

Department of Anthropology  
Emory University  
Fall, 2000  
10:40-11:30 MWF

**ANT 202: Concepts and Methods in Cultural  
Anthropology**  
Dr. Peggy Barlett, Geosciences 216, 7-5766  
Email: [pbarlett@emory.edu](mailto:pbarlett@emory.edu) (please do not use learnlink)

## Syllabus

Anthropology 202 is a required foundational course for anthropology majors and provides an introduction to the field for non-majors as well. In this course, we will explore the range of cultures around the world, including a foraging band in the Congo, a group of swidden agriculturalists in an Amazonian tribe, the Kwakiutl chiefdom of the Northwest Coast of the U.S., an irrigated rice farmers in Bali, and one group in an industrial society—residents of Spanish Harlem in New York City. Through the in-depth reading of a series of ethnographies, we will explore the nature of culture and how it is studied by comparison and contrast. With this introductory survey, students can plan later in-depth study of economic development issues, interpretive or psychological anthropology, medical anthropology, political ecology, or other topics of interest. This course is useful for students wishing to take ethnographic world area courses, as well. Throughout the semester, students will be introduced to the major theoretical approaches of the field and will learn to contrast different research strategies and research questions.

In addition to learning *about* anthropology, students will have an opportunity to learn by *doing* anthropology. A series of exercises will expand the skills of observation and interviewing and allow the student to design and carry out a small library research project. Electronic library searching skills and careful writing skills will also be a part of the course.

### Required Readings

Students are requested to buy the following books:

Colin Turnbull, *The Forest People*  
Janet Siskind, *To Hunt in the Morning*  
Phillippe Bourgois, *In Search of Respect*

Articles assigned in the course (see list at end of syllabus) are on reserve in Woodruff Library and should be available for downloading through the electronic reserves system. Students are encouraged to bring the appropriate text to class.

**Goals of the course:** Students who complete the course will be able to:

- Demonstrate mastery of basic anthropological terms and concepts.
- Discuss the ethnographic details of the 3 major groups studied and assorted other cultural groups, from lecture, readings, and movies.
- Demonstrate understanding of ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, emic and etic perspectives.

- Write accurately and with good evidence, showing the ability to compare cultures, using different perspectives and approaches.
- Use different theories of culture to analyze a single subject (and understand why some theories are more attractive to you than others).
- Construct an accurate kinship diagram.
- Carry out a simple library search on anthropological topics and separate sound sources from questionable ones.
- Carry out original library/electronic research on a contemporary group of personal interest somewhere in the world.
- Personally observe a cultural scene and report accurately what was observed.
- Conduct interviews and record the interaction using good anthropological techniques.
- Articulate the benefits of cultural anthropology for understanding major contemporary issues.

Students will have an opportunity to meet each of these goals throughout the course. In some areas, where work fails to meet a goal in one assignment, another assignment will offer a second opportunity to develop and demonstrate mastery.

### **Written work:**

There will be four graded papers due during the semester: Paper 1 will focus on the Mbuti and include an observation exercise (20%). Paper 2 will be a comparison of culture between the Mbuti, Sharanahua and other groups (20%). Paper 3 will be an essay on the Northwest Coast chiefdoms, demonstrating mastery of the different theoretical perspectives covered in that section (20%). Paper 4 is the final paper and will have various options, for students who have completed different levels of mastery on the earlier papers (20%).

There will also be several pass/fail methodological exercises throughout the term: An ethnocentrism exercise, a library search skills assignment, a kinship chart assignment, several interview assignments, and a letter of transmittal with the final paper at the end of the course. Each student will also complete original research in a short Update Report of about 3 pages. Assignments for these exercises will be handed out in class and posted on learnlink, throughout the semester. These six exercises will be evaluated as “high pass,” “pass” and “fail.” Failed assignments must be redone, until they are satisfactory. The care, conscientiousness, and overall quality of these six assignments, plus class participation—in which students may demonstrate their mastery of the assigned materials and their willingness to think about issues raised in discussions—will comprise the final 20% of the grade.

### **Daily Topics and Assignments**

(Readings are shown on the day they are due. See reserve reading list at end of syllabus for full citations and guidance for downloading reserve readings.)

Fri, Sept. 1 Introduction to the Course; ritual committee appointed.

- Mon, Sept 4 NO CLASS—Labor Day Holiday
- Wed, Sept. 6 Definitions of culture, ethnocentrism, different anthropological approaches. Bantus and Belgians. Guidelines for reading ethnographies. Ethnocentrism assignment handed out. (Assignments on reserve: Bodley, p. 1-15, Johnson “In Search of the Affluent Society” and Harris “Mother Cow”)
- Fri, Sept. 8 Overview of foraging bands and cultural evolution (slides). (Turnbull, *The Forest People*, Ch. 1-3; ethnocentrism assignment due)
- Mon, Sept. 11 Discussion of Mbuti mobility, subsistence, play and social control; the Boasians. Observation assignment explained. (Turnbull, Ch. 4-7, McGee and Warms, “Historical Particularism” p. 128-30, on reserve)
- Wed, Sept. 13 Anthropological Searches--Library Skills Training Session. MEET IN Woodruff Library, Room 314. (Turnbull, Ch. 8-10)
- Fri, Sept. 15 Mbuti music; discussion, cont. Library exercise clarified. Assignment for Paper 1 handed out. (Forest People—all)
- Mon, Sept. 18 Gender and community, contrasting perspectives; Movie excerpt: *Pygmies of the Rain Forest*. (Turnbull article “Mbuti Womanhood” on reserve)
- Wed, Sept. 20 Population growth and the evolution of bands; sedentarization and its impact. (Lee, “What Hunters Do for a Living” and McGee and Warms, “Cultural Ecology...” on reserve)
- Fri, Sept. 22 Update Reports on the Mbuti; discussion of observation assignments; genealogy chart assignment explained. (DeWalt, DeWalt, and Wayland, “Participant Observation” on reserve; Paper 1 due)
- Mon, Sept. 25 The Real People: Trouble with Tribes; Fried’s critique. (Siskind, *To Hunt in the Morning*, Ch. 1-2).
- Wed, Sept. 27 Kinship as basis for social organization; structural-functionalism. (McGee and Warms, “Functionalism” p. 154-6, on reserve, Siskind Ch. 3-4 and genealogy charts due)
- Fri, Sept. 29 Gender and contrasts with the Forest People; rites of passage (Siskind, Ch. 5 and 6)
- Mon, Oct. 2 Ritual drug use, solidarity, and myth analysis (Siskind, Ch. 7 and 8)

- Wed, Oct. 4 Final issues in Siskind; explanation of interview assignment (Siskind—all; and Bernard “Unstructured...Interviewing” on reserve)
- Fri, Oct. 6 open—Natural Step Conference (second paper assignment posted)
- Mon, Oct. 9 Amazonian Strategies of Resistance; Movie: *Contact: the Yanomami Indians of Brazil*
- Wed, Oct. 11 Discussion of *Contact*. Update Reports. Questions about interviews. (Turner article, “The Kayapo Resistance,” on reserve)
- Fri, Oct. 13 Evolution of Ranking and Inequality: from Big Men to Chiefs (second paper due)
- Mon, Oct. 16 **No Class—Fall Break**
- Wed, Oct. 18 Overview of Course so far; Culture and Personality School (Benedict “The Northwest Coast...” and McGee and Warms, “Culture and Personality” on reserve; first round of interviews due on learnlink)
- Fri, Oct. 20 Functionalism and Cultural Ecology--How to Decide When to Have a Potlatch. (Pidocke “The Potlatch System” on reserve)
- Mon, Oct. 23 Structuralism vs. Cultural Materialism; 3<sup>rd</sup> paper assignment handed out. (Harris “An Open and Shut...” and “Is Structuralism...”; McGee and Warms, “Structuralism” p. 310-11 and “Ecological Materialism” p. 267-9, on reserve)
- Wed, Oct. 25 Symbolic Anthropology and Myth Analysis, part II. Update Reports. (Shore “Kwakiutl Animal Symbolism” on reserve).
- Fri, Oct. 27: Recent approaches and issues in the Northwest Coast; agency and decision-making. (Johnson and Earle “The Corporate Group”, Jay on “Salmon,” and Raban, “Passage to Juneau” excerpts p. 216-221, 98-106, 230-232 [*Please read in this bizarre order—it won’t make much sense otherwise.*])
- Mon, Oct. 30 State Level Societies; Inequality, Caste and Class. Third Paper Due.
- Wed, Nov. 1 Movie: *The Goddess and the Computer* (start Geertz article on reserve)
- Fri, Nov. 3 Symbols and Meanings: Bali (Geertz, “Deep Play” on reserve)
- Mon, Nov. 6 Political Economy and Historical Approaches to Development Issues: The Green Revolution. (Roseberry “Introduction” and “Balinese Cockfights: The Seduction...” )

- Wed, Nov. 8 From Shrunken Heads to Monotheism: Anthropology of Religion; Rappaport's approach. Bali Updates.
- Fri, Nov. 10 **No Class**—Board Meeting for Southeastern Regional Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (finish interviews and independent update reports; Reed “What’s American…” on reserve)
- Mon, Nov. 13 Industrial Society; the Meaning of “Respect” (Start Bourgois)
- Wed, Nov. 15 Caste and Class, Part II; Industrial Workers (Bourgois, Ch. 2-3)
- Fri, Nov. 17 Comparison of Approaches (Bourgois, Ch. 4 and Erickson, “Symbolic Anthropology” p. 130-35, “Political Economy” p. 135-40, and “Post Modernism” p. 140-49 on reserve)
- Mon, Nov. 20 Race, Ethnicity, and Identity. Movie: *Black Is/Black Ain't*, part I. (Bourgois, Ch. 5)
- Wed, Nov. 22 Movie: *Black Is/Black Ain't*, part II, and discussion (Bourgois, Ch. 6)
- Fri, Nov. 24 **No Class—Thanksgiving Weekend**
- Mon, Nov. 27 Gender and Family (Bourgois, Ch. 7 and McGee and Warms, “Anth. and Gender” on reserve)
- Wed, Nov. 29 Final Issues in Spanish Harlem (Bourgois, Conclusion and Epilogue)
- Fri, Dec. 1 Atlanta: History and Parallels with NY (Coontz, “Pregnant Girls” on reserve) U.S. Update Reports
- Mon, Dec. 4 Reciprocity, Mauss, and the Kula; Discussion of campus reciprocity. Final paper assignments handed out; last day to turn in independent update reports.
- Wed, Dec. 6 Reciprocity, Ethnic Relations, and Indian Drunkenness in Ecuador
- Fri, Dec. 8 Class ethnography; symbols and the Quad.
- Mon, Dec. 12 Last day of class: Summary and slides; course evaluations (Final papers due)

## Reserve List of Articles and Book Excerpts for the Course (Anth 202)

*These readings will be available on reserve in electronic format for you to download and print out. To access the electronic version, enter Euclid and choose "Reserve Desk." Type: "Barlett" and choose Instructor and then select "Ant 202". Readings are listed here by various titles (of the article or book), but we will often in class refer to them by author, so I have listed them mainly by author in the syllabus, and here the authors are ordered alphabetically, so you can easily look up the appropriate title. You will often need to refer to these materials in class, so you would be wise to have a copy to bring to class and to use in paper writing.*

*The library lists a reading by title of the article or chapter, if it's a whole article or chapter. If it's an excerpt, they list it by the book title and note the page numbers. There are some inconsistencies in the way the readings for this course have been listed, but if you use a detective mentality, I think you'll be ok. If you find a problem as you need an item, please ask for help with the library circulation desk, but if something seems to be not available, please let me know ASAP, by email.*

1. Benedict, Ruth, 1934. "The Northwest Coast of America" In, *Patterns of Culture*. NY: Houghton Mifflin. p. 173-194.
2. Bernard, Russell, 1994. "Unstructured and Semistructured Interviewing" In, *Research Methods in Anthropology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Pp. 203-224. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
3. Bodley, John, 1977. "Understanding Other Cultures" In, *Cultural Anthropology: Tribes, States, and the Global System*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield. Pages 1-15.
4. Coontz, Stephanie, 1992. "Pregnant Girls, Wilding Boys, Crack Babies, and the Underclass: The Myth of Black Family Collapse" In, *The Way We Never Were*. Pp. 232-54. NY: Basic Books.
5. DeWalt, Kathleen M., Billie R. DeWalt, and Coral B. Wayland, 1998. "Participant Observation" In, *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. Russell Bernard, ed. Pp. 259-299. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
6. Erickson, Paul A., 1998. Three excerpts from: *A History of Anthropological Theory*. Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press.  
"Symbolic Anthropology" p. 130-135,  
"Political Economy" p. 135-140, and  
"Post Modernism" p. 140-149.
7. Geertz, Clifford 1973 "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" In, *Interpretation of Cultures, Selected Essays*. NY: Basic Books
8. Harris, Marvin, 1979. "An Open and Shut Case" and "Is Structuralism Good to Think?" In, *Cultural Materialism*. NY: Random House. P. 202-215.
9. Harris, Marvin, 1974. "Mother Cow" In, *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*. NY: Vintage. Pp. 6-27.

10. Jay, Tom, 1994. *Reaching Home: Pacific Salmon, Pacific People*. Excerpt: 6 pps. Anchorage, Alaska: Northwest Books
11. Johnson, Allen W. and Timothy Earle, 1987. "The Corporate Group and the Big Man Collectivity" In, *The Evolution of Human Societies*. Stanford, CA: Stanford U.P. P.160-172.
12. Johnson, Allen. 1981. "In Search of the Affluent Society" *Human Nature* (Sept.)
13. Lee, Richard B., 1968. "What Hunters Do for a Living, or How To Make Out on Scarce Resources" In, *Man the Hunter*, Richard B. Lee and Irven DeVore, eds. Pp. 30-43. Chicago: Aldine.
14. McGee, R. Jon and Richard L. Warms, 1996. Seven excerpts from *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield:
  - "Historical Particularism" (p. 128-30)
  - "Functionalism" (p. 154-6)
  - "Culture and Personality" (p. 202-6)
  - "Cultural Ecology and Noevolutionary Thought" (p. 221-3)
  - "Ecological Materialism: Functionalist, Evolutionary, and Marxist" (p. 267-9)
  - "Structuralism" (p. 310-11)
  - "Anthropology and Gender: The Feminist Critique" (p. 391-2)
15. Piddocke, Stuart, 1965. "The Potlatch System of the Southern Kwakiutl: A New Perspective." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 21:244-64.
16. Raban, Jonathan. 1999. "Passage to Juneau" In, *Passage to Juneau: A Sea and Its Meanings*. NY: Pantheon. excerpts: p. 98-106, 216-221, 230-232
17. Reed, Ishmael, 1989. "What's American about America? Toward Claiming Our Multicultural Heritage" In, *Utne Reader* March/April, p. 100-105.
18. Roseberry, William, 1989 "Introduction" and "Balinese Cockfights: The Seduction of Anthropology" In, *Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy*. New Brunswick, NY: Rutgers University Press.
19. Shore, Bradd, 1996. "Kwakiutl Animal Symbolism: Food for Thought". In, *Culture in Mind*. NY: Oxford.
20. Turnbull, Colin, 1981. "Mbuti Womanhood" In, *Woman the Gatherer*. Frances, Dahlberg, ed. Pp. 205-219. New Haven: Yale U. Press.
21. Turner, Terence, 1993. "The Kayapo Resistance" Ch. 34 in *Conformity and Conflict*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. James Spradley and William McCurdy, eds. NY: Longmans