Cultural Anthropology
ANTH 200

SPRING 2011

Guido Carlo Pigliasco  
Olona 118  
guido@hawaii.edu  
Office Hrs: TBA

Class hours: 7:45-9:00  
Classroom: Olona 115

Description
The goal of this course is to offer a comparative approach to the concept of culture and an analysis of how culture structures the worlds in which we live. This course provides a general overview of cultural anthropology for both majors and non-majors, giving them a fundamental grasp of the distinctive interrogatives about culture and social institutions from an anthropological point of view. Cultural anthropology is the study of multicultural perspectives and cultural diversity of human societies. It examines human societies from their beginnings to the postindustrial age, and considers the development of various forms of social organization and their significance for family and kinship, economics, politics, and religion.

Our textbook, Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology introduces students to key concepts and data of cultural anthropology suggesting basic ethnographic methodologies also used in other social sciences. Its objective is to expose students to the richness and variety of human life in the past and contemporary worlds. While the textbook covers the traditional anthropological material, additional material has been selected to give more insight into contemporary life styles.

Culture is manifested through visible symbols embedded in gestures, ceremonies, ritual performances, and artifacts situated in various environments. The use of ethnographic films throughout this course conveys and shapes anthropological experience, knowledge, methods and perspectives.

Required Text
Peoples James and Garrick Bailey.  
Course Requirements and Evaluation

4 Exams (50pts each)  (200pts)
10 in-class short exercises (3pts each)  (30pts)
Independent Field Study Project  (95pts)
Inventing a Culture Project  (25pts)

350pts

Class attendance & participation
Regular class attendance is a course requirement. In addition to video programs, additional material that is not covered in the textbook will be presented in PowerPoint format during the lectures. Students will be responsible for all changes to the course requirements that may be announced in class. Class participation includes questions and answers, the quality of your active engagement through contributions, group discussions, and overall preparation. This course relies heavily on lectures and in-class discussions and exercises. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from other students about what you missed.

Exams
Five exams will be given at the end of each main section of the textbook. Exams are based on your reading, lectures, and video programs. They generally include multiple-choice and short essay questions.

Exam #1  (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)  Feb. 03
Exam #2  (Chapters 5, 6, 7)  Feb. 24
Exam #3  (Chapters 8, 9&11, 12)  Mar. 17
Exam #4  (Chapters 13, 14, 10&15, 16, 17)  TBA

In-class Exercises: Written Reflections
By the end of the second week of the semester, you will be grouped with few other students in the course. On selected Thursdays, these groups will be called upon to work together to discuss readings and videos, to generate questions or comments and individually write a short reflection paper (3 paragraphs). These activities are designed to sharpen your grasp of the material through your engagement with it, but their effectiveness in this regard depends on your active participation and preparation (which includes having read the day’s assignments and pay attention to the videos). These notes should reflect the group’s thoughts about statements in the book or reactions to class discussions, lectures, and films.

Projects
All the information regarding your Independent Field Study Project and Inventing a Culture Project is attached at the end of the syllabus.

Extra-credits
Up to 10pts may be awarded for chapter terms and concepts, outside reading (i.e., books, scholarly journal articles, or magazines). Write a short (1-3) page discussion. Extra Credits must be turned in on the day of the exam for that section.
## Schedule

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<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 11 – Jan 13</td>
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<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Film <em>Anthropology: Real People, Real Careers</em> (45min)</td>
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<td>Film <em>Latah: A Culture-Specific Elaboration of the Startle Reflex</em> (39min)</td>
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<td>Film <em>American Tongues</em> (57min)</td>
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<td>Film <em>First Contact</em> (55min)</td>
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<td>Film <em>Neighborhood Tokyo</em> (29min)</td>
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<td>Chapter 6</td>
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<td>Film <em>The Hunters</em> (72min)</td>
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<td>Exchange in Economic Systems</td>
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<td>Marriages and Families</td>
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<td>Kinship, Descent and Gender</td>
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<td>Social and Political Organization</td>
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<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Social Inequality and Stratification</td>
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13
Apr 05 – Apr 07
Religion and Worldview
Chapter 14
Film  Witchcraft Among the Azande (52min)

Written reflections #8

14
Apr 12 – Apr 14
Ritual, Art and Aesthetics
Chapter 10 & 15
Film  Tatau: What One Must Do (27min)

Written reflections #9

15
Apr 19 – Apr 21
Globalization and Ethnicity in the Modern World
Chapters 16 & 17
Film  No Logo: Brands, Globalization, Resistance (42min)

Written reflections #10

16
Apr 26 – Apr 28
Inventing a Culture
Group Project Presentations

17
May 03
Inventing a Culture
Group Project Presentations

Independent Field Study Project
due May 03

FINAL EXAM TBA
Olona #115
Suggested Films

AAA


Blavier, Eric and Thomas Levachory

2000  A World Without Fathers or Husbands. Y.C. Aligator Film in coproduction with Studio Teleobjectif, Tchin Tchin Production, Unite Documentaire RTBF Lioge. VIDEOTAPE 21264 (Mar 03)

Camerini, Michael, and Rina Gill


Connolly, Bob, et al.

2004  First Contact. New York, NY: Filmmakers Library. DVD 3038 (Feb 03)

Hajime, Ikeda

1996  Neighborhood Tokyo. Urbana, IL: Asian Educational Media Service, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. VIDEOTAPE 17340 (Feb 10)

Harris, Hilary, and Robert Gardner


Heider, Karl G.

1974  Dani Sweet Potatoes. University of California Extension Media Center. VIDEOTAPE 6392 (Feb 24)

Klein, Naomi, et al.


Kolker, Andrew, Louis Alvarez, and Center for New American Media.

1986  American Tongues. N.Y.: International Production Center. VIDEOTAPE 1146 (Jan 27)

Marshall, John

1989  The Hunters. Film Study Center of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University. Chicago, IL: Films Incorporated. VIDEO 703 (Feb 17)

1980  Nlai, the Story of a !Kung Woman. Watertown, MA: Documentary Educational Resources (Firm). VIDEO 0296 (Feb 17)

Noyce, Phillip, et al.


1 All films are available at UHM Sinclair-Wong AV Center.
Simons, Ronald C.

Singer, Andre, and Steve Morrison
   1982  *Witchcraft Among the Azande.* New York: Granada Television International, Filmmakers Library Inc. VIDEOTAPE 15878 *(Apr 07)*

van der Ryn, Mycah
   1997  *Tatau: What One Must Do.* Distributed by Pacific Islanders in Communications. VIDEOTAPE 14238. *(Apr 14)*
INDEPENDENT FIELD STUDY PROJECT

STEPS TO DOING FIELD RESEARCH

1. Selecting a Topic for Field Research

First of all, this project is not a book report. Anthropology is a field science, and therefore you must go out into the community to observe, interview and collect what will become known as your data. There are many interesting subjects and situations that can be used for the focus of your anthropological study. You must become familiar with anthropological research as you will be applying anthropological concepts and terminology in your study.

2. Planning Your Field Research Project

Establish a weekly time frame for your research and data collecting, and for your research write up. Since you will be including a bibliography of accessory materials that you will have read, also allow yourself time to conduct library research.

3. Carrying Out Your Research in the Field

a. After thinking about the focus of your study, you should select a cultural scene. Carry with you a notebook used especially for your research notes. You may then begin making observations and taking notes about human behavior in this social setting. While observing you may participate, if possible, in the events to get a first hand feeling for what is taking place in this setting.

b. Keep field notes in a Field Diary or Field Journal using a composition book. Each time you go out to your cultural scene or interview with your informant you should add interesting observations or questions for further study. Jot down any information that you feel may be a significant part of your study. It is advisable that you note date, time, persons you talk to, etc. so that when you write your paper, you have the specific information in your notes if you need it. Photographs are also useful as a means of recording data. You may also want to videotape, or record sound for repeated viewing or listening.

c. Be a keen observer and provide a detailed description of the environment or setting. Describe the activities that you are observing. What is the nature of the events that are taking place? Ask yourself the question “What kind of cultural knowledge is required to participate in this cultural scene?” Make note of human relationships and groupings.

d. Find a key informant or several knowledgeable people to serve as resources. Establish rapport with these persons as “natives”. Conduct friendly conversations and allow the person to freely discuss the scene by asking open-ended questions. These individuals will most likely become your valuable key informants to the scene.
e. Listen to native accounts and descriptions of events. How do they describe scenes, events, celebrations, rituals, everyday life in the social group or community, or their history. Also ask about the causes and origins of certain practices and behavior. You will be searching for what we call epistemological explanations as to the origins of cultural behavior. This could also bring you in touch with the group’s history and with their mythology, legends and beliefs. You may design a detailed taxonomy of knowledge from the insider’s point of view with this method.

f. As the study goes on, you will soon begin to sort out the focus of your research. You will then want to narrow down your topic to a hypothesis or research question that can be stated quite simply, such as, "What are the beliefs held by Chinese people of Honolulu who practice Taoism?"

g. In some cases you may want to create a focal vocabulary of significant terms and definitions as provided to you by your informants. Linguistic data will enable you to better understand their cognitive worldview. This process may lead to a discovery of the means of categorization used by the members of this culture. This could include kinship terminology, how objects are named, herbs & medicines, chants, art forms, regional uses of language, sociolinguistics, etc.

ORGANIZING DATA AND WRITING YOUR FIELD RESEARCH PAPER

1. Subheadings and Sections of Your Paper - YOUR PAPER MUST include the following sections:

   Title Page - Please be sure that your paper has a title. Include your name, the course and the section.

   Introduction - What your study is about and why have you chosen this topic for study? What is your hypothesis that you will support or refute?

   Methodology - Where did your study take place? Who are your subjects and/or informants? How did you conduct your study? How long did your study take? (over what period of time, how many visits, etc.)

   Analysis and Discussion of Your Data - (Main body of the report) Descriptions and interpretations of what you studied, utilize anthropological concepts and terminology, references to library and other sources of information that you researched, provide examples from your data in your discussion.

   Conclusion - What significant conclusions can you draw from your study?

   Bibliography - Provide a list of references that you consulted. Then proofread your paper.

2. Methodological Tools

   If you feel that tools such as photos, or video or audio recordings will help your report, do include them, although they are not required. Video or sound recording may greatly add to your research materials. Many times you will find the events too fleeting for study at the time you are there and a recording may be analyzed later through repeated viewing or listening.

3. Write your ethnography by relying on your data.

   The main body of your report is the analysis and discussion of your study based upon the data that you have collected. Support your interpretations with examples from your field notes. Make use of
anthropological concepts and terminology. Look for cultural patterns and explain their meaning from an insider's point of view. You might begin by making an outline. Then create different sections under your main topic heading. Begin with the information that you feel most confident about. Use your bibliography references as additional support, for example, to confirm your observations or what your informants tell you. These references can also enhance your discussion by providing additional or related information to support your argument.

Many students who begin a study of a cultural scene finish with an overwhelming sense that "I have just begun to scratch the surface" and am really just beginning to learn something about my topic. With patience and practice you will find that you can gain much from doing ethnography and acquire valuable research skills in the process. A good field study will leave you feeling that while you have learned much about your topic, you also realize how much more there is to know about the topic. You may also gain the valuable perspective of seeing the world from another person's point of view.

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<td>Feb 13</td>
<td>Topic and hypothesis statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 05</td>
<td>Project 1st draft due</td>
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<td>May 02</td>
<td>FIELD PROJECT DUE: 10-12 PAGES DOUBLE-SPACED TYPED INCLUDING BIBLIOGRAPHY.</td>
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INVENTING A CULTURE PROJECT

Create and design a fictional culture that is highly adapted to one of the following environments:

1. Tropical Rain forest
2. Desert plains
3. High Mountain region
4. Pacific Island
5. Coastal Plains
6. Arctic North

Describe some or all of the following for your culture:

- subsistence
- political organization
- economics
- division of labor
- body adornment (tattoos, earrings, scarification, etc.)
- legends and myths
- origins (cosmology and stories of origin mythology)
- religion
- art, music or dance
- social organization

Research and development of a culture will result in an in-class presentation of your newly developed culture. All cultures should remain on Earth, although the conditions may have changed from the present. Please work as a team to prepare an interesting and imaginative culture that will be able to survive effectively in the given environment. Each student should give about a 5 minute presentation in their respective groups.

Past cultures: Shrimpters, Polymacans, Mountain Midgets, Sambali, Pequeno Islanders, Ecicitera, Articans, Evaw, Nalrahs, Lepoep, Drazils, Cations, Wompanika, Zaksjuwon People, Nus, Calip People, Aquatelegyne, Gabu Gabu Kabagi, Highlanders, Sumptings, Tupilaq, Gengi, Kadambayu, Rasadan, Biakabatukas, Aquatians, Bioboonians, Tenuti, Sasquatch, Bamictaro, Dophinese, Toobinahts, Cosmoliniants, Maohi, Shoreliners, Goldarians, Nuuk, San Jubu, Whatsku, and so on...