

AN 200: CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Inst.: Richard Bordner

Off. Hrs.: MWF 9-12, TR 9:30-12:20 or by app't (Eiben 122)

Phone: 739-4644(off.), 942-3563(hm)

Texts: Howes, David (ed.) 1996. *Cultural Consumption*. London: Routledge.

Kottak, Conrad & Kathryn Kozaitis. 1999. *On Being Different*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Recommended Text: Robbins, Richard 1997 (2nd ed.). *Cultural Anth*. Itasca: Peacock.

Course Description: This course is intended to provide an **introduction** to cultural **anthropology**. Anthropology is a very broad field - the systematic study of human beings. It aspires to describe and **explain** the similarities and differences between human groups and the stability, diversity and **change** within groups. Anthropologists are interested in all peoples, past and **present**.

Specifically this course is an **introduction** to what anthropologists have learned and how they **study** contemporary cultures. Culture is presented as a complex and dynamic **mechanism** by which human beings solve a variety of basic problems posed by **existence**.

Culture is defined as a **system** of **concepts**, **ideas**, values, attitudes and beliefs **which** are **learned** and shared within a human group. It is used to make **things**, to generate **behaviors** and **interpret experience**. It is a way of thinking about and looking at the world. Culture is symbolic and ideational. It is integrative - all parts are interrelated and constantly **adjusting** to one *another*. It is also adaptive, changing in response to circumstances.

Traditional **cultural** anthropology focused on "**primitive societies**" and less **technologically-advanced groups**. But in the last 50 years **anthropology** has moved to include the study of **dominant** cultures such as Japan and the United States. Thus while we will still follow the traditional **terms** and concepts of the discipline, one of the texts and much of the **class** discussion will focus on groups such as Americans **from an** anthropological perspective.

Course Objectives: 1) To develop a greater awareness of the role of culture in human **experience**. Specifically to help each of us to gain greater **awareness** of our own implicit assumptions, beliefs and values with the goal of developing a greater and more sympathetic **appreciation** of alternative **ways of looking** at and relating to the world To limit **Ethnocentrism!**

- 2) To **increase** our understanding of similarities and differences between **human** groups, of how and why cultures and societies change in different ways under different conditions. To provide a basic theoretical **perspective** for **thinking** about socio-cultural change;
- 3) To provoke intellectual curiosity which will lead to a lifelong interest in the basic **questions** raised by anthropology;
- 4) To provide better questions, rather than a set of simplistic and useless pseudo-answers.

Modes of Instruction: 1) **Lectures** and discussions: The lectures **will supplement** but NOT repeat the **material** covered in the texts. Both lectures **and textual** materials will be on the **exams**, and you are responsible for BOTH. Attendance is mandatory, if you want to pass the **class**.

- 2) **Simulations:** We **will** be doing several simulations this semester. You will be **working** in small groups and all members are **expected** to **contribute** their equal share to the group effort These simulations have proved in the past to be very useful **learning** tools to get across sophisticated concepts, so your active participation is **required**. Attendance will be mandatory.
- 3) **Films:** Films will be shown during the semester. You will be responsible for viewing them - attendance is mandatory and will be **taken**.
- 4) **Reaction papers:** In lieu of doing "real" fieldwork we **will** be getting into some situations during the semester where I will **expect** you to look at the world **through** with an **anthropologist's** perspective. This will include at least one film-based situation.

Grading:

- 1) **Exams:** There will be 3 exams in this class. All will consist of a combination of objective and short essay questions. The 3 exams will count for 60% of your course grade.
- 2) **Research Paper:** You will have to complete a research paper on a topic of your choice based on the course material. It must be approved by me or you may suffer the consequences. It will be from 6-8 pages in length (text) and will count for 20% of the course grade.
- 3) **Reaction papers:** You will have to complete 3 reaction papers based on situations we get into during the semester. . Each paper will be from 2-4 pages and be your reactions to the questions posed. Remember a reaction paper is your opinion on a topic, not a research paper. The reaction papers are worth a total of 10% of your course grade.
- 3) **Class participation/Attendance:** In introductory courses to stay awake and interested requires a little effort, so participation is necessary both to understand the material and stay conscious. Various projects, such as the simulations also require not only your physical attendance but also some mental effort. This will count for 10% of your course grade.

THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF EXTRA-CREDIT WORK IN THIS CLASS

Grade Weight: Exams(3).....60%
Reaction papers..... 10%
Part/Attend..... 10%
Research Paper 20%

A= 90-100	D=60-69
B= 80-89	F= -60
C= 70-79	

Aug.	30: Introduction Ass: Read K&K ch. 1-2	
Sept	1: Anthropology-Us/Them, ethnocentrism and cultural relativity Ass: Read K&K ch. 45 3: Culture, ethnicity and concepts of social groups Ass: Read K&K ch. 6-7 6: HOLIDAY 8: Video 10: Group behavior and the "dance of communication" 13: Culture, control and change Ass: Read H ch. 2 (Classen) 15: Symbols, icons, commodities and perception Ass: Read K&K ch. 15 17: Language and perception 20: Video 22: Sociolinguistics 24: Simulation 27: EXAM I (K&K ch. 1-7,15, H. ch. 2) Ass: Read K&K ch. 9,16 29: Gender and social roles	
Oct	1: Kinship-who are kin and why? Ass: Read H. ch. 1 (Comaroff), 7 (Grain) 4: Marriage and family Ass: Read K&K ch. 10-11 6: Individualism and the group 8: The "self" or "me" and the group Ass: Read H. ch. 3 (Philibert & Jourdan) 11: HOLIDAY Ass: Read K&K ch. 12 13: Simulation 15: Video 18: Simulation 20: EXAM II (K&K ch 9-12, 16, H. ch. 1, 3,7) Ass: Read K&K ch. 8 22: Religious systems and belief 25: Religion and segregation/inclusion Ass: Read H. ch. 8 (Howes) 27: Magic and the supranatural 29: Video Ass: Read K&K ch. 13-14	17: Simulation 19: Geopolitics and economic perception 22: Arts and kitsch 24: Culture and 'things' 25-26: Thanks. Recess-HOLIDAY 29: Famines, concepts of aid and development programs 1: Simulation 3: Simulation 6: Video 8: Trends in Hawai'i 10: Summary/RESEARCH PAPER DUE (late 1 grade off per day) 13: EXAM III 2:00 in regular room
Nov.	1: Social stratification Ass: Read H. ch. 4 (James) 3: Rank, class & caste Ass: Read H. ch. 5 (Weiss), 6 (Hendrickson) 5: Economic systems and the "world economic order" 8: Economics, culture and media 10: Video 12: Ethnic identity & nationalism 15: Diversity as concept and reality	