Study of Contemporary Problems  
University of Hawai‘i at Manoa  
Anth 300 Spring 2009

"Ink is handicapped, in a way, because you can blow up a man with gunpowder in half a second, while it may take twenty years to blow him up with a book. But the gunpowder destroys itself along with its victim, while a book can keep on exploding for centuries."

-Christopher Morley

About
Day: Tuesday and Thursday  
Time: 12:00-41:15  
Location: MIL 2

Instructor: Alex Golub  
Phone: 956-6576  
Email: golub@hawaii.edu  
Office Hours: Friday, 1-3 pm, Office: Saunders 313  
TA:  
Phone:  
Email:  
Office:

Description
This is mid-level undergraduate class designed show students how the concepts they learned in ANTH 152 “Culture And Humanity” are relevant to contemporary problems in today’s society. The course will be based around the distinction between fact and value, and the way that our ethical deliberation relies on accounts of what is in order to arrive at decisions about what we ought do. Specifically, we will be examining the concept of culture and ethical issues which implicitly rely on particular accounts of culture. How are these ethical issues reframed if the notions of culture which underlie them change?

This course has a Contemporary Ethical Issues (E) Focus designation. Contemporary ethical issues are fully integrated into the main course material and will constitute at least 30% of the course content. At least 8 hours of class time will be spent discussing ethical issues. Through the use of lectures, discussions and assignments, students will develop basic competency in recognizing and analyzing ethical issues; how to responsibly deliberate on ethical issues; and making ethically determined judgments. This course also has an ‘O’ focus and is designed to provide students experience in a small ‘seminar’ style classroom.

Student Learning Objectives
The objective of this course is for students to:

• Master the I Say/They Say system of making claims and arguments.
• Understand the way ethical deliberation about contemporary problems relies on scientific accounts of the world, and in this case the anthropological concept of culture
• Analyze the way theories of human nature are used to ground norms in ethical deliberation
• Analyze the way theories of cultural difference are used in debates about liberal and multicultural tolerance.

Grading
There are 300 points to earn in this class. Grades will be given on the total number of points earned as follows:

300-290 A+
289-280 A
279-270 A-
269-260 B+
259-250 B
249-240 B-
239-230 C+
229-200 C-
199-190 D+
189-180 D
179-170 D-
169-0 F

Students will be graded on the following topics:

1 Paper Analysis @ 20
At the beginning of class we will start learning the 'They Say/I Say System' via a paper assignment

5 Responses @ 25 125 points
Group presentation in which people will be individually graded (I will explain the system in more details)

5 Question presentations  @ 20 100 points
Responses to group presentation in weeks when your group are the designated respondee

Attendance and Participation 28 @ 2 56 points
Attendance will be taken and performance commenting on the responses will be noted.
(please note this actually adds up to 301 points so that the individual assignments have values that round off nicely -- in fact it is possible to earn 301 points in the class)

Textbooks
There are two textbooks that you will be required to read in their entirety. They should be on sale at the book store, the Internet, etc.:

Kwame Anthony Appiah, Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers
Susan Mackinnon, Neo-Liberal Genetics

There will be additional readings available on the class website as well, so please learn to use it.

Schedule

11 Jan - 17 Jan
Introduction
Intro, syllabus hand out
Ken Robinson video

I Say/They Say
Martin Luther King, "Letter From The Birmingham Jail"

I

18 Jan - 24 Jan

January 19  Monday  Holiday: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 20  Tuesday  Last day to drop courses
January 21  Wednesday  Last day to register/change grade option

Are Cultures Brightly and Cleanly Bounded?
Okin, "Is Multiculturalism Bad For Women?"

2

3

25 Jan - 31 Jan

Responses to Okin
Bonnie Honnig, etc.

Against a 'Billiard Ball' view of culture
Eric Wolf, "Intro" to Europe and the People Without History"

4

1 Feb - 7 Feb

A Strong View of Cultural Difference
Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations"

Gusterson, "The Seven Deadly Sins of Samuel Huntington"

5

8 Feb - 14 Feb

Cosmopolitanism
Appiah, Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers Intro and Ch.1

Appiah, ch. 2

6

15 Feb - 21 Feb

February 16 Monday  Holiday: Presidents’ Day

Appiah ch.3

7

22 Feb - 28 Feb

Appiah ch. 4

Appiah ch.5

8

1 Mar - 7 Mar
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>Appiah ch. 7 (skip ch. 8)</td>
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<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Appiah ch. 8</td>
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<td>Mar 15-21</td>
<td>Appiah ch. 9</td>
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<td>Mar 15-21</td>
<td>Appiah ch. 10 and conclusion</td>
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<td>Mar 13</td>
<td><strong>Friday</strong> Last day for restricted withdrawals</td>
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<td>Readings TBA</td>
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<td>Mar 22-28</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Mar 29-4</td>
<td>How Much Nature Is There In Human Nature?</td>
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<td>Pinker, Tanner Lectures on Human Values</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Geertz, &quot;Impact of Concept of Culture on Concept of Man</td>
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<td>Mar 5-11</td>
<td>Neoliberal Genetics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neo-liberal Genetics Ch. 1 - 2 (42 pages)</td>
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<td>Neo-liberal Genetics Ch. 3 (29 pages)</td>
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<td>Mar 12</td>
<td><strong>Friday</strong> Holiday: Good Friday</td>
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<td>Neo-liberal Genetics Ch. 4 (47 pages)</td>
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<td>Neo-liberal Genetics Ch. 5 and 6 (32 pages)</td>
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<td>Mar 19-25</td>
<td>More topics</td>
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<td>April 21 Tuesday Last day for examinations before finals</td>
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<td>Mar 26-2</td>
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Readings TBA

Readings TBA