

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTHROPOLOGY 300D
SOCIO-CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
Fall 2005

Instructor: David Sutton
Office Hours: MW 10-11:00 or by appt.
Faner 3537
Phone: 453-5017
e-mail: dsutton@siu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Socio-cultural Anthropology offers a unique perspective on human societies and cultural diversity throughout the world and close to home. This course will introduce some of the main topics, theories and methods by which anthropologists have understood human behavior and human creations in small-scale societies as well as industrialized ones. Through a focus on reading ethnographies of different groups, the students will learn about anthropology's **holistic** approach to society, in which all aspects of life, from kinship, economic and political relations, ritual and gender relations are brought together.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

One mid-term and one final examination, each worth 30% of your grade

[If you know you will miss one of these exams, you must make arrangements with me prior to the day of the exam; an unapproved miss will mean an 'F' on that exam]

One 3-4 page essay worth 10% of your grade

One 6-8 page essay worth 20% of your grade

one email assignment worth 5% of your grade

Finally, note cards on each class reading will be worth 5% of your grade (see below).

*Grading will be done on a standard numerical scale (i.e., 91-100=A)

Attendance Attendance is required. If you anticipate schedule conflicts due to other classes, work, athletic events or other activities you are advised not to take this class because irregular attendance will negatively impact your grade. If you need to miss a class due to illness, religious observances or team participation you must notify me

prior to the class.

Extra Credit: Anyone wishing to do extra credit may contact me about an additional reading which you can write a 3-4 page discussion of, relating it to the relevant readings, and which will result in an in-class presentation. (See me for details).

NOTE CARDS For each class reading you should write a note card and hand it in at the beginning of class of the day the reading is to be discussed. This card should include your questions or comments about the reading, and might also include a brief summary of the reading and comment on how it relates to previous readings.

*Any student with special needs for taking this course must contact me during the first week of the term.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Janet Siskind *To Hunt in the Morning*

Peter Wogan *Magical Writing in Salasaca*

All other readings are available in a packet at The Printing Plant, 606 S. Illinois (next to "New Kahala," across from Melange.

COURSE OUTLINE

**Note: Weeks listed are meant as a general guideline, not a hard-and-fast schedule. Actual reading assignments will be finalized in class.

WEEK 1 Course Introduction. What is Anthropology? What do anthropologists study? What is Fieldwork?

Readings:

Horace Miner "The Nacirema" (Handout in class)

Raymond Williams "Culture"

James Spradley "Ethnography and Culture"

WEEK 2: Kinship, or What's in a Family? How have anthropologists studied kinship? Is kinship based on "the facts of life." What is the significance of marriage, and how does one select a marriage partner? What are the implications of a differently structured (matrilineal) kinship system?

Readings:

Richard Robbins "Patterns of Family Relations"

Serena Nanda "Arranging a Marriage in India"

Barbara Bodernhorn "He Used to be My Relative"

WEEK 3: **Not for Sale:** Gifts and Commodities. Why is the exchange of gifts crucial to understanding of social relations? What do our "things" tell us about ourselves? Is money the root of all evil?

Readings:

Richard Lee "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari"

Lewis Hyde "Some Food we Could not Eat"

James Carrier "Gifts in a World of Commodities"

WEEKS 4-6: **The Sharanahua:** Kinship and Exchange among an Amazonian People.

Readings:

Janet Siskind *To Hunt In the Morning*

Gift Essay Due end of week 5

MIDTERM EXAM #1 beginning of week #7

WEEK 7 **The Kayapo:** Political Organization in Defense of Identity and Environment

Readings:

John Palatella "Pictures of Us"

Daphne Eviatar "The High Cost of Oil"

The Film *The Kayapo: Out of the Forest* will be shown.

WEEKS 8-9 **Social Categories, Social Constructions**

Ian Hacking "Are You a Social Constructionist?"

Dennis Overbye "No Quark is an Island"

Robert Edgerton "Pokot Intersexuality"

Julia Serano "Skirt Chasers"

Emily Nussbaum "The Sex that will not Speak its Name"

The Film *Juggling Gender* Will be Shown

Jeffrey Fish "Mixed Blood"

Elizabeth Krause "The Bead of Raw Sweat in a Field of Dainty Perspirers: the Olympic Class Ordeal of Tonya Harding"

Mary Douglas "Secular Defilement"

WEEK 10: **Fieldwork: Moral and Epistemological Issues**

Readings:

David Sutton "He's Too Cold! Children and the Limits of Culture on a Greek Island."

Martin Key "New Life in Old Healing"

James Rachels "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism"

e-mail Assignment Due

WEEKS 11-12: **The Price of the Rite.** What makes a ritual, and what gives ritual its

power to move people? How do rituals help us get through daily life, and what can they tell us about the society we live in? How does a symbolic approach to a ritual compare to a Marxist and a post-modernist approach?

Readings:

Tom Driver "Community"

Clifford Geertz "Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"

William Roseberry "Balinese Cockfights and the Seduction of Anthropology"

Pamela Freese "The Union of Nature and Culture"

Renato Rosaldo "After Objectivism"

George Gmelch "Baseball Magic"

Bradd Shore "Baseball"

Paper on *Sports in American Society* Due end of week 11

WEEKS 13-15 The Power of Writing: What is the symbolism of literacy in a non-Western society. How is it reflected in their interactions with the State, Church and other institutions relying on writing? How does this parallel our own attitudes toward the written word?

Peter Wogan *Magical Writing in Salasaca*

FINAL EXAM END OF WEEK 15

PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING PAGE. IF YOU MISS A CLASS, YOU SHOULD RELY ON YOUR CLASSMATES AS A FIRST RESORT FOR NOTES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Name

Phone #

e-mail

Name

Phone #

e-mail