

ANTH 390
Spring 2008
SUNY College at Oneonta
TR 12-1:15pm / Fetzelle 302

Professor Sallie Han
E-mail: hanss@oneonta.edu
Office: Fetzelle 330A / x2715
Office hours: TBA

ANTH 390-01 - ISSUES IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Prerequisites: JrS or SrS & ANTH 100, 130, or 140 (LA, WS2)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What does it mean to be human? Are there human universals? How is behavior fashioned by nature and nurture? Is a unified discipline of anthropology possible? This seminar will assist students in answering basic questions about the nature of the human experience by considering practical and theoretical issues of interest to anthropologists and others. Students will discuss general questions in archaeology, biological, cultural, and linguistic anthropology, as well as examine anthropological perspectives on current events. Guest lecturers, film, readings, and discussion will form the basis of the seminar.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed as the culmination of the undergraduate experience for majors in anthropology. It also is intended to provide basic preparation for students interested in pursuing graduate studies in anthropology or in related disciplines.

A particular concern of this course will be to consider both the rewards of holism and the challenges of integrating the various approaches and perspectives of archaeologists, biological anthropologists, cultural anthropologists, and linguistic anthropologists. To this end, this course is organized around four themes that concern anthropologists across the four fields:

- Thought, Language, and Culture,
- Origins/Ancestry,
- Human/Nature, and
- Anthropology and the Public.

These themes represent enduring concerns in anthropology. Thus, we begin with readings of "classic" texts such as Benjamin Lee Whorf, Claude Levi-Strauss, and Clifford Geertz, and continue with readings of contemporary scholarship.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Because becoming familiar with the conventions and discourses of scholarship is a goal of this capstone seminar, in this course, we will be reading primarily recent articles published in scholarly journals and relevant popular sources. We will be reading excerpts from "classic" texts as well. Most of the readings will be available (either as PDF's or as Web links) on the Angel site for this class. Please print hard copies of the readings to bring to class. Other readings will be distributed as handouts in class. Please check the reading schedule.

REQUIREMENTS

Your final grades for the course will be based on total cumulative points, broken down *approximately* as follows:

Class presentations/Discussion	20 points
1 st response paper	15 points
2 nd response paper	20 points
3 rd response paper	20 points
4 th /final paper	25 points

Your final grade will be based on meeting all of the above requirements. Failure to meet any one of the requirements can result in a failing grade. Also, please note in advance that there are no extra credit or make-up assignments.

CLASS PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION

Each student will be responsible for class presentations on two of the assigned readings. (A sign-up sheet will be circulated during the first week of classes.) You will speak for about 5 minutes. You will be evaluated according to the following criteria: In your presentation, explain the central argument, highlight other key points of the article, describe the evidence and examples that the author employs, and offer two or three questions to generate class discussion.

In addition to the spoken class presentation, you also should prepare and submit written notes, such as Power Point slides or an outline. These will be due at the time that you give your presentation. Please e-mail a PDF of your Power Point slides or a MS Word document of your presentation to the instructor. The slides or notes will be posted on the Angel site for this class. (See below regarding Angel.)

In addition, participation in class discussion also will be considered for your final grade. For each class, you will be assigned either + or – for your participation in class discussion. Lack of participation on a regular basis will affect your grade negatively.

RESPONSE PAPERS

You will be required to write four response papers. These writing assignments are intended to enable both the instructor and the student to assess the student's grasp of the material in this class. They also are intended to provide opportunities for the student to reinforce his or her understanding of it. The papers also should be treated as "cumulative" in the sense that the papers will build upon each other – i.e., material in the 1st paper should be considered further in the 2nd paper, and the final paper will draw from material in the previous three papers.

Each paper should be no fewer than 5 and no more than 7 pages in length. It should be double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman or other standard font.

Instructions for the essay exams will be discussed in detail in advance of the due dates.

ANGEL

All students will be required to enroll in the Angel site for this class. Announcements, instructions for written assignments, presentation notes, and supplemental readings will be available on Angel. You also will submit written assignments on Angel.

You will receive instructions in class on how to enroll in and use Angel in class.

E-MAIL

When you are e-mailing Professor Han, please use only the following information in the subject line:

Your Last Name Anth 390

This will help me respond to your queries. Thanks for your consideration.

PARTICIPATION AND CONDUCT

This is a reading and discussion-intensive seminar. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings. They also are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and courteous of their classmates.

ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING

Creating an environment for learning conducive to learning involves community effort. Students are expected to refrain from using cellular phones, iPods, etc., during classes.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In order to meet the requirements of this class, it is expected that all of your written work, including take-home writing assignments and in-class essay exams, will represent your own honest, individual, and original efforts to engage with the material in this class. Please be careful with your written work. Dishonesty of any kind (e.g., "copying" or "borrowing") will not be tolerated, and will result in a failing grade for the class.

You will be expected to cite your sources properly and include a list of references. You may prepare your citations in any standard style used in scholarly writing (e.g., MLA, APA), but please be sure to use it consistently and correctly. For example, the style guideline for *American Anthropologist* is available at www.aaanet.org.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance in class is required. Indeed, failure to attend class regularly can result in a failing grade for the class. If there are special circumstances to explain a pattern of absence, then it is the student's responsibility to report these to the instructor promptly, and to present official documentation. Also, please be reminded that absence does not exempt students from responsibility for all of the material covered in class, and that there are no extra credit or make-up assignments.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please note that special considerations such as extensions on deadlines will be permitted only with official documentation. If special circumstances arise that prevent the regular and timely completion of assignments, it is the student's responsibility to communicate them with the instructor. Please do so as soon as possible.

All material on this syllabus is subject to change.

Th 1-17	Introductions	
T 1-22	Four fields or four disciplines? Selections from Anthropology News: Mary Shenk, "Models for the Future of Anthropology" Fran Mascia-Lees, "Can Biological and Cultural Anthropology Coexist?" Robert Layton and Adam Kaul, "American Cultural Anthropology and British Social Anthropology"	PDF's on Angel
	Thought, language, and culture	
Th 1-24	How do natives think? Selections from Claude Levi-Strauss, Gannath Obeyesekere, and Marshall Sahlins	Handout
T 1-29	Structure and agency Guest speaker: Jason Antrosio, Hartwick College Selection from Pierre Bourdieu	Handout
Th 1-31	The birth, evolution, and death of languages Guest speaker: Don Hill <i>Required:</i> John McWhorter, "How Language Came to Be, and Change" Salikoko Mufwene, "Languages Don't Kill Languages; Speakers Do" <i>Suggested:</i> Lawrence Osborne, "A Linguistic Big Bang"	PDF's on Angel
T 2-5	Linguistic relativism Benjamin Lee Whorf, "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language"	PDF on Angel
Th 2-7	Non-human thought, language, and culture? Excerpt from Jonathan Marks, What It Means to Be 98% Chimpanzee: Apes, People, and Their Genes	Electronic reserve
T 2-12	No class / 1st response paper on thought, language, and culture due	
Th 2-14	Film: "Washoe: Apes and Sign Language"	
BREAK		
	Origins/Ancestry	
T 2-26	Identity Guest speaker: Brian Haley Brian Haley and Larry Wilcoxon, "How Spaniards Became Chumash and other Tales of Ethnogenesis"	PDF on Angel
Th 2-28	The peopling of the Americas Guest speaker: Renee Walker TBD	
T 3-4	Exhibiting culture in museums Guest speaker: Lisa Sorenson-Stahl TBD	
Th 3-6	Rethinking race and human variation Guest speaker: John Relethford *Does Race Exist? A Proponent's Perspective *Does Race Exist? An Antagonist's Perspective	Electronic reserve
M 3-10	Invited speaker: Linda Layne - 7pm at Morris Conference Center	
T 3-11	No class	
Th 3-13	No class – 2nd response paper on holism and native/ancestry due	
	Food and eating: Perspectives	
T 3-18	Domesticating tastes – From feasting foods to plain fare Brian Hayden, "Were Luxury Foods the First Domesticates?" Ethnoarchaeological Perspectives from Southeast Asia"	PDF on Angel
Th 3-20	Food, health, and morality George Armelagos, "Evolutionists and Creationists at the Dinner Table"	PDF on Angel
BREAK		

	Human/nature	
T 4-1	What became of the Neandertals? Theories, evidence, and why it matters Fred Smith, Ivor Jankovic, and Ivor Karavanic, "The Assimilation Model, Modern Human Origins in Europe, and the Extinction of Neandertals"	Electronic reserve
Th 4-3	Gender and sexuality in prehistory Guest speaker: Cindy Klink Rosemary Joyce, "A Precolumbian Gaze: Male Sexuality among the Ancient Maya"	Handout
T 4-8	Love and hate among the primates Guest speaker: Craig Bielert Ian Parker, "Swingers: Bonobos are celebrated as peace-loving, matriarchal, and sexually liberated. Are they?"	PDF on Angel
Th 4-10	Archaeology of warfare Guest speaker: Cindy Klink Elizabeth Arkush and Charles Stanish, "Interpreting Conflict in the Ancient Andes"	PDF on Angel
T 4-15	No class – 3rd response paper on human/nature due	
	Anthropology and the public	
Th 4-17	Anthropology in a time of war Richard Shweder, "A True Culture War"	PDF on Angel
T 4-22	Adieu, culture? The uses and abuses of anthropology's signature concept Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "Adieu, Culture: A New Duty Arises"	PDF on Angel
Th 4-24	"Intelligent design" Guest speaker: John Relethford "Intelligent design?" (On Angel, please follow the link to the Web forum at <i>Natural History</i> magazine – http://www.naturalhistorymag.com/darwinanddesign.html) "Fifteen Answers to Creationist Nonsense" "Perimeter of Ignorance"	Electronic reserve
T 4-29	Tomb raiding and tourism Teresa Pinter, "Heritage Tourism and Archaeology: Critical Issues" Justin Jennings, "Seducing Adventure Tourists by Damaging Archaeological Sites"	Handout
Th 5-1	Climate change <i>Required</i> James Owen, "Did Climate Change Trigger Human Evolution?" Kate Bissell, "Alaskan People Tell of Climate Change" <i>Suggested</i> Christopher Scholz, et al., "East African Droughts between 135 and 75 Thousand Years Ago and Bearing on Early-Modern Human Origins" "Changing Climate Has More Inuit Shopping for Food"	PDF's on Angel
T 5-6	Film: "Darwin's Nightmare"	
Th 5-8	4th (final) response paper on relevance of anthropology due	