

ANTH2010: Principles of Cultural Anthropology

J. Leinaweaver (jessaca_leinaweaver@brown.edu)

Spring 2016 | W 9:30-11:50 | Giddings 114

Office hours: T 1:30-3:30, Giddings 115 | Appointments available [here](#).

This seminar explores fundamental theoretical and ethnographic currents in 20th- and 21st- century cultural anthropology. The readings and discussions will lead to the further development of a critical understanding of those currents and of anthropological theory more generally. The seminar is required for first-year anthropology graduate students, and open to graduate students in other disciplines by permission of instructor.

Evaluation

- 1) Thorough reading, preparation for discussion, and thoughtful discussion contributions are the basis for the success of the course. Participation in discussion is central, with quality more significant than quantity. In support of this, share a short response to the readings by noon the day before class. (You can have one “skip” over the course of the semester.) Before class, closely read your colleagues’ responses and come prepared to engage with the text and with one another. **(20%)**
- 2) Two strictly time limited 5-minute presentations on an example of how the theoretical frameworks we consider are used in contemporary anthropological writing. **(10% total, sign up in class)**
- 3) Three short synthetic papers, 3-4 pages double spaced, in which you analyze the material read in prior weeks and propose your understanding of how the works read thus far inform (or should inform) contemporary anthropology: do they fit into a narrative? If so, what are they telling us about how anthropology works and what it does? If not, what is the nature of their incoherence, and what in turn does that say about recent anthropology? **(10% each, dates in syllabus).**
- 4) Writing evaluation: attached to your second and third synthetic papers, a short paragraph explaining what you yourself are working on improving in either your writing or your level of analysis (or both) based on the comments from the first synthetic paper and perhaps also comments from other classes you are in. In other words, a reflection on how you are using the current paper to try to develop issues you want to improve from your previous paper(s). **(5% total, dates in syllabus)**
- 5) Citation management: take notes on each reading (even if brief) and enter the readings into your Endnote (or whatever) program. For the first two weeks, screenshot one of the new references you created, print and bring to class. In

subsequent weeks; put your notes and quotes in Endnote or whatever (you'll be glad you did), but you don't need to turn it in. (Note: This semester, the Library is offering several citation management workshops. Highly recommended to sign up for one if you need a quick training on how to use such a program.) (5%)

- 6) A final assignment, with three parts: You will note that this syllabus is far from comprehensive, and a great many aspects of current anthropological theory and thinking are not addressed here for lack of space. The final assignment will be your take on one of these bodies of theory which you find especially important and worth considering. Choose *a theoretical topic* not included on this syllabus to develop over the course of the semester. For example: social suffering; infrastructure; space and place; world anthropologies; etc. The parts of the assignment are as follows:
- a. Early on in the semester: Turn in a one-paragraph précis describing the theoretical approach you mean to assess and list approximately 10 sources (including both books and articles) that you judge to be central to that approach, in annotated bibliography format (i.e., with a brief description of the content of each, and a hint of how it links to the broader frame you describe) produced using your citation management software. (You can use a variety of shortcuts for getting to that list – for example, look for recent articles in the Annual Review of Anthropology on that framework – but ultimately, you'll have to do quite a bit of skimming.) This should potentially be the very preliminary start toward a prelim statement, and I encourage you to sign up for office hours to discuss your options. (5%).
 - b. Assignment/presentation/outline: At some future point you very possibly will have to teach some of this stuff. Assign us each a 10 page (max) segment which will give your colleagues a sense of the kind of work being done on the body of literature you are examining, and prepare a 5-8 minute *teaching presentation* of a particular key theoretical concept, construct, tool etc. Imagine you are presenting it to smart undergrads. As a written complement to your presentation, prepare a teaching outline to turn in the same day (2 pages double spaced) (10%)

(As colleagues to the presenter: be prepared to ask questions that will help you figure out how/if the approach may work with your own research interests! One of the key challenges in early stages of graduate school is finding the theory to explain your ethnography or that resonates with your findings, so use these reviews to begin thinking about possibilities.)

At the end of this session we will gather together our observations about “Theory in Anthropology Since the xxxx,” a la Ortner.

- c. Book review: Having read the +/-10 pieces you highlighted in your list, select a single book that is particularly important and noteworthy for the theoretical approach you chose. Write a book review (see AE or AA for examples), in which you critically assess the book’s contribution to that approach. (15%). You have the option whether you want to do this for publication (I can send you a list of books available for review) or simply as an assignment. If the latter, you have more freedom in the book you choose, but need to write a somewhat longer paper – 5 pages double spaced, instead of the journal’s word limit.

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the Brown Bookstore, and on 24-hour reserve at the Rock. The remaining articles and chapters assigned are available on OCRA, at: <http://dl.lib.brown.edu/reserves/>, with the password “savage”.

Required:

Mintz, Sidney. *Sweetness and Power*.

Tsing, Anna. 2007. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (Jan 27) – Organizational meeting

In class project: Reading for theory

Week 2 (Feb 3) – Crisis/Reflexive Turn

Asad, Talal.

1979 Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. *In Politics of Anthropology: From Colonialism and Sexism Toward a View from Below*. Pp. 85-97. The Hague: Mouton.

Fabian, Johannes.

1983 Time and the Emerging Other *and* Conclusions. *In Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. Pp. 1-36 and 143-166. New York: Columbia University Press.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph.

1991 Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness. *In Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. R.G. Fox. Pp. 17-44. Santa Fe: SAR Press.

Clifford, James.

1986 Introduction: Partial Truths. *In Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Pp 1-26. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Abu-Lughod, Lila.

1991. "Writing Against Culture." Pp. 137-62 in *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, edited by R. G. Fox. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press

Minh-ha, Trinh T.

1989. The Language of Nativism (selections). In *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism*

[Endnote screenshot]

Week 3 (Feb 10) – Bourdieu

Bourdieu, Pierre.

1977 Outline of a Theory of Practice. Richard Nice, trans. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp 1-30, 72-95, and 149-183.

Bourdieu, Pierre.

1996 The State Nobility, pp 102-123 and 374-389. Stanford University Press.

Wacquant, Loic

1996 Introduction to The State Nobility, Pages ix-xix. Stanford University Press.

Johnson, Randal.

1993 Editor's Introduction: Pierre Bourdieu on Art, Literature, and Culture. *In The Field of Cultural Production*. Pierre Bourdieu. Pp 1-27. New York: Columbia University Press.

[Endnote screenshot]

Week 4 (Feb 17) – Foucault

Foucault, Michel.

1976 Part 2. *In History of Sexuality, Vol 1: An Introduction*. Robert Hurley, trans. London: Allen Lane.

Foucault, Michel.

1975 The Carceral. In *Discipline and Punish*, 293-308.

Foucault, Michel.

1991 Governmentality. Rosi Braidotti and Colin Gordon, trans. *In The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds. Pp 87–104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Foucault, Michel.

1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*. New York: Pantheon. AM Sheridan Smith, Trans. “Introduction” Pp. 3-17; “The unities of discourse” pp 21-30; “Discursive formations” pp 31-39.

Stoler, Ann.

1997 *Educating Desire in Colonial Southeast Asia: Foucault, Freud, and Imperial Sexualities*. *In Sites of Desire/Economies of Pleasure*. Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly, eds. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dirks, Nicholas B., Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner.

1994 Introduction. *In Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

+ <http://www.buzzfeed.com/chrisr414d8a71a/post-structuralism-explained-with-hipster-beards-2-xwfv>

Week 5 (Feb 24) – History

Mintz, Sidney W.

1986 *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Penguin.

Wolf, Eric R.

2010/1982 Introduction. *In Europe and the People Without History*. Pp 3-23. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[Precis]

Week 6 (Mar 2) – Postcolonialism/Subalternity

Said, Edward.

1995 Orientalism. *In The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. Ashcroft et al, eds. Pp 87-91. London: Routledge.

Guha, Ranajit.

1983/2001 Introduction. *In Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*. Pp 1-17. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade.
1984 Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses
Boundary 2. 12(3)-13(1): 333-358.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty.
1988 Can the Subaltern Speak? *In* *Marxism and the Interpretation of Cultures*.
Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds. London: Macmillan.

Mbembe, Achille.
1992 The Banality of Power and the Aesthetics of Vulgarly in the Postcolony.
Public Culture 4(2): 1-30.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh.
2000 Introduction: The Idea of Provincializing Europe. *In* *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton University Press.

[Synthetic Paper 1 – on weeks 2-5]

Week 7 (Mar 9) – Gender & Sexuality

Rubin, Gayle
1975 The Traffic of Women: Notes on the “Political Economy” of Sex. *In* *Toward An Anthropology of Women*. Rayna R. Reiter, ed. Pp 157-210. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Scott, Joan.
1986 Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis. *American Historical Review* 91: 1053-75. < <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1864376>>

Butler, Judith.
1989 Chapter 1: Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire. *In* *Gender Trouble*. Pp 3-44. Routledge.

Crenshaw, Kimberle.
1993 Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color.

Ortner, Sherry.
1996 Chapter 1: Making Gender. *In* *Making Gender*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Ebron, Paulla.
2001 Contingent Stories: Anthropology, Race, and Feminism. *In* *Black Feminist Anthropology: Theory, Praxis, Politics and Poetics*. Irma McClaurin, editor. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers. pp. 211-232

Week 8 (Mar 16) -- Race & Nation

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant.
1986 Racial Formation. *In* Racial Formation in the United States. Routledge.

Hall, Stuart.
1980 Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance. *In* Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism. Paris: UNESCO, pp. 305-345.

Anderson, Benedict.
2001 Imagined Communities. *In* Nations and Identities: Classic Readings. Vincent P. Pecora, ed. Malden: Blackwell.

Stoler, Ann and Frederick Cooper
1997 Between metropole and colony: rethinking a research agenda. *In* Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World, Cooper & Stoler, eds., pp. 1-51.

Hale, Charles
2002 Does Multiculturalism Menace? Governance, Cultural Rights and the Politics of Identity in Guatemala. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 34(3): 485-524.

Brodin, Karen
2000 Global capitalism: What's race got to do with it? *Am. Ethnol.* 27(2):237-56

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph
2001 The anthropology of the state in the age of globalization. *Current Anthropology* 42(1):125-38

Week 9 (Mar 24) – The Global

Appadurai, Arjun.
1996 Modernity at Large. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
[Selections: Chapter 1 and 2]

Hannerz, Ulf.
1992 Chapter 7: The Global Ecumene. *In* Cultural Complexity. Pp 217-268. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt.
1997 (2005) *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[Assign a short article to your colleagues]

Week 10 (Apr 6) – “Anthropologies Of.”

[Readings TBA]

[Teaching Presentations]

[Synthetic Paper 2 + writing eval – on weeks 6-9]

Week 11 (Apr 13) – Affect

Berlant, Lauren

2009 Cruel Optimism. In *The Affect Theory Reader*, pp 93-117.

Deleuze, Giles

1994 “Percept, Affect, Concept” and “Conclusion: from chaos to the brain.”
What is Philosophy? Columbia University Press, 1994.

Stewart, Kathleen

2012 Precarity’s Forms. *Cultural Anthropology*, 27: 518–525

Navaro-Yashin, Yael

2009 Affective spaces, melancholic objects: ruination and the production of anthropological knowledge. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 15: 1–18.

Povinelli, Elizabeth

2011 The Persistence of Hope. In *Theory After Theory* (Elliot & Attridge, eds.).

Leys, Ruth

2011 “The Turn to Affect: A Critique,” *Critical Inquiry* 37 (Spring 2011): 434-472.

Week 12 (Apr 20) - Things

Munn, Nancy

1992 *The Fame of Gawa*. Durham: Duke University Press. Chapter 1, “The conceptual framework” (3-20)

Weiner, Annette.

1992 *Inalienable Possessions: The Paradox of Keeping-While-Giving*. Berkeley: University of California Press. *Selections*: Introduction, Ch. 1, and Afterword

Kopytoff, Igor.

1986 The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process. In *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Arjun Appadurai, eds. Pp 64-94. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Law, John and Annemarie Mol
1994 Regions, Networks, and Fluids: Anaemia and Social Topology. *Social Studies of Science* 24(4): 641-671.

Christopher Pinney
2005 Things happen: or, from which moment does that object come? *In Materiality*. Daniel Miller, ed. Pp 256-273.

Ingold, Tim
2000 Building, dwelling, living. From *The perception of the environment*, Pp 172-188. Routledge.

Week 13 (Apr 27) –Ontology/Perspectivism

Cussins, Charis.
1996 Ontological choreography: Agency through objectification in infertility clinics. *Social Studies of Science* 26(3): 575-610

Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo.
2004 *Perspectival Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Equivocation*. *Tipiti* 2(1): 3-22.

Mol, Annemarie
1999 *Ontological Politics: A Word and Some Questions*. *In Actor Network Theory and After*. John Law, and J. Hassard, ed. Pp 74-89. Oxford: Blackwell.

Blaser, Mario.
2013 *Ontological conflicts and the stories of peoples in spite of Europe: toward a conversation on political ontology*. *Current Anthropology* 54(5): 547-568.

Ramos, Alcida Rita.
2012 *The Politics of Perspectivism*. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41: 481-494.

Venkatesan, Soumhya & colleagues
2010 "Ontology is Just Another Word for Culture," *Critique of Anthropology* 30(2): 152-200

(Resource: <http://somatosphere.net/2014/01/a-readers-guide-to-the-ontology-turn-part-1.html> - courtesy of Parsa)

Weds, May 11 – Book Review *and* Synthetic Paper 3 + writing eval [on weeks 10-13 –including your and your colleagues' presentations!] by 4 pm