

# Introduction to Anthropology

Anthropology/Sociology 103  
Spring 2005

CLASS PERIOD—Section 1 (8-9:15 AM); Section 2 (2-3:15 PM)

CLASSROOM-- 102 Clough

PROFESSOR-- Susan Kus

OFFICE-- 105 Clough      Office Hours – T, Th 1-2 PM; W 9-10:30 AM; or by appointment

## **COURSE STATEMENT**

Anthropology is not the study of the range of “bizarre” human behavior; anthropology is rather the study of the range of normal human behavior. This course will explore this range.

## **THE "WONDERS" BEYOND RHODES**

We enter the world with the marvelous capacity to live any one of a thousand different kinds of life, as the anthropologist, Geertz, says. Nevertheless once we begin to live the life that is to become ours, we often live it with the amazing conviction that it is the best, and possibly the only “reasonable”, way to live. Those other lives that could have been ours are also lived with equal conviction. Many of those different kinds of lives are lived next door when society sees “race”<sup>1</sup>, gender, age, religious conviction, wealth, etc. as differences that make a difference in the life you are allowed to live. Yet many of those lives are also found spread across six continents and thousands of islands on this planet.

## **CHALLENGE TO OUR LIMITED [CULTURAL] IMAGINATIONS**

There is a significant challenge that faces us in attempting to understand any of those thousand different kinds of lives that could have been ours. If we attempt to imagine our way into alternative realities while firmly rooted in a parochial stance (both literally and figuratively), the exercise risks futility. With our lives as sole cultural reference we exercise a limited imagination of comparison, most often conceiving of the “other” in terms of “absences” rather than “alternatives.” Sometimes we imagine these individuals, through the absences of technology and literacy, to be pre-, proto- or primitive versions of ourselves. Or through the absences of modern dilemmas such as time pressures and consumerism, we imagine the “other” as our Edenic alter ego. Both of these “imaginings” are impoverished.

## **OUR ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORLD BEYOND RHODES**

A rich and enriching appreciation of those thousand of other kinds of life cannot be acquired simply nor exclusively through pursuits of “the mind,” no matter how imaginative. Engagement in a culture through participation and dialogue are critical in our attempts to understand the diversity of thought and behavior that is the most astonishing of human characteristics. Such engagement allows us to go beyond naïve bewilderment and shock at difference to a more informed sense of wonder at human and cultural diversity. Anthropology is not about documenting “bizarre” human customs; anthropology is about exploring the range of normal human behavior.

Perhaps “living intimately with strangers” is not the form of engagement suitable for all individuals. Nevertheless, among our community we are in need of those who will undertake this challenge to their “creature” comforts and scholastic complacency. We need individuals such as anthropologists to help us gain a healthy respect for the intensity and integrity of other lives as negotiated

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<sup>1</sup> Here “race” is understood as a social category and not as a scientific category. We will have occasion to study this point during the semester

from day to day and a solid respect for the philosophical and intellectual products of other cultures. We need such individuals because each day many of these thousands of different lives of individuals and many different cultures are not only endangered but are lost through disease, attrition, acculturation and genocide. Lives are lost and this is a tragedy of immense proportion. But it is tragic also that we are losing cultural alternatives, losing the diversity that is critical to the survival of any species. If we limit our cultural imaginations, either through loss of diversity or through experiential timidity, or worse, through indifference, then we become impoverished as a species and as individuals. We will not be able to imagine our way out of the limits of our current world and we risk becoming convinced of the inevitability and immutability of our particular alternative reality, ultimately a form of surrender to social, cultural and intellectual lethargy.

***COURSE REQUIREMENTS***

Class attendance and class participation are very important if you wish to take an active interest in your education and move along the path to enlightenment. Besides lectures and assigned readings, this course requires class participation, completing 4 short essay assignments (4-5 pages), a mid-term and a final exam, and viewing of several films outside regular class time

Essays are normally due one week after they are assigned. The essays will be in the style of a journal entry or a short exploratory piece. Late papers and assignments will not be accepted, except in the case of very extenuating circumstances. In such a case, permission to turn in an assignment late must be obtained **in person** from the instructor **before** the assignment due date. Such late submissions carry an automatic grade penalty.

**Failure to adequately complete any assignment or to take any exam will result in a failing grade for the course.** Absences and/or failure to participate in class can lower your grade. In the case of 4 absences a grade of “F” will be assigned for class participation. In the case of 5 or more absences, a failing grade will as a rule be assigned for the course. You are asked to self-report on absences. Upon returning to class after an absence, you should sign the attendance notebook with the date of the absence(s) and the reason for the absence.

Incompletes are not normally given in this class. In the rare case where an incomplete may be in order, the student must obtain permission from the instructor **in person** and complete all paper work for the Registrar **before** the final day of the course.

***GRADING***

Class participation.....	10%
4 essay assignments @ 10% each .....	40%
Mid-term exam.....	20%
Final exam.....	30%

***REQUIRED READING***

Basic Text: Rosman, A. & P. Rubel, The Tapestry of Culture, (8<sup>th</sup> ed.)

Podolefsky, A. & P. Brown, Applying Anthropology: An Introductory Reader, (7<sup>th</sup> ed.)

Wormsley, W. The White Man Will Eat You!

Farrer, C. Thunder Rides a Black Horse

Kehoe, A. The Ghost Dance

Reserve Readings

Snyder, G. "Re-inhabitation," in The Old Ways, San Francisco: City Lights, 1977.

Raharijaona, V "Mihatsara Ivelan-tshihy: Taking time to properly lay out the mats." Academie Malgache, Fianarantsoa, June 2, 1995.

Kus, S. "Desires of the Heart and Laws of the Market Place." Smart Breakfast Talk, Rhodes College, November 1, 1995.

Individual articles from

DeVita, P and J. Armstrong Distant Mirrors: America as a Foreign Culture, Wadsworth, 1998.

**COURSE TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

(readings are to be completed on or before the assigned days)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LECTURE TOPIC</u>	<u>READING</u>
Jan 13	Introductory remarks-What makes us human?	
<div style="background-color: #cccccc; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;">           P&amp;B= Podolefsy &amp; Brown            TXT = Rosman &amp; Rubel         </div>		
Jan 18	Becoming human & being human	P&B (Chapters 1, 31, 9, 32, 6) <b>Begin Wormsley</b>
Jan 20	A World of symbols "Shock of the Other" Film viewing (TBA)	TXT (Chapter 5), (P&B 24, 28)
Jan 25	Human Nature?	TXT (1 pp. 1-15), P&B (19, 7, 30)
Jan 27	Learning about the other <b>Class discussion</b> of Wormsley Chapters 1-10 <b>Essay #1 assigned (due February 10<sup>th</sup>)</b> <b>Essay #4 assigned (due April 14<sup>th</sup>)</b>	TXT (2), P&B (34)
Feb 1	Language; A concept of culture	TXT (3), P&B (25, 26, 27)
Feb 3	Culture (cont.); An ecology of earth and mind (The example of the !Kung)	P&B (8)
Feb 8	Living on sacred land; Consequences of Agriculture	*Snyder, P&B (11, 13, 15) TXT (8 pp. 179-197)
Feb 10	<b>Class discussion</b> of Chapters 11-20 of Wormsley <b>Essay #1 due</b> <b>Essay #2 assigned (due February 22<sup>nd</sup>)</b>	
Feb 15	Family, friend and foe	TXT (6), P&B (43, 45, 4)
Feb 17	Social relations	*Raharijaona, <b>Begin Farrer</b>
Feb 22	Gender <b>Essay #2 due</b>	TXT (7) P&B (2, 12, 44)
<b>END OF MATERIALS COVERED IN MIDTERM</b>		
Feb 24	The giving of gifts "A Poor Man Shames Us All" film viewing TBA	TXT (8 pp. 197-end), *Kus
Mar 1	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	
Mar 3	Is money the root of all evil? <b>Class discussion</b> of Chapters 1-3 of Farrer	P&B (35, 36)
Mar 8	<b>SPRING RECESS</b>	
Mar 10	<b>SPRING RECESS</b>	

Mar 15	Power and prestige in non-Western societies	TXT (9 pp. 225-251), P&B (47)
Mar 17	Power and prestige (cont.) "The Tightrope of Power" film viewing (TBA)	P&B (33)
	Psychological Anthropology	TXT (4), P&B (42)
Mar 22	"Hopi: Songs of the 4th world"	<b>Begin Kehoe</b>
Mar 24	<b>EASTER RECESS</b>	
Mar 29	Social being determines consciousness Class discussion of Chapters 4-8 of Farrer Essay #3 assigned (due April 7 <sup>th</sup> )	
Mar 31	"Faithkeeper"	TXT (10 pp. 270-275, 288-294), (P&B 10, 50)
April 5	A world of meaning	TXT (11)
April 7	A world of meaning (cont.); Culture Contact	TXT (12 optional) P&B (53)
	<b>Essay #3 due</b>	
April 12	Fighting for meaning and dignity Class discussion of Chapter 1-6 of Kehoe	TXT (14 pp. 381-384) P&B (55)
April 14	"Wiping the Tears of the Seventh Generation" (film viewing TBA) <b>Class discussion</b> of final chapters of Kehoe <b>Essay # 4 due</b>	
April 19	Anthropology in Our World	TXT (13) P&B (21, 51)
April 21	Anthropology in Our World (cont.)	TXT (14 & 15 are optional), P&B (38, 52, 54)
April 26	Individual readings from <u>Distant Mirrors</u>	
April 28	Concluding remarks	

<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Friday, May 6, 1 PM</b>
	<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Tuesday, May 3, 1 PM</b>

**GROUP #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Members of your group**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>	<b>PHONE</b>
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**SCHEDULE for (1) Indigenous Peoples and Anthropology Watch (IPAW) and  
(2) “What does it all mean to me and to the USAn’s?”**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>IPAW (first 15 mins of class)</b>	<b>SO WHAT? (last 15 mins of class)</b>
January 25 <sup>th</sup>	1	
January 27 <sup>th</sup>		2
February 1 <sup>st</sup>	3	
February 3 <sup>rd</sup>		4
February 8 <sup>th</sup>	5	
February 10 <sup>th</sup>		1
February 15 <sup>th</sup>	2	
February 17 <sup>th</sup>		3
February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	4	
February 24 <sup>th</sup>		5
March 15 <sup>th</sup>	1	
March 17 <sup>th</sup>		2
March 29 <sup>th</sup>	3	
March 31 <sup>st</sup>		4
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	5	
April 7 <sup>th</sup>		1
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	2	
April 14 <sup>th</sup>		3
April 19 <sup>th</sup>	4	
April 21 <sup>st</sup>		5

**KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR GRADES AND ABSENCES**

ESSAY #1	10%	
ESSAY #2	10%	
ESSAY #3	10%	
ESSAY #4	10%	
MID-TERM EXAM	20%	
FINAL EXAM	30%	
CLASS PARTICIPATION	10%	

DATE OF ABSENCE	EXPLANATION