

Anthropology 333
Fall 2003
M 1-3:30 pm
Lovejoy 307

Professor Derick Fay
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Office hours: T-Th 10:50 am-12 pm
or by appointment (Lovejoy 309)

Contemporary Theory

This course examines some of the directions anthropological theory has taken since the 1960s. It begins by setting out three broad approaches, focused on meaning, action, and political economy respectively. It then turns to attempts to synthesize or at least understand the interrelation of these elements of human social life. It also considers changes in ethnographic writing, as anthropologists have struggled with the epistemological and political questions involved in writing about cultural difference. Finally, it considers some recent approaches to grappling with the mobility, complexity and diversity of “culture.”

Requirements

- 1) Weekly 2-3 page response paper on the readings (10 total - 50% of grade).
- 2) Term project. The project is an ethnographic writing assignment, in which you theoretically analyze ethnographic data. The project will have two components. The first is an 8-10 page essay. A draft of this will be due November 10, and will be circulated to several members of the class for peer review. The final version will be due in the exam period. The second component is a formal presentation (max. 10 minutes) made to the class during the final week of classes (40% of grade)
- 3) Class attendance and participation (10% of grade).

All assigned readings should be read *prior* to coming to class on the day for which they are listed. The assigned books are available through the Colby bookstore; all other readings are on reserve in Miller Library or on electronic reserve.

A copy of this syllabus and links to the electronic reserves can be found at <http://www.colby.edu/personal/d/dafay/theory>

Required Texts

Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*

Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*

Sherry Ortner, *Making Gender*

Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer*

Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*

Fredrik Barth, *Balinese Worlds*

Other readings available at the Miller Reserve desk and/or electronic reserve.

September 8 - Introduction

Thomas Eriksen, “A Brief History of Anthropology” (optional; required for students who have not taken AN332)

Parker Shipton, “Bitter Money” (reserve)

September 15 - Symbolic Anthropology

Structuralism

Edmund Leach, *Claude Levi-Strauss*, ch. 2, 5 (reserve)

Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" in *Making Gender*

Roy Richard Grinker, "Houses in the Rainforest" (reserve)

- or -

Pierre Bourdieu, "The Berber House" (reserve)

Interpretive

From Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (reserve)

ch. 1: "Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture"

ch. 15: "Deep play: Notes on the Balinese cockfight"

C. Geertz, "From the Native's Point of View"

optional: Adam Kuper, *Culture*, chapter 3 "Clifford Geertz: Culture as Religion and as Grand Opera" (esp. pp. 75-83, 88-114, 118-121)

September 22 - Actors and Process

Fredrik Barth, *Models of Social Organization* (reserve)

Susan Carol Rogers, "Female Forms of Power and the Myth of Male Dominance" (electronic reserve)

Pierre Bourdieu, "From Rules to Strategies: An Interview with Pierre Bourdieu" (electronic reserve)

Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, I:6 "The Work of Time," II:1 "The Social Uses of Kinship" (reserve)

September 29 - Political Economy

Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*

chapter 1 (3-23), 3 (73-100), 6 (158-194) part three (263-391)

Eleanor Leacock, "Interpreting the Origins of Gender Inequality" (reserve)

Mona Etienne, "Women and Men, Cloth and Colonization" (reserve)

October 6 - Structure and History

Sally Falk Moore, "Explaining the Present: Theoretical Dilemmas in Processual Ethnography" (electronic reserve)

Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*

Adam Kuper, ch. 5 "Marshall Sahlins: History as Culture" (reserve)

October 13 - Power and Meaning

William Roseberry, "Marxism and Culture"

Philippe Bourgois, "From Jibaro to Crack Dealer: Confronting the Restructuring of Capitalism in El Barrio"

Comaroff and Comaroff, "Introduction" to p. 32

James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* - ch. 2: "Domination, Acting and Fantasy," ch. 4: "False Consciousness or Laying it on Thick?"

Mary Crain, "Poetics and Politics in the Ecuadorean Andes: Women's Narratives of Death and Devil Possession" (electronic reserve)

Lila Abu-Lughod, "The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power Through

Bedouin Women” (electronic reserve)

October 20 - No Class – Fall Break

October 27 - Practice Theory and Gender

Ortner, *Making Gender*, ch. 2-end

H.L. Moore, “Households and Gender Relations: the Modelling of the Economy” (reserve)

November 3 - Postmodernism and its Critics

Terry Eagleton, “Post-Structuralism,” in T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory* (reserve)

Stanley Fish, “Is there a Text in this Class?” (reserve)

Clifford, “Introduction: Partial Truths” From Clifford and Marcus, eds. *Writing Culture* (reserve)

Crapanzano, “Hermes’ Dilemma: The Masking of Subversion in Ethnographic Description”
(reserve)

Tyler, “Post-Modern Ethnography” (reserve)

S. P. Reyna, “Literary Anthropology and the Case Against Science” (electronic reserve)

Greenfield, “What Psychology Can Do for Anthropology, or Why Anthropology Took
Postmodernism on the Chin” (reserve)

optional: Kuper, ch. 6

November 10 - Reflexivity

Renato Rosaldo, “Death and the Headhunter’s Rage” (reserve)

Jose Limon, “Representation, Ethnicity, and the Precursory Ethnography: Notes of a Native
Anthropologist,” in R. Fox, ed., *Recapturing Anthropology* (reserve)

Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks your Heart* (entire)

November 17 - Culture, Locality and Globalization

James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, “Introduction,” from *Culture, Power, Place*

Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections* (entire)

November 24 - Generative Models Revisited

Fredrik Barth, *Balinese Worlds*

December 3 - Presentations I

To be Scheduled - Presentations II