moodle or given to you as a link. Please be aware that there is a considerable amount of reading in this course, do make sure you keep on top of it as you will want and need to be able to contribute to class discussions.

Plagiarism Policy

As a major in Anthropology and of course a student at DePauw, you should be very familiar with the plagiarism policies we have at the University. As the newest kind of members of the community of professional anthropologists we also expect you to adhere to and take seriously the high ethical standards of practicing professionals. See for example the American Anthropological Association's code of ethics: "Anthropological researchers bear responsibility for the integrity and reputation of their discipline, of scholarship, and of science. Thus, anthropological researchers are subject to the general moral rules of scientific and scholarly conduct: they should not deceive or knowingly

misrepresent (i.e., fabricate evidence, falsify, plagiarize), or attempt to prevent reporting of misconduct, or obstruct the scientific/scholarly research of others" (<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>). Any work that is not your own that you attempt to pass off as your own falls short of this code. Please do not jeopardize your careers (here in this class, at DePauw, post graduation, or in life in general) by succumbing to unethical and untruthful behavior.

If you get behind or overwhelmed, please come and talk to me. **There is no problem that cannot be solved**, but you need to be proactive with any difficulties that arise.

Expectations

I expect you to be engaged in class, so please make sure you demonstrate interest in the course material. I will make every possible effort to make this class enriching since it is a crucial course in your experience as Anthropology majors. In addition to **attending class** regularly (if you miss class without a prior approved excuse, your grade will undoubtedly suffer, if two are missed you will be in danger of failing the course), you are expected to come to class prepared with thoughtful comments and questions. I will pick discussion leaders soon after classes begin. I expect student discussion leaders to bring in at least five typed questions to class and multiple copies to distribute among their peers. These questions should engage with the main arguments of the texts assigned for the day. I would like to see these questions in advance, via email or in person, or via Googledocs, so that we can refine our in-class discussions and make them more efficient. This course is taught in a seminar style, it meets once a week, let us be as productive as possible with our time!

A Note About Communication and Technology – Tweets for the Week & Pinterest

We live in an increasingly technologically savvy and sophisticated era – you and I should be familiar with how certain technologies can be (and are being) used in classrooms and to facilitate learning. To that end, we will be using Twitter each week to post about the theorists/theories you have read (at a minimum you should post two Tweets for the Week to the group list that we create) and you will create a Pinterest board as part of your final individual project on the theorist and theory of your choosing.

ADA STATEMENT:

“DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and University administered activities and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). Any student who feels she or he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge is strongly encouraged to contact Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services, for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Academic Success and Student Disability Services is located in 101 E. Seminary St. Their telephone: 765-658-6267. It is the responsibility of the student to share the letter of accommodation faculty and staff

members. Accommodations will not be implemented until the faculty or staff member has received the official letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss implementation of accommodations with each faculty and staff member receiving the letter.”

Grading & Course Requirements

- Class participation and Final Presentation – 40%
(this includes *your* individual preparedness in class, punctual and consistent attendance *in addition to* the final project, Tweets for the Week and your role as discussion leader)
- Exams – 60%
(these will include two essay format exams that will require you to synthesize key themes in the course and demonstrate familiarity with a range of concepts and theories in the class and their relation to one another)

A note on graded materials – you must wait at least 24 hours (but no more than 1 week) before you come to see me about a grade you have received on any class material. I am available to look over a graded assignment only after you have taken sufficient time to read through both your original work and my comments. Please bear in mind that grade reviews can mean a possible increase or decrease in the original grade so do look over your work carefully and completely before bringing it to me for a second time.

For clarification - your final grade is based on the following:

- Discussion Leader/participation.....20%
- Final Project.....20%
- Two (2) Exams.....60%

*Please see the DePauw handbook for the complete understanding and description of grading at the University. The scale for grades in this class are:

A (94% +)	A- (90-93%)	
B+ (87-89%)	B (84-86%)	B- (80-83%)
C+ (77-79%)	C (74-76%)	C- (70-73%)
D+ (67-69%)	D (64-66%)	D- (60-63%)
F (59% and below)		

Schedule of Events:

[do not forget that each week you must write a response to the readings in addition to your Tweet for the Week about the theory we read – this also helps prepare you to contribute to the class discussion – I will read these and return them to you for your files, they do ‘count’ as participation but are intended as a means through which you can work out various ideas and intellectual responses to the work we read]

Week I (August 28)

Read/To Do:

- Preface and Overview in Erickson & Murphy (EM)
- Appadurai, Arjun “Theory in Anthropology: Center and Periphery”
<https://wiki.brown.edu/confluence/download/attachments/73106098/appadurai+theory+in+anthropology.pdf>
- Prepare a one page written statement (that you will read on day one) about what you know about theory in anthropology. This is open-ended, there is no correct answer, trust me...but do think about this and bring your carefully considered ideas to class.
- Also, choose one of the following anthropologists and prepare a one-two page statement/description about their work and their significance in the discipline of Anthropology. You will talk about what you find/learn/write in our first meeting – you are not expected to be experts, but rather, we are going to use information we learn about these scholars as our springboard for the semester to come. You will turn in your one-two page statement, so please cite properly and do not simply cut and paste from the internet. **Select from: Zora Neale Hurston, Ida Wells, Elsie Clews Parsons, Mary Leakey, Dian Fossey, Annette Weiner, Theodora Kroeber, Vera Mae Green, Hortense Powdermaker, Eleanor Leacock, Esther Newton.**

Try to avoid overlap as much as possible in this first assignment – please let me know whom you choose and I will let you know if others have already selected that theorist.

- If you do not already have a Twitter account, please do so, we will be using Twitter as a means of posting responses to our theoretical readings
- If you have not explored Pinterest before, please do so, we will be using Pinterest as a means of pulling together your final project

Week II (September 4)

Evolution, Barbarism, Civilization. Animism

Read: Chps. 1-5 (EM) – Marx, Engels, Tylor and Morgan, Spencer, Darwin

Week III (September 11)

Motivations, Magic, Science, Religion and the importance of Symbolism

Read: Chps. 6-9 – Freud, Durkheim, Weber, Saussure

Week IV (September 18)

The Rise of Ethnography/Methods

Read: Chp. 10-14 & Chp. 19 – Boas, Lowie, Kroeber, Mead, Benedict, Malinowski

Week V (September 25)

Structuralism/Functionalism/the Role of Society

Read: Chps. 15-18 – Levi-Straus, Leach, Sahlins, Radcliffe-Brown

Week VI (October 2)

Symbolism and British Social Anthropology

Read: Chps. 20 & 24 – Gluckman & Turner

Read: Purity and Danger (entire – be sure to focus on chps. 1-3, particularly Ritual Uncleanliness and The Abominations of Leviticus)

Week VII (October 9)

Read: The Gift (entire)

Week VIII (October 16) -- Exam # 1

Week IX [October 23 - Fall Break ☺]

Week X (October 30)

Ecology, Cultural Materialism and Human Universals?

Read: Chps. 21-23, & chp. 25 – Sapir, White, Harris, Geertz

Week XI (November 6)

Gender, Kinship, Language and the Other

Read: Chps. 26 & 27 – Slocum, Gal

Read: American Kinship (entire)

Week XII (November 13)

Power and Representations - How Anthropological Theory Matters

Read: Chps. 28 - 36 – Said, Gupta and Sharma, Wolf, Foucault, Bourdieu, Clifford, Marcus and Fischer, Ortner, Lock and Scheper-Hughes

Week XIII (November 20) – NO CLASS

American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting

Week XIV (November 27) – Thanksgiving Break

Week XV (December 4)

Disjuncture, Difference and Diversity in the Global Cultural Economy - where are we now with Theory in Anthropology?

Read: Chps. 37 – 41 (all of the chapters in part four; Appadurai to Eriksen)

Pinterest Boards due

Week XVI (December 11)

Final Project Presentations

FINAL EXAM – DUE: by 11:30am Thursday December 19th – electronic submission