Syllabus

SC003 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
Fall 2011
Monday, Wednesday and Friday 2:00 to 2:50PM
O’Neil 211

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As the price of democracy is eternal vigilance, so the cost of vital culture is its continual
re-creation. People never find out who they are, or their value, by looking into
someone’s else’s mirror, nor by accepting cultural judgments from an earlier time.
Those reflections are necessary correctives. They guide people toward goals and around
pitfalls. But a living culture constantly adapts the usable past to present pressures. Not
the other way around. When critics measure the present only with past yardsticks, or
when they fail to search widely enough for an era’s authentic gestures, then it appears to
them that no usable present culture exists. W. T. Lhamon Jr. in Deliberate Speed 2002

About the course
This course is an introduction to cultural anthropology. We will focus on what anthropology has
to contribute to an understanding of the social issues of our times.

After introducing cultural anthropology and human origins, we will move to issues that
anthropologists are currently addressing such as marriage and the family, health and healing, sex
and gender, political economy, youth culture, migration, social stratification, global warming,
the rise of the East and globalization. Anthropologists are interested in the effects of what goes
on around us on people.

The course will take a radical view of contemporary issues. We will attempt
to “think outside the box.”

Requirements
Class attendance and keeping up with the readings are critical. If you don’t do the readings, I
end up doing all the talking and that is boring for everyone.

You are required to prepare three two-page papers on assigned topics. You must write the
papers within the context of the course. Do not use the dictionary or the web. The papers are
due in class on the assigned dates. You will lose twenty (20) percentage points if you hand a
paper in late. Late papers may be turned into my mailbox in McGuinn 426.
Beware cutting and pasting your papers from the web. Plagiarism is easy spot and easy to verify using Google. The university rules for plagiarism are severe.

You have a rewrite option (only if you handed the paper in on time). Rewrites are due in class one week after the papers are returned. If you choose this option, you will receive the higher grade.

At the beginning of each topic, there will be a quiz on the assigned readings and the film(s) for that week. The purpose of the quiz is to have you keep up with the readings and films. The format of the quiz will be true/false, multiple choice, matching and occasionally a question requiring a short answer. If you have read and viewed the films, the quizzes will be easy.

There will be a mid-term exam and a final exam. You will lose twenty (20) percentage points if you hand an exam in late.

Grading
The course grade is composed of three parts of equal weight (33.3 per cent) - (1) classroom - the papers and the quizzes, (2) the mid-term and (3) the final.

Since the papers and the quizzes account for one-third of the grade, they should be taken seriously. With the rewrite option and the number of quiz grades that can be dropped (including the attendance bonus - see below), this part of the course is designed to raise your grade. Beware, if you do not keep up with the readings, attend class and take the quizzes, the classroom grade will lower your grade.

There are three papers and twelve quizzes. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Your quiz and paper grades will be averaged for the classroom portion of your final grade.

The mid-term and the final will each be based on the material for that half of the course.

Attendance
There is no penalty for non-attendance (except see the next paragraph). There is a bonus for attendance. If you miss three classes, your second lowest quiz grade will be dropped. If you miss two classes, your second and third lowest quiz grades will be dropped. If you miss one class, your second, third and fourth lowest quiz grades will be dropped. If you miss no classes, your second, third, fourth and fifth lowest quiz grades will be dropped. This is a substantial bonus: don’t miss it. Because this is a bonus, no excuses for missing a class will be accepted.

If you have more than nine (9) unexcused absences, you will receive an F. No senior Fall.

Readings
The readings have been gathered into a course pack, available in class. A copy of the course pack is on reserve in the library. The readings have been selected to be readable, interesting and relevant.
Films
At the beginning of each unit there will be a film relevant to the unit’s topic. The films will be shown with minimal explanation so that you may experience them first hand. We will develop an anthropological understanding in discussion. “my DVD” means the DVD does not have a call number; it is an edited version that is on reserve.

Cell phones are to be turned off during class. No texting.

Computers are to be used for class notes only. No internet.

Unit 1. September 7
Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Unit 2. September 9, 12 & 14
Culture
Franklin 1, Rensberger 25-30, Sterk 13-19, Elst 48-54, Spradley and McCurdy 1-5
Friday, 9-9. Film: selections from Advertising and the End of the World. 34 minutes. (my DVD)
selections from The Overspent American. 15 minutes. (my DVD)
Film Note: There is much in these videos that sets the stage for the course. What is culture? How does culture change? To what extent is the way you think and act influenced (controlled) by your culture? Do you have free will?

Monday, 9-12. Quiz #1 Culture

Unit 3. September 16, 19 & 21
Human Origins
Nanda and Warms 27-54, Williams 1-6
Friday, 9-16. Film: Evolution and Human Equality. 42 minutes. (my DVD)
Film note: This film is a lecture by Stephen J. Gould about concepts of evolution. It bridges from the 19th century work of anthropologists like William Henry Morgan in his effort to explain human progress as a linear process and to justify colonialism to current scientific evidence about human origins and equality. The film brings into question structures of inequality in our society and especially our everyday acceptance of inequality as normal.

Monday, 9-19. Quiz #2 Human Origins

Wednesday, 9-21, Paper #1 - Culture - is due
Unit 4. September 23, 26 & 28

Making a Living: Food and Survival
Moore 1-2, Diamond 95-98, Cabaza de Vaca 91-93, 78-81, Moore-Lappe 189-193
Friday, 9-23. Film: The Women’s Bank of Bangladesh. 47 minutes. HG3290.6.A8 G736
Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for leveraging small loans into major social change for impoverished families. This film shows how the process works and how micro-financing can affect how people are able to make a living.
Monday, 9-26. Quiz #3 Making a Living

Unit 5. September 30, October 3 & 5

Marriage and the Family
Halberstam 508-520, Kristof 114-116, Tannen 62-70
Friday, 9-30. Film: Ozzie and Harriet, episode 3 (Chaperones). 22 minutes. PN1992.77.A38
Friends, episode 2 (The One That Ends with a Sonogram). 30 minutes. PN1992.77.F75
Film note: Ozzie and Harriet was a radio show in the 1940s and by the 1950s, a TV show. Ozzie, Harriet, David and Ricky (their children) were a real family that performed as a sitcom family. You are probably familiar with Friends. Note the portrayals of the family. Does TV (the media) reflect culture or does it influence culture?
Monday, 10-3. Quiz #4 Marriage and the Family

Unit 6. October 7 & 12

Homelessness
Gonzales 1, Hurt 1, Blackstarnews.com 1, Duffield 195-199, Ralston 1-3, Amster 7-14
Friday, 10-7. Film: selections from It Was A Wonderful Life. 47 minutes (my DVD)
Film Note: Middle and upper class women talk about their slide into homelessness, how they are getting along and their hopes for the future. It happened to them. Could it happen to any of us? We learn that homelessness is about much more than alcohol, drugs and mental retardation.
Wednesday, 10-12. Quiz #5 Homelessness
Wednesday, 10-12. Paper #2 – Marriage and Divorce – is due

Unit 7. October 14, 17 & 19

Sex and Gender
Kimmel 202-234, Holmes 90 & 92, Mainichi 1, Strahinich 1, Lavelle 1-2, Hymowitz 1-2, Woods 1-3
Friday, 10-14. Film: Killing Us Softly, III. 35 minutes. HF5822.K5
Film note: This video is about the construction of female identity. Who does the constructing? Why is this construction process successful? What effect does it have on women? And on men?
Monday, 10-17. Quiz #6 Sex and Gender
Unit 8. October 21, 24 & 26

Social Stratification and Class
Kornholz 1-3, Aeppel 1-3, Rubin 28-43, Murray 1-4, Yen 1-3, Censky 1-3
Friday, 10-21. Film: selections from People Like Us: Social Class in America. 57 minutes.
   (my DVD)
Film note: I have excerpted 57 minutes from a 2 hour video. We like to think that America is
classless. Not so. This video shows class in a way you will recognize. The consequences it
reflects are disturbing. It puts the lie to our belief in meritocracy.
Monday, 10-24. Quiz #7 Social Stratification

Midterm Exam due in class Wednesday, 10-26

Unit 9. October 28, 31 & November 2

Health & Healing
Miller 171-196, Glass-Coffin 101-109 & 127-136, Goulding 1-8
Friday, 10-28. Film: Miracle Man: John of God. 50 minutes. BF1275.F3 M57
Film note: The treatment of illness is not exclusively about biological medicine. Spiritualism
plays a role in healing and wellness.
Monday, 10-31. Quiz #8 Health and Healing

Unit 10. November 4, 7 & 9

Economic Anthropology
Brouwer 382-391, Andrews 1-2, Kunstler 1-5, Reich 3-8, 18-27 & 42-64, Appleby 325-334 &
400-407, Rampell 1-2
Friday, 11-4. Film: Surviving the Bottom Line: Running with the Bulls. 19 minutes.
   Surviving the Bottom Line: Living on the Fault Line. 31 minutes.
   HC106.82.S96
Film note: These videos are about investor capitalism. They reflect some of the forces
influencing our present economy and society. They are reasonably balanced, showing the
motivations of the money movers and the effects of the new economy on middle class (blue and
white collar) employees of large corporations. How will you survive/excel? These films and the
readings for economic anthropology illustrate some of the interests of economic anthropologists.
Monday, 11-7. Quiz #9 Economic Anthropology
Unit 11. November 11, 14 & 16

**Globalization**

Greider 11-26, Wright 1-2, Donnelly 1-2, Engardio 1-5, Bellman 1-2, Chao 1-2, Ehrenreich 11-49, McCraken 1-4, Wessel 1-4

**Friday, 11-11. Film:** *Life and Debt*. 20 minutes. HC154.L54

**Trading Democracy.** 30 minutes. HF1746.T73

Film note: *Life and Debt* shows what has happened in Jamaica after independence. This is a contemporary example of the process described in the Moore Lappe article “Why Can’t the Poor Feed Themselves” (unit 4). If you think globalization benefits the rich nations and hurts poor nations, consider the situation presented in *Trading Democracy*. Once laws and agreements are enacted, they are open to interpretation, often beyond the original intention. With NAFTA, we have a devastating situation in existence. Just as Jamaica found itself in a “bind,” so have the parties to the NAFTA agreement.

**Monday, 11-14. Quiz #10 Globalization**

**Wednesday, 11-16. Paper #3 – Economic Anthropology - is due**

Unit 12. November 18, 28 & 30

**The Rise of the East**

Jacques 1-16, Curtin 1-2, Kahn 1-3, Brooke 1-3, Rai 1-3, Yahoo 1-2, Romero 1-2, Tsai 1-2, Cogliano 1-2

**Friday, 11-18. Film:** Selections from *Boston Legal*, season 5, disc 4, episode 12. 17 minutes (my DVD)

- China Rises, disc 2, City of Dreams, 26 minutes, HC427.95 C45
- Great Decisions, disc 1, Red Army Rising, 14 minutes, E835.F58

**Monday, 11-28 Quiz # 11 Rise of the East**

**Wednesday, 11-30. Class Presentations – Rise of the East**

Unit 13. December 2, 5 & 7

**Global Warming**

Rosenthal 1-3, Roach 1-2, EPA – Future Temperature Change 1-5, EPA – Future Sea Level change 1-2, Barclay 1-2, Xinhua 1-2, Revkin 1-3, Bullis 50-56

**Friday 12-2. Film:** *Too Hot To Handle*. 54 minutes. QC981.8.G56 T66

Film note: *Too Hot To Handle* presents global warming as a natural phenomenon and a human enhanced event. The focus is on the implications of global warming for the U.S.

**Monday, 12-5 Quiz # 12 Global Warming**

**Wednesday, 12-7. Class Presentations – Global Warming**

Unit 14. December 9

**A Perfect Storm**

**Final Exam**

Due in my mailbox in McGuinn 426 by 5PM on Tuesday, December 20, 2010