ANTHROPOLOGY 1-UA: HUMAN SOCIETY & CULTURE
Fall 2012
MW 12:30-1:45 pm
Rm: SILV 405

Professor Noelle Stout
Email: noellestout@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:45 – 3:00 pm
Rufus Hall, Rm 604
25 Waverly Pl

Teaching Assistants:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Cultural anthropology explores the everyday practices and values of people living in a diverse array of contexts. More than a fixed set of ideas, cultural anthropology provides a way to interpret the world. This means that one can apply an anthropological framework to nearly any topic—from macroeconomic processes such as globalization to the intimate practices of sexual desire. Across this diversity of topics, cultural anthropologists have a keen interest in how people make sense of their experiences. Drawing on local meanings and understandings, anthropologists take seriously people’s own interpretations as a source of authority and knowledge. While many social scientific disciplines apply large scale theories to people’s lives, anthropologists believe that theories should respond to people’s lived experiences. This makes anthropology a self-reflexive discipline in which constructive criticism drives innovation and spurs intellectual debates.

In this course, students will be introduced to classic topics in US anthropology including kinship, economics, religion, race and ethnicity, conflict and violence, and gender and sexuality. Weekly readings will pair introductory materials from our textbook with advanced theoretical articles and ethnographies, through which we will discover a variety of cultural practices in settings from Samoa to Spanish Harlem. Instead of memorizing discrete cultural facts, students will be asked to acquire and use critical thinking skills to investigate germane social issues such as inequality, power, and conflict in a globalized world. Through field research in New York City students will experience the benefits and ethical dilemmas of participant observation first-hand. Readings, lectures, films, and discussion sections will encourage students to reflect on current events and to question our most deeply held assumptions about what is natural, normal, and true.

OBJECTIVES:
Students who fulfill the requirements of this course should be able to:

• Appreciate how differences are shaped by local and global patterns.
• Articulate anthropology’s history and primary schools of thought.
• Acknowledge ethnocentrism and its consequences.
• Analyze contemporary social, economic, and political issues through an anthropological lens.
• Define and utilize key terms and ideas fundamental to sociocultural anthropology.
COURSE MATERIALS:

Required Texts
- *Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, 9th Edition*
- *Coming of Age in Samoa*, Margaret Mead
- *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*, Philippe Bourgois

Articles
All articles are available on Blackboard under “Course Documents.”

Films
Copies of all films in the course are available at the Avery Fisher Center on the 2nd Floor of Bobst Library.

ASSESSMENT & GRADING:

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 Response Papers (1-2 pgs each)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>In-Class Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnographic Proposal</td>
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<td>Ethnographic Project &amp; Paper (6-7 pgs)</td>
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<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
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Scale

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[See the grading rubric on Blackboard for detailed information regarding assessment.]

REQUIREMENTS

Reading: Between approximately 70-80 pages a week. Use the textbook as a reference, but much of the information in the text will not be required for the exams. In order to know which information you will be responsible for, you must attend lectures.

Attendance: Attend all lectures and discussion sections having completed the readings and arrive ready to listen and participate. Lectures will provide information not covered in the text and will suggest alternative perspectives to class readings, which will appear on class exams. On occasion, you will turn in in-class assignments as a way to keep track of attendance. In section, your openness to asking questions and engaging in relevant dialogue will decide your grade.

Response papers: You will complete two 1.5-2 page response papers on relevant readings, as assigned in the course schedule. In your response, you will formulate an analysis about the book as a whole or a particular point or made by the author. The response must be analytical, not simply a description of your own personal feelings about the book (e.g. I liked it, I didn’t like it, etc.). Likewise, do not summarize the text. In the first paragraph, state your argument or the idea that you will be discussing and briefly outline how your idea fits within the main argument of the text. In the next page or page and a half present evidence that supports your perspective. Be sure to include quotes from the text, and use this citation format: (Author Year: pg.#) for example: (Mead 1928: 22). Papers should be doubled-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins.
Exams: The midterm and final exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer questions, and essays given in class. The midterm will cover the readings, lectures, and films from the first half of the course, and the final exam will cover the second half. Students will be invited to suggest exam questions prior to the exam. During the exam, students may anonymously complete a brief comment sheet that the TAs will review in order to suggest possible adjustments. Make-up exams will be given only when documentation of hospitalization, death in the family, or other emergency is provided.

Fieldwork Project & Paper: Over the course of the semester, you will conduct short-term ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation in a setting in New York City that you find interesting. Proposals for fieldwork projects are due September 19. In the paper, you will describe the context of your research and apply at least three different course readings to your findings. For example, in a 7-page paper, your description of your fieldsite should occupy no more than three pages and the remainder should apply ideas and concepts from the course to your topic. Papers are due December 11. Papers should be doubled-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins, and include a cover sheet with your name, email, and year.

DUE DATES:
All assignments are due in lecture:

- Ethnographic proposal
- Response Paper: Coming of Age in Samoa
- Response Paper: In Search Of Respect
- Ethnographic Paper

Wed. Sept. 19
Wed. Sept. 26
Wed. Dec. 5
Wed. Dec. 11

Please do not email the professor or TA to request extensions. There will be no extensions or incompletes granted. Exceptions will only be made in the case of an emergency and through email requests from your faculty advisor, someone from the dean’s office, or in the form of a doctor’s note.

CONDUCT:

Plagiarism:
All information borrowed from print sources or the internet must be identified. Plagiarists fail the course and have their offense recorded. Violations of academic honesty can affect a student's graduation, financial aid, and eligibility for honors. [Note: Submitting the same work for more than one class without notifying your TA is considered plagiarism.]

In-Class Conduct:
Refrain from using computers, phones, or other distracting technology during lecture and section. Arrive promptly and pack up no earlier than 1:45 pm. The very last row will be reserved for latecomers.

NOTE:

Information for Students with Disabilities:
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs. Also contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.
# COURSE SCHEDULE

## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

**Weds. Sept. 5**

Introduction & Overview: What do we mean by culture?

*Humanity* pp. 1-37

*(No sections)*

## ANTHROPOLOGY: ORIGINS, METHODS & CRITIQUE

**Mon. Sept. 10**

*Humanity* pp. 36-37 “The Cultural Construction of Race,” 68-78


American Anthropological Association Statement on “Race” (May 17, 1998)

http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm

**Weds. Sept. 12**

*Humanity* pp. 78-80, 95-104

B. Malinowski 1922 “Introduction: The Subject, Method, and Scope of This Enquiry” from *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. pp. 1-25

**Mon. Sept. 17**

*Humanity* pp. 89-91 “Interpretative” and “Postmodern”

Clifford Geertz 1973 “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight” in *The Interpretation of Cultures* pp. 412-448 (Online through Bobst)

Renato Rosaldo 1993 [1989], *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* pp. 1-45

**Weds. Sept. 19**

Screening: *Them and Me* Stéphane Breton (2001 63 min.)

FIELDWORK PROPOSAL DUE

## GENDER & SEXUALITY

**Mon. Sept. 24**

Margaret Mead 1928 *Coming of Age in Samoa* Preface, Chp. 1-3, 7, 10 pp. xxii-28, 61-76, 92-110

**Weds. Sept. 26**

Margaret Mead 1928 *Coming of Age in Samoa* Chp. 12-14 pp. 128-170

RESPONSE PAPER DUE: COMING OF AGE

**Mon. Oct. 1**

*Humanity* Chp. 11 pp. 237-244

Emily Martin 1991 “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles” pp. 485-501

Rayna Rapp Reiter 1975 “Introduction” in *Toward an Anthropology of Women* pp.1-6

**Weds. Oct. 3**

*Humanity* Chp. 11 pp. 257-266


Mon. Oct. 8  
*Humanity* Chp. 11 pp. 244-249 “Multiple Gender Identities”  
Anne Fausto-Sterling 1993 “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough” pp. 5-8  
Don Kulick 1997 “The Gender of Transgendered Brazilian Prostitutes” 574-585

**MARRIAGE & KINSHIP**

Weds. Oct. 10  
*Humanity* Chp. 8 pp. 164-189  
Jessica Bennet 2009 “Polyamory: The New Sexual Revolution?”  

Mon. Oct. 15  
No Class

Weds. Oct. 17  
Kath Weston, *Families We Choose* Chp. 2-3, pp. 21-73

Mon. Oct. 22  
Screening: *Off and Running: An American Coming of Age Story* dir. Nicole Opper, 2009 75 min.

Weds. Oct. 24  
**MIDTERM EXAM**

**RELIGION**

Mon. Oct. 29  
*Humanity* Chp. 14 pp. 313-342  
E.E. Evans Pritchard 1976 “Witchcraft and Unfortunate Events” in *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic Among the Azande* pp. 63-83

Weds. Oct. 31  
Review Midterm Results

**POLITICAL ECONOMY & GLOBALIZATION**

Mon. Nov. 5  
*Humanity* Chp. 7 pp. 142-163  
Marcel Mauss 1923 *The Gift* “Intro, Chp. 1, and Conclusion” pp. 1-18, 65-83

Weds. Nov. 7  
*Humanity* Chp. 16 pp. 364, 373-384

Mon. Nov. 12  
Steven Gregory 2007 “Introduction, Chp. 1” *Devil Behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic* pp. 1-7, 11-49
Denise Brennan 2004 “Women Work, Men Sponge, and Everyone Gossips: Macho Men and Stigmatized/ing Women in a Sex Tourist Town” *Anthropological Quarterly* pp. 705-733

Screening: *Inside Job* dir. Charles Ferguson (108 min) Part 1


Weds. Nov. 21  CLASS CANCELED – Thanksgiving Holiday

**SOCIAL INEQUALITY & POVERTY**

Mon. Nov. 26  *Humanity* Chp. 13 pp. 290-313


RESPONSE PAPER DUE: *IN SEARCH OF RESPECT*

**ETHNICITY, CONFLICT & PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGY**

Mon. Dec. 10  *Humanity* Chp. 17 pp. 387-410
George Packer 2007 “Knowing the Enemy: Can Social Scientists Redefine the ‘War on Terror’”? *The New Yorker* pp. 1-11

Weds. Dec. 11  *Humanity* Chp. 18 pp. 411-437
Reflection & Wrap-up
ETHNOGRAPHIC PAPER DUE

Weds. Dec 19  FINAL EXAM 12:00 – 1:50 pm