

<u>INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY</u> Sociology/Anthropology 110 Fall 2011, Carleton College T/Th 10:10-11:55, Leighton 305	Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg Office: Leighton 233, x4113 Office Hours: T/Th 3:15-5:00, W 10:00-11:30
WA's: Emily Miller (millere); Henry Peyronnin (peronnh)	Distro: RAD, SocInq, IS, WR2

INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY

Course Syllabus

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Anthropology is the study of all human beings in all their diversity. With its global sample, anthropology has been called "the astronomy of the social sciences." Sociocultural anthropology is unique because anthropologists actually go and live with the people they are studying.

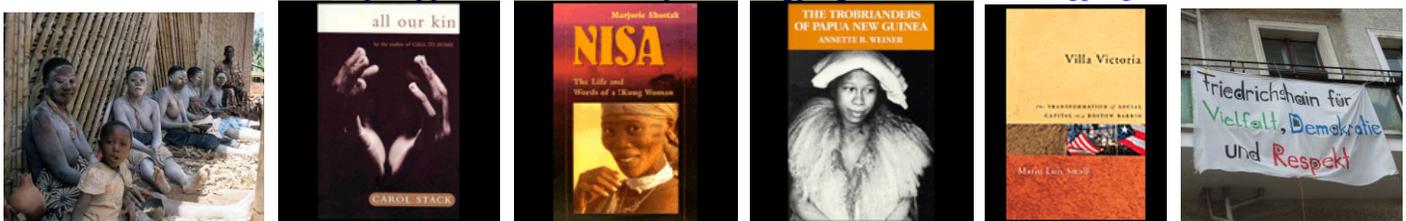
One of the **goals** of this course is to help us to see ourselves, and others, from a new perspective. We will do that both by sampling some of the exciting diversity of human societies and cultures, and by examining specific analytic concepts and techniques through which anthropologists generate their knowledge. To build on skills that can facilitate intercultural dialogue we will juxtapose readings on unfamiliar cultures with those examining comparable issues in the United States.

This introduction to sociocultural anthropology will show us how anthropologists make the strange more familiar and the familiar more strange. By exploring the ways anthropologists set up problems, define interesting questions, and seek answers, we will learn how to approach an understanding of other cultures and how to look behind cultural assumptions in our own society. We will examine ethnographic fieldwork, the hallmark of anthropology, by conducting our own miniature fieldwork projects.

If fieldwork is the hallmark of anthropology, then culture and language are the hallmarks of humankind. Through both descriptive and theoretical articles, we will explore how culture and language contribute to our commonalities as well as to the differences among the world's peoples. People not only need to make their world meaningful through culture; they also need to live together in groups. We will read three full-length ethnographies from Africa, New Guinea, and the U.S. to examine different forms and principles of social organization. We will end the term with a discussion of urban poverty in the U.S., and how anthropology might contribute to further understanding of such thorny social issues.

This course allows you to fulfill the **RAD requirement**, as well as Social Inquiry and International Studies (IS) distributional requirements. The readings introduce you to a variety of cultures and social issues dealing with gender, race, and class, among other dimensions of cultural difference. Our in-depth study of the Ju-/'Hoansi of the Kalahari let us explore these issues (and their representation) in the context of social change. A critical examination of Stack's *All Our Kin* and its juxtaposition with Small's *Villa Victoria* specifically focus on race, class, and culture in the urban United States. The fieldwork project aims to help you critically examine cultural differences by including yourself and your everyday environment in the range of cultural differences found worldwide. By experiencing and reflecting upon how anthropological knowledge is generated, you learn about one way that we construct knowledge about cultural differences.

This course also allows you to fulfill part of the **Writing Requirement (WR2)**. In addition, the final paper from the fieldwork project would be a good candidate for your Writing Portfolio, due at the end of your sixth term. The project focuses on developing writing skills for three distinct anthropological writing genres (fieldnotes, thick description, reflection), and on improving writing through multiple drafts. If done well, your final paper reports on something observed, demonstrates ability to analyze data, provides interpretation, demonstrates your ability to articulate and support a thesis-driven argument, and to a small extent demonstrates ability to identify and effectively use appropriate scholarly sources. For more information on the portfolio, consult the folder you received as a first-year student, talk with your advisor, or read about it at: <http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/writingprogram/carletonwritingprogram/>



II. COURSE MATERIALS

A. Required Texts (available at bookstore)

- M. Small, *Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio*
- M. Shostak, *Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman*
- C.B. Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community*
- A. Weiner, *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*

B. Reserve Readings

All article length readings are on **e-reserves**. Readings are arranged in folders by topic. Always check the syllabus and search first by the author of the reading assignment. (There are non-required, supplemental readings on e-reserves as well.) Access e-reserves through the library web page, password: SOAN. **Required** readings should be read by the class meeting listed on the syllabus. Required means **required**. **Recommended** readings are merely recommended. They are for your further edification, now or later. They are **not required**.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Attendance, participation, evidence of active reading	10%
B. Two exams (essay + geography, kinship, or terms; Exam# 1: 25%, Exam # 2: 25%)	50%
C. Fieldwork project steps and meetings with writing assistant, cumulative (see handout for specifics)	20%
D. Fieldwork project report portfolio, including work with WA's	20%

N.B. : 1) THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM! 2) We will be using Moodle for most handouts and assignments. WA's have access to your ethnography project assignments via Moodle. 3) If you send me an assignment via Moodle or as an e-mail attachment, it must be in MS Word and it must have your full name in the filename (e.g. JaneDoeFieldnotes.doc).

<u>SUMMARY OF TOPICS</u>	<u>THE ETHNOGRAPHY PROJECT—DUE DATES</u>
<p>Part I. Anthropology and Fieldwork : 9/13 through 9/20 --Film: "FROSH," 9/20</p> <p>Part II. History of Anthropology, Human Variation, and Race: 9/22 through 9/27 --Film: "Race: The Story of an Illusion," 9/22 --Film: "Chimpanzee Grooming," 9/27</p> <p>Part III. Culture: 9/29 through 10/6 --Film: "How to Talk Minnesotan," 10/4</p> <p>Exam #1: 10/11</p> <p>Part IV. Social Organization: Three Ethnographies: 10/13 through 11/15 --Film: "N!ai," 10/18 --Film: "Trobriand Cricket," 10/27 --Exam # 2: 11/3 --Exam # 3: 11/16 (optional) --Reflective Ethnography Paper, 11/16</p>	<p>(unless otherwise announced, hand assignments in via Moodle; see syllabus for fieldwork observation sessions)</p> <p>9/20 Delineating the Ethnographic Field (in class/Moodle)</p> <p>9/27 Fieldnotes (Moodle)</p> <p>9/29ff Meet with WA</p> <p>10/27 Thick Description (Moodle)</p> <p>11/3ff Meet with WA</p> <p>11/9 Reflective ethnography draft (Moodle, Wednesday) (voluntary for most)</p> <p>11/15 Extra credit (1pt) for papers and portfolios turned in by 5:00 pm.</p> <p>11/16 Reflective Ethnography and portfolio of assignments with all drafts due by 5:00 p.m. at the latest (Wednesday)</p>

IV. PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

A. Attendance is important because your presence adds something to class. As a courtesy, please tell me why you were absent; for an “excused” absence, you must give me a legitimate reason before class. Make friends with classmates to share notes in case of absences. More importantly, ask questions, call me, or come to my office hours if anything is unclear to you or if you want to discuss something related to this class.

B. Etiquette: When we enter the classroom, we should think of ourselves as a community of thinking people, learning from our readings and from each other. This means we need to listen to each other.

C. There are many ways of **participating:** questioning, commenting, listening carefully when other students ask questions or propose a new way to think about the materials we are studying, eye contact, nodding.

D. Punctuality: make-up exams and late assignments will be arranged or accepted only in cases of illness or family emergency, and when you have contacted me promptly, in most cases prior to the due date.

E. Academic honesty: cite correctly and do not plagiarize. For guidelines, go to the Dean of the College webpage, click on For Students, and then on Academic Honesty at Carleton.

F. Citation norms: A brief description of anthropological citation style is found on page 3 of this syllabus. There is a fuller description on our departmental website: (<http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/soan/resources/citation/>). Choose the American Ethnologist style. An even more complete guide is available from the American Anthropological Association: http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf. Reference style is on pp. 10-14 of the AAA document. ***You are required to follow this citation style.*** This is part of practicing writing like an anthropologist. These principles of positive behavior are all strategies to help you learn and to help you get a taste for what anthropologists do: participate, observe, discuss, analyze, write, learn details, contextualize in the big picture, and make sense of things culturally.

Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor at the beginning of term so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. In addition, students with any other concerns needing special consideration (e.g. not a native speaker of English, unusually stressful family situations) should also bring this to my attention early in the term.

V. HELPFUL HINTS

A. Guidelines for Reading and Discussion:

1. **Pre-reading:** Look at the book or article reference. Ask yourself: What does the title tell me? Do I recognize the author? What other knowledge do I have about this topic or author? Looking at the date of publication, can I place this piece in the recent history of ideas (this is hard to do, especially early in the term)?
2. **Reading:** Your first goal is to understand what the article or monograph is about, what the author is trying to say, and how s/he goes about doing so. What questions does the author investigate? Is the article mainly theoretical or descriptive? What theories does the author propose or rely upon, with what implications? What data or evidence does the author use to make his or her argument? Are these well-suited to the questions posed?
3. **Post-reading:** Evaluate how this reading relates to our discussion topic, and to other readings or discussion topics. How could we analyze this further? What is your reaction to this reading (e.g. intellectually, emotionally)?

B. Guidelines for Writing Papers: Goals for college-level writing include attention to: Audience and purpose; Clarity of prose; Clear organization; Effective use of evidence; Appropriate attribution and citation; Effective use of Standard English. Papers you write in this course will give you practice in observation, writing, and analysis. Incorporating advice from your Writing Assistant is an essential part of the writing and re-writing process for individual papers. In addition, use feedback from one paper to improve your approach and writing in the next paper.

Each paper should have a title page, with an interesting and descriptive title, your name, the date, and the course number and title. Papers should be 12 font with 1-inch margins, with the text section double spaced. If you quote or cite other authors' works, the text of your paper should be followed by a “references cited” section (the bibliography of works you cite in the paper) in anthropological citation style (see below). For final papers, make sure you have an introduction, a logically organized body of the paper, and a conclusion. Section headings provide useful guideposts to the way you organize your thoughts, and are particularly important for longer papers.

Here are some tips on writing well:

- Write from the top down. Start with your most important point, then develop it. Don't keep your reader guessing.
- Use good topic sentences. Topic sentences should tell your reader the point of the paragraph. New thoughts generally require new paragraphs. Use transition sentences for flow between paragraphs and sections. When you turn to a new thought, be sure your reader can connect backward and forward to other parts of the text.
- Use your topic paragraph effectively. Good titles are nice. So are zippy first sentences.

- Eschew the passive voice. “Humberto wrote the book” is better than “The book was written by Humberto.” This is particularly important in the social sciences, because use of passive voice masks agency.
- Vary sentence structure to enliven your writing. Avoid run-on sentences.
- Watch your spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Look out for singular/plural agreement. (Note: the word “data” is plural.) Use semicolons appropriately (that is, to separate complete sentences).
- Avoid unclear referents (like “it” without an obvious connection to what “it” is). Also avoid indirect wording. As much as possible, eradicate the phrases “there are,” “it is,” and the like from your writing.
- Watch for dangling clauses. The sentence, “Hot from the oven, I ate the pizza,” implies that I (not the pizza) am hot from the oven.
- Use parallel phrases. “I like to swim, read, and eat” is better than “I like swimming, to read, and food.”
- Learn the difference between “because” and “since.” “Since” refers to time: “Since 1940, women’s hemlines have crept up.” Know the difference between “that” and “which.” Generally, if you can use “that,” do so. Master the correct usage of “affect” and “effect,” whose meanings as nouns differ from their meanings as verbs!
- Plain English is best. Don’t be wordy. For example, you rarely need to use the term “in order to.”
- Cite your sources with author, date, and page number for quotations, as well as for specific ideas or any short, paraphrased segments. When in doubt, cite it! See section on “Anthropological Citation Style” below.
- Consider your audience. Use the appropriate tone and style; above all, don’t be boring!
- Rewriting is the key to writing well.

C. Anthropological Citation Style: In papers for this and other anthropology classes, you should use the correct citation style, following the major professional journals, *American Anthropologist* and *American Ethnologist*. A more complete description is found on our departmental website: (<http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/soan/resources/citation/>). Choose *American Ethnologist* style. *An even more complete guide is available from the American Anthropological Association: http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf.* Reference style is on pp. 10-14 of the AAA document.

In the course of your text, you should cite authors whose ideas you use with their last name and the date of publication (Stack 1974). If you quote an author, e.g. that “the powers of village women... [do not] provide women with the last word,” (Harding 1975:308), you must include the page number(s) as well as the author and publication date. Please note punctuation!

References Cited (*not* “Bibliography”), placed starting on a new page at the end of your text, does not include any publication not cited in the text. All entries must be listed alphabetically by last name of author, and chronologically arranged for two or more titles by the same author. The layout should be as follows:

1) for a **journal article**, showing the volume and issue numbers, and page numbers:

Bohannon, L.

1966 Shakespeare in the Bush. *Natural History* 75(7):28-33.

2) for an **article in a book of collected essays**:

Harding, S.

1975 Women and words in a Spanish village. In *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. Rayna R. Reiter, ed. Pp. 283-308. New York: Monthly Review Press.

3) for a **book**:

Small, Mario L.

2004 *Villa Victoria: Social Capital in a Boston Barrio*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

4) from **the web**:

If it’s an article, cite as much of the information you would have for print media as possible (author, title, date of publication, journal, volume, page numbers), plus date accessed, and give the complete URL. If it is an article from JSTOR or ProQuest, just give information as if it were directly from the print journal (see # 1).

Following this style is a requirement. Ask if you have questions.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

INTRODUCTION AND FIELDWORK

Week 1

T 9/13 **Introduction: What is Anthropology?**

Th 9/15 **Fieldwork and the Anthropological Perspective: How Anthropologists Learn about Cultures**

Read: The Ethnography Project handout, thoroughly (attached to your syllabus)

Berremán, "Behind Many Masks"

Gottlieb, "Two Visions of Africa: Reflections on Fieldwork in an 'Animist Bush' and in an Urban Diaspora"

Lee, "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari" (for those with last names beginning A-L)

Bohannon, "Shakespeare in the Bush" (for those with last names beginning M-Z)

Slide show of fieldwork in Bangangté, Cameroon

Week 2

T 9/20

Making the Familiar Strange: Fieldwork in an American College Setting

Read: Moffat, *Coming of Age in New Jersey* (through page 141. Read Chapter 3 thoroughly, after skimming Ch. 1 & 2) (each chapter is filed separately on reserve)

Nathan, R. (2005a) *My Freshman Year*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Chapter 4, "How Others See Us," pp. 67-89.

American Anthropological Association. (2009) Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association.

<http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/upload/AAA-Ethics-Code-2009.pdf>

(see also www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethics.htm for links to ethics case studies).

Recommended Reading:

Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, (Foreword, pp. 1--19, pp. 195-202)

Nathan, R. (2005b) *Understanding Student Culture*. *Anthropology News* (October):17-18.

Blum, S.D. (2009) *My Word! Plagiarism and College Culture*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Film: FROSH; *Introducing your writing assistants*

Fieldwork project: Do preliminary fieldwork to try out possible research sites; in-class brainstorming of research sites (Delineating the Ethnographic Field)

HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY, HUMAN VARIATION, AND RACE/RACISM

Th 9/22

History of Anthropology; Anthropology and Racism

Read: Hann (2000) Chapters 2-4 in *Social Anthropology*, pp. 14-47 (History of Anthropology, Time and Space Coordinates, Doing Social Anthropology)

Thompson (2006) "The Problem of 'Race as a Social Construct'"

Hartigan (2006) "Saying 'Socially Constructed' is not Enough"

Recommended reading:

American Anthropological Association (1998) "Statement on 'Race'" and (1997) "Response to OMB Directive 15: Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistical and Administrative Reporting."

Fieldwork project: Choose a fieldsite from the list and conduct 2 hours of ethnographic fieldwork over the weekend; write up fieldnotes

Week 3

T 9/27

Human evolution, human biological variation, and the need for culture

Read: Goodman (1997) "Bred in the Bone?"

Lewin, *Human Evolution*, Ch. 4 ("Modern Evolutionary Theory"), Ch. 16 ("The First Hominids"), and Ch. 23 ("Mitochondrial Eve")

Lewin, *The Origin of Modern Humans*, ("Genetics, Linguistics, and Archeology")

Recommended reading:

Long (2004) "Human Genetic Variation: The Mechanisms and Results of Microevolution."

Lewin, *Bones of Contention*, Ch. 2 ("The Storytellers")

Miller and Wood, Anthropology, Ch. 6 ("The Earliest Human Ancestors")

Film: Race: The Story of an Illusion

Fieldwork project: Hand in Fieldnotes (upload onto Moodle)

CULTURE

Th 9/29

The Culture Concept: Norms, Customs, Communication, and Credulity

Read: Geertz, "Thick Description"

Jackson, "The Man Who Could Turn into an Elephant"

Film: Chimpanzee Grooming as Social Custom

Recommended reading:

Feldman-Savelsberg, P. (2005) How Rumor Begets Rumor: Collective Memory, Ethnic Conflict, and Reproductive Rumors in Cameroon, pp. 141-157.

Fieldwork project: Meet with your Writing Assistant to discuss sharpening your observer's eye for Fieldnotes

Week 4

T 10/4

Culture and Language: Framing Perception

Read: Becker, "Silence across Languages: An Essay"

Whorf, "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language"

Maltz and Borker, "A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication"

Recommended reading:

Tannen, "Who's Interrupting? Issues of Dominance and Control"

Harding, "Women and Words in a Spanish Village"

Film: How to Talk Minnesotan

Th 10/6

Culture, Ethnography, and Authenticity

Read: West, Excerpts from *Ethnographic Sorcery*, pp. 49-54, 59-60, 71-76, 80-81.

Week 5

T 10/11

Exam # 1 (covering course material through 10/6)

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION: THREE ETHNOGRAPHIES

Th 10/13

I. Hunter-Gatherers in the Kalahari Desert: Environment, Livelihood, and Development

A. The Ju/'Hoansi-!Kung: Environment and Society

Read: Shostak, *Nisa* (through chapter 3)

Week 6

T 10/18

B. Increasing Sedentarism and Social Change: The "Farm San" and Development

Read: *Nisa* (preferably, complete the book; recognizing that this is a lot to read concentrate your reading for today on Ch.s 5, 8, and 10 [and 4, 6, and 9 as well if you can manage])

Lee, R.B. (2003) The Dobe Ju/'Hoansi, Ch. 12, "The Ju/'Hoansi Today," pp. 167-192.

Film: N!ai: The story of a !Kung woman (59 min.)

Th 10/20

C. Increasing Sedentarism and Social Change: Gender Inequality

Read: Draper, P. (1975) "!Kung women: Contrasts in sexual egalitarianism in foraging and sedentary contexts." pp. 77-109 in R. Reiter, ed. *Toward an Anthropology of Women*.

Kent, S. (1995) "Does sedentarization promote gender inequality? A case study from the Kalahari." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) 1:513-536.

Shostak, *Nisa* [if you haven't had time to read it yet, please read Ch. 12]

Fieldwork project: Return to your original fieldsite; conduct two additional hours of fieldwork over the weekend, and write up your fieldnotes

WEEK 7

T 10/25

Religion, Healing, and Social Change

Read: Lee, R.B. (2003) *The Dobe Ju/'Hoansi*, Ch.9, "Coping with Life: Religion, World View, and Healing," pp. 125-140.

Shostak, M. (1983) *Nisa*, Ch. 13, 15, Epilogue (if you haven't yet had time to read the entire

book)

Recommended reading:

Feldman-Savelsberg, P. (1994) Plundered kitchens, empty wombs: Fear of infertility in the Cameroonian Grassfields. *Social Science and Medicine* 39(4):463-74.

Th 10/27

II. Kinship, Politics and Exchange in the South Pacific: Trobriand Islanders

A. Material and Symbolic Exchange I: Economics, Politics, and Reaction to Colonialism

Read: Malinowski, *Argonauts*, "The Meaning of the Kula," pp. 509-518

Weiner, *Trobrianders*, to page 79

Film: Trobriand Cricket (*take notes, of course!*)

Fieldwork project: Hand in Thick Description (upload on Moodle)

WEEK 8

T 11/1

B. Material and Symbolic Exchange II: Personhood, Kinship, and Exchange

Read: Weiner, pp. 81-167 (read pp. 165-167 twice! Re-read your Trobriand Cricket notes)

In-class exercise: Reading and making kinship charts: Kinship Terminology vs. Practice

Th 11/3

Exam # 2 (emphasizing course material from 10/13 to 11/1)

Read: If you have time, start reading Stack, *All Our Kin*, through page 61 (first four chapters)

Fieldwork project: Meet with your Writing Assistant to discuss Thick Description over the weekend

WEEK 9

T 11/8

III. Kinship and Exchange in Complex Society: "Culture of Poverty" vs. "Adaptive Strategies" in a U.S. Inner-City Ghetto

Read: Stack, *All Our Kin* (complete entire book, but concentrate on pp. 1-61)

W 11/9

EXCEPTION TO REGULAR SCHEDULE!

Fieldwork project: Reflective ethnography draft due, for those who want or need advice (WA)

Th 11/10

IV. Poverty, Social Capital, and Community Participation: A Boston Barrio

Read: Small ('96), *Villa Victoria*, Reading assignment TBA, will be drawn from: Chapters 1-3 (pp. xi-62); and Chapters 4, 7, 8 and epilogue (pp. 63-90, 145-193)

WEEK 10

T 11/15

Read: Small ('96), *Villa Victoria*, Appendix (on ethnographic methods), pp. 194-200

Recommended reading:

Small, Mario L. 2009. "How Many Cases Do I Need?" On Science and the Logic of Case Selection in Field Based Research." *Ethnography*. 10(1): 5-38.

Duneier, Slim's Table, pp. 25-30, and Part 4, "You're White, He's Black, I'm a Sociologist: Who's Innocent" (pp. 121-168)

W 11/16

Fieldwork project reflective ethnographies & portfolios due to prof by 5:00 p.m

(post to Moodle but hand in paper copies including portfolio)

OPTIONAL Exam # 3 (emphasizing course materials since 11/3)

☀️ Enjoy your Winter Break! ☀️

Full Citations of SOAN 110 Readings

- American Anthropological Association
1997 American Anthropological Association Response to OMB Directive 15: Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting. Electronic document, <http://www.aaanet.org/gvt/ombdraft.htm>, accessed December 11.
- 1998a American Anthropological Association Statement on "Race." Electronic document, <http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm>, accessed December 11.
- 1998b Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association. Electronic document, <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>, accessed December 11.
- Becker, Alton
1995 Silence across Languages: An Essay. In *Beyond Translation: Essays Toward a Modern Philosophy*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Berreman, Gerald D.
1962 Behind Many Masks: Ethnography and Impression Management in a Himalyan Village. *The Society for Applied Anthropology Monograph no.4*:24.
- Blum, Susan D.
2009 *My Word! Plagiarism and College Culture*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Bohannon, Laura
1966 Shakespeare in the Bush. *Natural History* 75(7):28-33.
- Draper, Patrica
1975 !Kung Women: Contrasts in Sexual Egalitarianism in Foraging and Sedentary Contexts. In *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. R.R. Reiter, ed. Pp. 77-109. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Duneier, Mitchell
1992 *Slim's Table: Race, Respectability, and Masculinity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Feldman-Savelsberg, Pamela
1994 Plundered Kitchens, Empty Wombs: Fear of Infertility in the Cameroonian Grassfields. *Social Science and Medicine* 39(4):463-474.
- 2004 Doing Ethnography: Learning Ways of Thinking and Writing Anthropologically. In *Reflections on Learning as Teachers*. S. Singer and C. Rutz, eds. Pp. 123-136. Northfield: College City Publications.
- 2005 How Rumor Begets Rumor: Collective Memory, Ethnic Conflict, and Reproductive Rumors in Cameroon. In *Rumor Mills: The Social Impact of Rumor and Legend*. G. Fine, V. Campion-Vincent, and C. Heath, eds. Pp. 141-157. New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction.
- Geertz, Clifford
1973 Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. In *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Pp. 3-30. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Goodman, Alan
1997 Bred in the Bone? *The Sciences*:20-25.
- Gottlieb, Alma
2012 Two Visions of Africa: Reflections on Fieldwork in an 'Animist Bush' and in an Urban Diaspora. In *The Restless Anthropologist: New Fieldsites, New Visions*. A. Gottlieb, ed. [chapter 4]. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hann, Chris
2000 *Social Anthropology*. London: Hodder Headline.
- Harding, Susan
1975 Women and Words in a Spanish Village. In *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. R.R. Reiter, ed. Pp. 283-308. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Hartigan, John
2006 Saying "Socially Constructed" Is Not Enough. *Anthropology News* 47(2):8.
- Jackson, Michael
1989 The Man Who Could Turn Into an Elephant. In *Paths Toward a Clearing: Radical Empiricism and Ethnographic Inquiry*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Kent, Susan
1995 Does Sedentarization Promote Gender Inequality? A Case Study from the Kalahari. *Journal of the Royal*

- Anthropological Institute N.S.(1):513-536.
- Lee, Richard B.
1969 Eating Christmas in the Kalahari. *Natural History* 78(10):151-157.
- 2003 *The Dobe Ju/'Hoansi*. Wadsworth: Thompson Learning.
- Lee, Richard B., and Megan Biesele
1994 A Local Culture in the Global System: The Ju/'Hoansi-!Kung Today. *General Anthropology* 1(1):2-5.
- Lewin, Roger
1987 The Storytellers. In *Bones of Contention: Controversies in the Search for Human Origins*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- 1993a Genetics, Linguistics, and Archeology. In *The Origin of Modern Humans*. New York: W. H. Freeman.
- 1993b *Human Evolution: An Illustrated Introduction*. Boston: Blackwell Scientific Publications.
- Long, Jeffrey C.
2004 Human Genetic Variation: The Mechanisms and Results of Microevolution. *In Understanding Race and Human Variation*. Alexandria, VA: American Anthropological Association.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw, and James George Frazer
1984 The Meaning of the Kula. *In Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Pp. 509-518. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.
- Maltz, Daniel N., and Ruth A. Borker
1982 A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication. In *Language and Social Identity*. J.L. Gumperz, ed. Pp. 164-174. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, Barbara D., and Bernard Wood
2006 The Earliest Human Ancestors. In *Anthropology*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Moffatt, Michael
1989 *Coming of Age in New Jersey: College and American Culture*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Nathan, Rebekah [Cathy Small]
2005a "How Others See Us," Chapter 4, pp. 67-89 *In My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- 2005b Understanding Student Culture. *Anthropology News* (October):17-18.
- Shostak, Marjorie
1981 *Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Small, Mario Luis
2004 *Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Small, Mario L.
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THE ETHNOGRAPHY PROJECT

SOAN 110- INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY

Professor Feldman-Savelsberg

Introduction

I designed the Ethnography Project to invite you to question how we anthropologists know what we know, and to ground that questioning in the experience of doing anthropology. The goal of this project is to produce your own ethnography of your immediate life-world. This gives you the opportunity to do original fieldwork, write up your ethnographic descriptions, and reflect upon your experience with fieldwork and description. This assignment thus allows you to participate in generating anthropological knowledge. This project focuses on delineating an ethnographic “field,” practicing the methods of observation and participant observation, and practicing different forms of ethnographic writing (fieldnotes; thick description). The final part of the project will be the generation of a thematically-driven and reflective ethnography. This ethnography should include: both thick description and your serious reflections upon your experiences doing “hands-on” field research about culture; how they relate to those of professional, published anthropologists; and what this tells you about anthropology.

This project, and especially the final, reflective ethnography, is an important element in fulfilling the RAD requirement through this course. It aims to help you critically examine cultural differences, largely by including yourself and your everyday environment in the range of cultural differences found worldwide. By experiencing and reflecting upon how anthropological knowledge is generated, you learn about one way that we construct knowledge about cultural differences. This project helps make SOAN 110 a Writing Requirement (WR2) course. To do so, it focuses on developing writing skills for a variety of anthropological writing (e.g. fieldnotes, thick description), and on improving writing through multiple drafts. Whether or not you are pursuing the writing requirement, think of the experimentation we do with anthropological writing genres as experimenting with different ways of thinking anthropologically. In this way, the Writing Assistants serve as assistants to *all* students, regardless of perceived writing skills.

At the end of the term, you will hand in both your reflective ethnography (a term paper), and a portfolio of all the assignments leading up to this final paper. ***Thus, it is imperative that you save hard copies of all of your assignments with Writing Assistant’s and Professor’s comments on them.*** If your Writing Assistant gives you oral comments, take notes on your hard copy and include them in your final project portfolio.

To enhance the success of your project, and to take into account the requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research with human subjects (a federally mandated procedure that protects the rights of research subjects), the parameters of this assignment are defined as follows: You should limit the group or social scene you will study to something with which you are already familiar, e.g. the dorms, a classroom or lab situation, shopping for groceries in town, or an activity you are already involved in or familiar with (orchestra, band, drama, choir, Accidentals, sports, committees, student government...). Together we will generate a list of appropriate “social scenes” through an in-class brainstorming session. You should also limit your methods to observation and participant observation. Participant observation often includes informal conversations, and thus may blend into interviewing. Survey research and *formal* interviewing are NOT appropriate methods for this assignment.

The project should not only help you to practice using anthropological concepts, but also provide you an opportunity for learning that you can apply in situations that reach beyond this course. An earlier iteration of the project and the teaching philosophy behind it are described in an essay, “Doing Ethnography,” published in *Reflections on Learning as Teachers*, edited by Susan Singer and Carol Rutz; this essay is available on e-reserves.

To complete this project successfully, you must start early and keep up with assignments—this job cannot be left until the end of term. To help you keep up and to provide feedback, this project is divided into distinct steps. Each one involves a short written assignment that should be typed double-spaced. These steps will be graded on a check, check +, check - basis, and taken together count for 20% of your total grade. Some will be examined by your writing assistant, some by your professor. All should be handed in via the Moodle system no later than 4:00 p.m. on any given due date, unless otherwise announced. You ***must*** have your **name** and the **name of the assignment** in the document file label (e.g. PamelaSavelsbergFieldnotesI.doc). Again, ***save your copies*** (with comments), as they will be collected into a **portfolio**.

The final paper due **November 16, must** be typed, double-spaced, and the main body of text should be six pages long (I will accept a range of 5 to 7 pages). This means you must write clearly and concisely. ***You must include full referencing of all literature you have cited in the citation style of the American Ethnologist***, both in-text and in a **References Cited** section (not included in the page limit). This is both part of proper academic conduct, and good practice. A brief guide to anthropological citation style is found on page 4 of your syllabus, and a more complete one on

the departmental website (Academic Departments→SOAN→resources→citations: <http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/soan/resources/citation/>), as well as on the website of the American Anthropological Association: http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf. Reference style is on pp. 10-14 of the AAA document. Along with your paper, you should hand in a portfolio of *all* of your ethnography project assignments, with WA and professor comments.

Step-by-step

The steps you should take to complete your fieldwork project and research report are as follows:

I. Delineating the Ethnographic Field.

a. Background: Proposals, research topics, and methods.

Because this is an introductory course, many of the questions addressed in a research proposal are pre-defined by the assignment. Nonetheless, it is helpful to learn about the elements of a research proposal, since this is an essential part of the anthropological research process and one important genre of anthropological writing. This is a long introduction, so please bear with me.

Throughout your life, you likely will have to write proposals to get research or travel funding, to support the work of a non-profit organization, or to introduce resolutions or legislation. In the anthropological research world, a proposal answers several questions: 1. What is the topic that you wish to investigate, and what are the principal questions you want to pose about the topic? 2. What do anthropologists already know about this topic (this question addresses the topic's anthropological relevance and is explored in a review of relevant scholarly literature)? 3. Why do we need to know more? How would your research build on, modify, or correct errors in previous work on this topic (again, this question addresses the topic's relevance)? 4. What exactly would you do? (Conduct participant observation? Non-participant observation? In-depth personal interviews? In what settings/contexts? Who would be your subjects, and how will you protect them from harm? What approximate timetable would you use? How would you analyze and/or interpret the data you collect? How will these methods address your specific research topic, including the shortcomings or needs identified in #3?

When anthropologists choose a research topic, they select a group or situation, and then determine an anthropological question they would like to investigate about this group or situation. Conversely, they may also determine a topic (often based upon issues raised in the scholarly literature), and then think of arenas where they could best investigate it. The work of socio-cultural anthropologists always focuses in some way on observable social interaction. All of our class readings on fieldwork, as well as examples from lecture/class discussions, illustrate potential research questions. Gottlieb (2012) does a particularly good job portraying an anthropologist's thought processes when choosing both a research topic and a field site. Moffat (1989) and Nathan (2005a) give good examples of anthropological fieldwork within an American college setting. Anthropologists want to find out something unique about human societies and the ways humans give meaning to their life worlds; they also strive to make their work part of a broader intellectual conversation, of interest to people who have never been to their field site. In order to adequately answer the question using scientific processes (anthropology is part of social science, even if it is "soft"), you must be careful about how it is stated.

Generally, social science cannot answer questions which contain the words "why" or "should". "Should" questions always imply a particular value position or moral stance. A "should" question (e.g. "should marijuana be legalized?") can be rephrased in a neutral way (e.g. "Is the legalization of marijuana related to an increase in its use?") so its answer can be used by those with opposing value positions. "Why" questions require theories, carefully worked out causal statements. This level of inquiry is inappropriate for your fieldwork project and reflective ethnography portfolio. Nonetheless, "why" questions can be broken down and rephrased so they are appropriate and feasible. (For example: "Why do cliques form on dorm floors?" can become "What are the numbers and forms of ties between each student and his/her floormates in dorm X?" and "What kinds of transactions and information flow along these ties?"). Rephrasing a "why" question does not preclude you from looking at a variety of theories advanced by scholars for answering such questions, e.g. in terms of logic, use of evidence, appropriateness of concepts and variables. Ultimately, theories are supported or refuted by systematic observations (in our case, your fieldwork).

Questions for research projects can be descriptive ("How many friendship ties do students in singles have on dorm floor X?") or relational ("What is the relation between the number of roommates and the density of social networks on dorm floor X?"). Relational questions are more interesting. Both types of question imply variables. For an anthropological question, the variables on which you focus your observation must be relevant both to your interest and to anthropology. For example, occupation and heartbeat rate both vary for individuals, but only the former is relevant to the cultural anthropologist.

Anthropologists always need to pay attention to the population their topic deals with. How representative is the sample, what are its limitations and/or biases? Do not view lack of representativeness or bias as drawbacks; rather, be

aware of them and explicitly ask what you can learn from the limitations or biases of a study population. Often, it is these telling particulars that make anthropology so interesting. Remember what ethnography is good at, and what it asks of us as researchers. Hendry and Watson state that ethnography "...requires learning how to decipher obscure messages, recognizing code names, and painstakingly assembling disparate and discrete pieces of data into a unified whole in order to make sense of the wider picture" (2001:1).

In many ways, the issues of delineating the study population (or "sampling") in the preceding paragraph are part of the methods section of any anthropological research proposal. In the methods section of a proposal, the anthropologist explains how they will explore their topic and answer their research questions. Anthropologists should be very specific and intentional. Thinking thoroughly about "how" helps them to define a feasible research topic. In this way, methods and delineating the fieldsite and topic are closely intertwined.

Anthropologists most often use the methods of participant observation, observation, and interviewing. For this project, we will limit ourselves to non-participant observation and participant observation (which can include shaping a conversation toward your interests in natural settings). In a proposal for a project utilizing these methods, an anthropologist would discuss exactly how they intend to conduct their participant observation (e.g. what is their role as a participant, and how is it transformed by simultaneously observing). Anthropologists also discuss how their application of methods will take into consideration the requirements of ethics and human subjects review. In the future, if you do any research with human beings (e.g. for your comps project), you will have to delineate risks and safeguards in an application to Carleton's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

b. The Assignment: Delineating the Ethnographic Field. In this class, and for this project, we will not be writing proposals. Instead, your methods (non-participant and participant observation) are pre-defined. Your research focus on impression management (see Berreman 1958) and on elements of social organization (see the second half of the syllabus) will likewise be pre-defined in subsequent assignments. The point of this project is to practice some elements of ethnographic observation and writing, not to conduct comps research! One element of proposal writing, choosing a field site, will be conducted as an in-class group assignment, on **Tuesday September 20**. To prepare, reflect on what you have learned from your syllabus readings about anthropological questions and fieldwork sites. Observe some "sites" around campus and/or around town to see if they would be good potential fieldwork sites.

In class, on **Tuesday September 20**, we will generate **group lists and individual checklists on fieldsites**: Students will meet in groups of five for an in-class brainstorming and checklist exercise. Groups will generate a list of potential fieldsites, which will be handed in both **on paper and electronically**, including the names of all group members. In addition, individual students will hand in a checklist answering a series of questions on *one* of these potential fieldsites. This won't necessarily be the fieldsite you will choose for the rest of the project, but it will be to your advantage to think thoroughly about your fieldsite in this way. These checklists will be handed in **on paper by the end of the class session**.

The checklists will ask you to select a setting, group, and/or situation about which you can pose an anthropological question; think about specificity in terms of the physical and social boundaries of the setting, the time of day, and the population of those involved; is there observable social interaction occurring in this setting and if so, of what sort; what underlying anthropological question whets your curiosity regarding this setting, group, and/or situation; will you use non-participant observation (fly on the wall) or participant observation; if the former, what will be your vantage point of observation; if the latter, what will be your role as participant, and how will it be transformed by simultaneously observing; how will you maintain the privacy of those you will be observing?

II. Fieldnotes. By Thursday, September 22 you should choose a fieldsite from the master list, based on the class brainstorming session; the list will be posted on Moodle. During the week and/or over the weekend, conduct two hours of ethnographic observation. While you are observing, take "scratch notes." Exactly how you will take scratch notes will depend upon the situation. As soon after your observation session as possible, type up your fleshed-out fieldnotes. Imagine fieldnotes as the full-sentence, word-version of sketches and studies in observational drawing. Just as sketches provide the raw material for a detailed painting, your fieldnotes will provide the raw material for your thick descriptions. This field observation and fieldnotes writing exercise aims to refine your methods and skills at observation and fieldnote-taking. Record your observations toward the tasks of deciphering and assembling described in the quotation by Hendry and Watson above. Write your fieldnotes diary-style with room in the margins for indexing. Make sure to note the setting, actors, and (inter)actions of your observation session. Write down what you observe. Do not infer feelings or motivations of the social actors you are observing; instead focus on *observable indicators* (words, gestures, body posture, ...) of those states of mind, and—particularly—social interactions. You can write memos to yourself (speculations about motivations; questions that you would like to investigate in the future) in brackets. Use pseudonyms for each person appearing in your fieldnotes (to protect their privacy). Hand in your *typed* fieldnotes via Moodle by 5:00 pm on **Tuesday September 27**.

Between September 27 and October 2, you will meet with your Writing Assistant to go over the fieldnotes and discuss possible strategies for sharpening your observations, and expressing your observations in words.

III. Thick Description. Sometime around **October 20** return to your original fieldsite, conduct two more hours of fieldwork, and write up your fieldnotes. Save these fieldnotes to include in your final portfolio. Based on your fieldnotes from both observation sessions, as well as what you have learned about thick description from reading Clifford Geertz' writings, compose a **three-page thick description** of your fieldsite (the setting and the action you have observed). Remember: thick description is richly contextualized; it implicitly contains interpretation and analysis of what is described. Focus your thick description around a theme. You can choose whether the theme will involve *impression management* (Berreman 1958, Moffat 1989) that you have observed, or some aspect of *social organization* discussed in later readings from the course. Examples of dimensions of social organization would be group size, fission, and fusion; conflicts and conflict resolution; symbolic and material exchange; folk categories of relationships (e.g. kinship) with attendant rights and duties. Where appropriate, cite readings that explain the concepts you use to organize your thick description. Hand in your Thick Description assignment by 5:00 pm on **October 27**, via Moodle. Meet with your Writing Assistant sometime over the following two weekends to receive feedback on your Thick Description, with an eye toward revisions for the final reflective ethnography.

IV. Reflective Ethnography Paper and portfolio.

General: Based on the thick description you wrote in your earlier assignment, compose a six-page reflective ethnography. Pick a theme for your reflective ethnography and write an introduction. Describe your social scene and findings (thick description). Since thick description is implicitly analytic, the more interpretation, analysis, and discussion of your findings you can incorporate into your description, the better. You should also reflect on your experience doing fieldwork (e.g. what challenges did you face and how did you resolve them, how has this fieldwork experience affected your understanding of anthropology, and is there some way that you will look at the world differently after practicing this structured way of observing and describing—of making the familiar strange). One requirement to help you reflect is to **read at least two articles** and relate concepts about anthropological fieldwork to your own experience with fieldwork and the challenges of transforming observation into ethnographic description. You may choose these articles from the syllabus, or from a list of readings on fieldwork and fieldnotes (to be handed out later in term). You should **cite** these articles using anthropological citation style. In your reflection, you may want to consider such issues as age, gender, hierarchies, the presentation of self, or fieldnotes vs. memory. In planning this section, try to reflect on what you've learned about the nature of ethnographic research and knowledge through this term-long exercise; part of this is having a sense of how your short term research is similar to and differs from the field experiences of professional anthropologists. The reflective ethnography paper should be **six pages**, approximately three pages each for description and reflection. It should be the most important element of a portfolio of each of the steps of this assignment (including drafts with WA's comments). Six pages is tough in its brevity, and underscores for you the huge amount of field research that goes into even the briefest of ethnographies.

Sub-step (a) Select and read two articles by professional anthropologists reflecting on their experiences writing fieldnotes and conducting fieldwork. Using these as a starting point, reflect upon your own fieldwork experiences, and choose a theme or set of themes that allows you to integrate your reflections with a thick description of your findings.

Sub-step (b) Write a draft of your reflective ethnography. You are invited but not required to hand this draft in to your WA on Wednesday **November 9**. Students who would particularly benefit from a clear process of drafting and rewriting will be required to take this sub-step. WAs will be available for conferences, by appointment, between when you hand in your drafts and when you hand in your final paper. Meeting earlier is best. These meetings will be dialogic and more like regular WritePlace meetings.

Sub-step (c) Hand in the final draft of your six-page "reflective ethnography," along with your "portfolio." The portfolio consists of your collected assignments (all drafts, with comments) plus any extra illustrative material you might want to include. The **final reflective ethnography and research portfolio** should be handed in to me at Leighton 233 on **Wednesday November 16** (the last day of classes), strictly no later than 5:00 p.m. (20% for paper/portfolio plus 20% for all of the steps leading up to the paper). Upload the Reflective Ethnography paper onto **Moodle** at this time. If you are able to hand in the paper and portfolio by 5:00 pm on Tuesday November 15 (including uploading the paper on Moodle, you will receive one point **extra credit**.

References Cited

Feldman-Savelsberg, P.

2004 Doing Ethnography: Learning Ways of Thinking and Writing Anthropologically. pp. 123-136 In: Susan Singer

and Carol Rutz, editors. *Reflections on Learning as Teachers*. Northfield, MN: College City Publications.

Hendry, J. and C. Watson, eds.

2001 *An Anthropology of Indirect Communication*. London: Routledge.

Examples of Fieldwork Project Topics (taken from successful past papers on a different version of the project)

Help-seeking at the Math Skills Center

Nudity in the women's basketball locker room

Symbolic interaction in the Burton smoking dining room, or at Goodbye Blue Monday

Informal authority in the folk-singing group, Chapel

Interruptions at study break on "Third Lewis"

Terminology/language as ways to exercise power and control in Semaphore

Power dynamics and leadership in an a cappella singing group

Power dynamics and role conflicts between student managers and student workers

Social functions of language in the men's cross-country team

Identity formation and maintenance through rituals of interaction in various campus groups

Space, group boundaries, and body language (non-verbal communication) in venues such as coffee shops, dining halls, great space, and the libe.

Group dynamics and managing insecurities while shopping at Ragstock

Language genres in interactions between a lesbian couple and their straight friends

Boundary maintenance in professor-student relationships on the Geology fieldtrip and its aftermath

Reciprocity of favors among a custodial working group

Examples of Concepts Guiding Fieldwork Project Analysis

Impression management

Exchange, reciprocity

Creation and maintenance of social norms

Social networks and social capital

Boundary creation/maintenance, in and out groups, social cohesion

Conflict resolution

Formal vs. informal leadership

Link to Carleton's Institutional Review Board for Research with Human Subjects website:

http://apps.carleton.edu/governance/institutional_review_board/

Link to the American Anthropological Association's website on professional ethics:

<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethics.htm>

Link to the American Anthropological Association's website on citation style:

http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf

Some Recommended Readings on Fieldwork (more to come in a later handout):

Faubion, James D. and George E. Marcus, eds.

2009 *Fieldwork Is Not What It Used To Be: Learning Anthropology's Method in a Time of Transition*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. (*see particularly Part I: Reflections on First Fieldwork and After*)

Gottlieb, Alma, ed.

2012 *The Restless Anthropologist: New Fieldsites, New Visions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lassiter, Luke Eric.

2005 *The Chicago Guide to Collaborative Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.