

Anthropology 4021.001
Spring 2012, TR, 9:30 - 10:50AM
Wooten Hall 217

Instructor: Beverly A. Davenport, PhD, MSPH
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Office hrs: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday: 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM, or by appointment

DEVELOPMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THOUGHT

What do we mean when we use the term “theory” in social science in general, and anthropology in specific? How does social science theory compare to theory in natural science? What is theory good for? Does it actually help us to understand social phenomena? How can we discern theoretical points of view in research presentations (book length ethnographies, journal articles, conference papers and posters)? Do theoretical perspectives of authors color their interpretation of data? How do we employ theory in our own research? How do implicit "ways of knowing" guide our own thinking about social phenomena?

We will ponder these questions as we trace the development of anthropological theory from its 19th century origins into the present day. By the end of this course I hope that you will have working answers that will inspire you to further study. No social theory is disembodied; it emerges out of specific cultural, historical and geographical contexts. As we study the literature together, I will focus on these factors when pertinent, in order to provide you with a more holistic understanding of the theoretical ideas.

Through reading, discussion, informal and formal writing in this class you will:

- **Learn** some key concepts in anthropological theory **and**
- **Identify** the authors associated with those key ideas
- **Contextualize** key authors– how did they influence and how were they influenced by major theoretical "schools" in anthropology and in social theory more generally?
- **Understand the impact** of historical and cultural contexts on the emergence of theory
- **Compare** and **contrast** different theoretical perspectives
- **Recognize** the theoretical approach of a specific ethnographic report
- **Distill** and **synthesize** specific concepts from theory for presentation to me and your classmates

BOOKS YOU NEED TO BUY:

Paul Erickson & Liam Murphy

2008 A History of Anthropological Theory, 3rd edition. University of Toronto Press.
Abbreviated as “E&M” in the syllabus

Jerry D. Moore

2009 Visions of Culture: An Annotated Reader. AltaMira Press.
Abbreviated as "Reader" in the syllabus.

Both are available at UNT Bookstore; they are also on reserve at Willis Library.

OTHER REQUIRED READING:

All material listed on the syllabus is required. Readings that are not in the required texts will be posted on Blackboard. **Plan to download and print out all readings.** I reserve the right to assign additional reading material as necessary.

Please bring “Reader” and any weekly assignments posted on Blackboard to class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Exams:

- Take-home midterm – due in my box by 5 PM, Friday, March 9
- Take-home final – due in my box by 5 PM, Wednesday, May 9

2) Term paper

- 7-10 pages due in my box by 5 pm, Friday, May 4. I will supply a list of suggested topics in week 3.

3) Class Presentation:

- All students in the class are required to do a 10 minute presentation on a pertinent topic related to material we are addressing in class. **Topics and presentation dates will be selected IN CLASS on Thursday, January 26.** Presentations will begin either week 4 or week 5, depending on how many students end up in this class. Students will be graded on the oral presentation and the written summary they provide which will be posted on Blackboard.

4) “Blogging”:

- Students will be randomly assigned to “blog groups” by Thursday, 1/26 (end of week 2).
- **Beginning Tuesday 1/30, there will be two required blog postings weekly:**
 - ▶ The first must be must be posted **before class on each Tuesday, that is, by 9:30 AM** – This must be your “reaction” to the reading – approximately 150-250 words. **See “How to Blog for Anthropology 4021” for more detail.**
 - ▶ The second must be posted **before class (by 9:30 AM) on each Thursday** – This will be your reaction to the members of your blog group’s reactions.
- You will receive 5 points for every blog posted for a total of 100 points. **Late posts will receive 0 points, no exceptions.** There are 24 opportunities to blog over the semester, so you can skip four blogs without being penalized. You will not be able to receive an ‘A’ in this class without regularly participating in the blogging requirement.

Anthropology Department Undergraduate Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. You should always provide references for any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of information that are not common knowledge. The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. Students suspected of academic dishonesty will be given a hearing in which they are informed of the charges. Clear evidence in support of the charge will merit failure in the course. For more information on the university’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities at <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

STUDENT EVALUATION SYSTEM

	Percent	Points
Blogging	10%	100
Class Presentation (oral)	10%	100
Class Presentation (written)	10%	100
Midterm	25%	250
Final	25%	250
Term Paper	20%	200
	TOTAL POSSIBLE PTS:	1000

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Except at the beginning of the semester when I have to hand in paperwork to the Registrar's Office, I will not be taking formal attendance. **Anything discussed in class is "fair game" as source material for exam questions.** Students who intend to do well in this class are therefore advised to attend class regularly.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Please complete all reading BEFORE class (you need to do so in order to blog). Please bring "Reader" and/or other primary sources to class in order to facilitate close textual analysis.

Week 1: January 17, 19 – Historical Context for the Emergence of Anthropology

- E & M: pp. 15-16, pp. 21-43

Week 2: January 24, 26 -- Social Science and Darwin

- Spencer, "Organic Analogy," (Blackboard)
- Mayr on Darwin (Blackboard)
- E&M, pp. 62-74

Week 3: Jan. 30, Feb. 2 -- Cultural Evolution

- READER, ch. 1 – Tylor and ch. 2 – Morgan
- E&M, pp. 43-56
- Bloch, ch. 1 (Blackboard)

Week 4: February 7, 9 – Franz Boas and American Anthropology

- READER, ch. 3 – Boas and ch. 5 – Kroeber
- E&M, pp. 93-102
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 5: February 14, 16 Culture & Personality: Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead

- READER, ch. 6 – Benedict and ch. 8 – Mead
- E&M, pp. 102-111
- Blog posts due 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 6: February 21, 23 -- The Science of Society: Emile Durkheim

- READER, ch. 4 – Durkheim
- E&M, pp. 78-81, pp. 111-113
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thurs

Week 7: Feb. 28, March 1 – The Gift and the Total Man: Marcel Mauss

- READER, ch. 9 – Mauss
- *Take-home midterm will be handed out this week*

Week 8: March 6, 8 -- Functionalism – Bronislaw Malinowski

- READER, ch. 10 – Malinowski
- “1936 article about Freud” (Blackboard)
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Midterm - HARD COPY - due in Davenport's box by 5:00 PM, Friday, March 9

Week 9: March 13, 15 -- Structural Functionalism: Radcliffe-Brown and Evans-Pritchard

- READER, ch. 11 – Radcliffe-Brown and ch. 12 – Evans-Pritchard
- E&M, pp. 123-134
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

SPRING BREAK March 19-23

Week 10: March 27, 29 – Neo-Evolutionism: Leslie White and Julian Steward

- READER, ch. 13 – Leslie White and ch. 14 – Julian Steward
- E&M, pp. 141-150
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 11: April 3, 5 -- Neo-materialist Approaches: Marvin Harris and Eleanor Leacock

- READER, ch. 15 – Marvin Harris and ch. 16 – Eleanor Leacock
- Review E&M, pp. 141-150
- "Applebaum, pp. 293-300" (Blackboard)
- Blog posts due 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 12: April 10, 12-- Symbols and Meanings: Victor Turner and Mary Douglas

- READER, ch. 18 – Victor Turner and ch. 20 – Mary Douglas
- E&M, pp. 113-118, pp. 157-162
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 13: April 17, 19 –Interpretations: Clifford Geertz

- READER, ch. 19 – Geertz
- “Geertz – Thick Description” (Blackboard)
- E&M, pp. 157-164
- Blog post due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 14: April 24, 26 – Culture, Power and History

- READER, ch. 23 – Bourdieu and ch. 24 – Wolf
- Ortner, “Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties” (Blackboard)
- E&M, pp.168-188
- Blog posts due by 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday

Week 15: May 1, 3 – Post-modernism: Renato Rosaldo

- "Rosaldo – Grief" (Blackboard)
- E&M, pp. 180-191, pp. 203-215
- Blog posts due 11:00 AM Tuesday and Thursday
- *Take-home final handed out this week*

Final paper – HARD COPY - due in Davenport’s box by 5 PM, Friday, May 4

Final Examination – HARD COPY - due in Davenport's box by 5 PM, Wednesday, May 9