

Social/Cultural Anthropology - Anth 3
Las Positas College
 Fall 2005
 V01 - TTh 9:30 - 10:45, room 402

THE COURSE WEBSITE IS LOCATED AT www.laurenhasten.com/anth3.htm; YOU MUST ACCESS THIS WEBSITE EVERY WEEK IN ORDER TO DOWNLOAD YOUR ASSIGNMENTS!

Instructor: Lauren Wells Hasten (lhasten@laspositascollege.edu -- please put "ANTH 3" in the subject field)
 Office hours: M 9:45 - 10:45 AM, TTh 7:30 - 9:20 AM, room 1316

Course Description:

Welcome to Cultural Anthropology. This is an introductory course in the study of human cultures, viewed through a lens that sees race, gender and class as implicit in all human relations. We'll explore the political history of cultural anthropology so we can use it responsibly to ask questions about the relationship between methodology and theory building. While traditional anthropology has sought to categorize and typify those who are different from us (the "other," i.e., Samoans, Trobriand Islanders, the Nuer), we'll try turning the analysis on ourselves; one cannot understand the "other" until one knows oneself.

This is a class of student researchers, not simply a group of passive learners. You will all be working during the course of this term to produce your own original ethnographic research, not simply learning facts out of a textbook. You absolutely must write a term paper (the mini-ethnography) in order to pass this class. Students are also expected to read ahead in order to prepare for the week's work. A large percentage of your grade will be based upon your participation, both as an individual and as a member of a group, in class discussions; you will not be able to contribute to the conversation if you have not done the reading.

Success in this class depends upon: (1) good attendance, (2) your informed participation in discussions, (3) your participation in group work, (4) three short written submissions, (5) a final paper, and (6) short answer style midterm and final exams. It is important to keep up with your assignments and come to class prepared to participate. Attendance is required; I reserve the right to drop any student absent five times or more.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. Any time you provide information that is not common knowledge, you must tell the reader where you obtained it; if you do not, you have committed plagiarism. Plagiarism or cheating of any kind on any assignment will result in a grade of F on that assignment and a deduction of three times its point value from your total score; furthermore, plagiarism on any part of a multi-part assignment will result in the loss of any opportunity to complete that assignment. You will also be denied the right to complete any optional extra credit work. All instances of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students and noted on the student's academic record.

Required Materials:

1. *Cultural Anthropology*, Study Edition, 2nd edition, by Barbara D. Miller. Allyn & Bacon, 2004. ISBN: 0205401384.
2. *Asking and Listening: Ethnography as Personal Adaptation*, by Paul Bohannan and Dirk van der Elst. Waveland Press, 1998. ISBN: 0881339873.
3. *A Bagful of Locusts and the Baboon Woman: Constructions of Gender, Change, and Continuity in Botswana*, by David N. Suggs. Harcourt College Publishers, 2002. ISBN: 015507038X.

Grading:

• Totem Events (group)		worth up to 15 points		TOTALS	
• Potlatch Participation (individual)		worth up to 15 points		90 points or more	A
• Midterm Exam (week of 3/14)		worth up to 20 points		80 - 89 points	B
• Final Exam		worth up to 20 points		70 - 79 points	C
• Term Project	Due Date			60 - 69 points	D
1. Proposal (2 page min.)	week of 9/12	worth up to 5 points		less than 60 points	F
2. Field Notes (5 hour min.)	week of 10/24	worth up to 10 points			
3. Outline + first 3 pages	week of 11/14	worth up to 5 points			
4. Ethnography (10 page min.)	week of 12/12	worth up to 15 points			
• Extra Credit: Garbage Project	week of 11/28	<u>worth up to 5 points</u>			
Total =		110 possible points			

1. Totem Events (Group Work)

At the beginning of the term, you will be assigned to a group of four or more people (your clan), who will together choose a totem to represent themselves to the rest of the class. Each week the class will be given four questions to be answered by the following week; each individual clan member must assume responsibility for preparing an answer to at least one of these questions. The following week, you will work together with your clan to fill out a single answer sheet for submission. Each individual in the clan must write an answer so there must be four different styles of handwriting on the document. A complete assignment will be awarded four points to be distributed evenly among the people of your clan (one point to each, for a maximum total of 15 points each over the course of the term). A less than complete assignment will result in less points to be divided among the clanspeople -- including the ones who failed to participate. This means that you are responsible not only to yourself, but to your clan, for showing up to class and participating equally in all totem events; an absence means your entire clan will pay the price by having to share their already inadequate points with you.

The first time you are absent from a totem event, your clan will be kind enough to share their points with you. The second time, they will give you the silent treatment (no points). When you miss your third totem event of the term, your clan may exercise their option to ostracize you (i.e., throw you out of the group). Why would they do that, you ask? Because once you are gone they may band together to answer your question for extra credit. If you are expelled from the clan, you will lose any opportunity to earn further points as a member of the group. Your only recourse will be to answer all four questions by yourself and turn them into your instructor for only one point. You can avoid this by emailing your answer to your clan in advance if you anticipate an absence.

2. Potlatching, or "What's up with the index cards?" (Individual Participation)

In this class, you are not only responsible to your clan, but you have obligations to the tribe as well. The headwoman will demonstrate her generosity and capable leadership weekly by distributing gifts (symbolic, I assure you) to all; reciprocity demands that each individual, indebted to the headwoman by her gift, attempt to repay that generosity by giving a gift in return. That gift will be your knowledge, transmitted to the tribe via the headwoman. Expect to have at least one thing to contribute to class discussion each week; you can earn up to 15 points this way. These points are absolutely essential if you intend to earn an A or a B in this course.

3. Term Project - The Mini-Ethnography -- SEE THE WEBSITE FOR IMPORTANT LINKS!

The best way to understand how anthropology works is by doing it; the it is ethnography -- learning firsthand about a culture and then writing about it. What better place to start than right here in your own world? There is no doubt that wherever you live or work, you are already in a complex community with an evolving story. How can you characterize your city? What makes it run -- or keeps it from running? What binds its communities together -- or keeps them apart? What do people do for a living? What do they do to survive? How do they feel about the world, about their jobs, about college, about anything? Whatever topic you choose, you will be conducting legitimate, constructive research, and you will be the first to do it. And since no one before you has written on the subject, there will be no one to disagree with you -- you'll be a pathbreaker!

Early in the term, you'll be asked to formulate a research problem to investigate through anthropological methods including participant observation and interviews. You must also go to the library to make sure that you can relate parts of your work to existing scholarship (e.g., research focused on blue collar workers, Silicon Valley, single parent households, etc.); the references you use will be the wall of "authority" in front of which you stand to present your conclusions. You should also briefly outline your strategy for researching the topic you intend to discuss. Once your research plan has been approved you may commence fieldwork. Be sure to keep a journal of fieldnotes to refer to when you sit down to write your ethnography; I will collect and evaluate your fieldnotes about midway through the term. Later, you will need to submit a complete outline for your paper as well as three pages from your first draft; this will give your instructor an opportunity to review your project, make suggestions and generally push you in the right direction. Your final paper, a 10 page minimum mini-ethnography, will be due in person, in class on the last day of instruction -- NO EXCEPTIONS.

Go to the course website (www.laurenhasen.com/anth3.htm) for important links to grading rubrics. Refer to them for submission guidelines. Print them out and attach them to the front page of the corresponding assignments as you submit them.

4. Extra Credit: The Garbage Project

Keep track of all of the garbage (everything!) that is thrown out in your home for a period of 5 consecutive days. Submit a typewritten list with all the items shown under the day they were discarded. Try to keep it to one page, even if you have to reduce the type to do so; just make sure it is readable. That's all; just a list. No summaries, no explanations -- just a list.

No late papers or make-up exams will be granted except in cases of extreme need or emergency.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE:

- You must arrive on time and remain seated until the class is over. Students who arrive late and/or leave early 5 times or more will have their final scores cut by 10 points.
- You must inform me in advance if you anticipate that you will be leaving early; please take a seat close to the exit so as not to distract your fellow students.
- Once you have arrived in class you are expected to remain seated for the duration. Students who sign the attendance sheet and then leave without informing me will be counted as absent.
- Films are required viewing; attendance is mandatory and notes should be taken.
- Regular attendance is required; I reserve the right to drop any student who has missed five classes.
- Please turn off all cell phones and beepers during class time.
- Any student who arrives for an exam after most of the other students have taken it will not be allowed to take it.

Class Schedule and Readings:

(34 Classes over 17 Weeks)

WEEK 1: Course Introduction - Anthropology and Culture

[Discussing Chapter 1 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 8/22 - First Week of Class; Course Introduction

Online: Read Horace Miner's Body Ritual among the Nacirema

WEEK 2: Methods in Cultural Anthropology - Fieldwork and Ethics

[Discussing Chapter 2 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 8/29 - Totem Event #1 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Film: Maasai of Kenya: Maasai Women

Online: Read about Changing Attitudes Toward Female Circumcision

WEEK 3: About Ethnography, part one

[Discussing Parts I and II of Bohannan and van der Elst's Asking and Listening: Ethnography as Personal Adaptation]

Week of 9/5 - Totem Event #2 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Film: How Cultures are Studied

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY - MONDAY, 9/5 - NO CLASSES

WEEK 4: About Ethnography, part two

[Discussing Parts III and IV of Bohannan and van der Elst's Asking and Listening: Ethnography as Personal Adaptation]

Week of 9/12 - Totem Event #3 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Ethnography Proposal Due (2 page minimum plus a separate list of annotated references) -- Go to the course website (www.laurenhasten.com/anth3.htm) for a grading rubric to attach to your submission!

WEEK 5: Modes of Production

[Discussing Chapter 3 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 9/19 - Totem Event #4 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

WEEK 6: Consumption and Exchange

[Discussing Chapter 4 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 9/26 - Totem Event #5 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Film: The Sakkudei of Indonesia

**Online: Read about famine in the former Soviet Union

WEEK 7: Birth and Death

[Discussing Chapter 5 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 10/3 - Totem Event #6 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

WEEK 8: Culture and Personality

[Discussing Chapter 6 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 10/10 - Totem Event #7 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Midterm Review

**Online: Read a reinterpretation of literature on the "berdache"

WEEK 9: Kinship

[Discussing Chapter 8 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 10/17 - Totem Event #8 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

MIDTERM EXAM

WEEK 10: Domestic Groups

[Discussing Chapter 9 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 10/24 - Totem Event #9 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Field Notes Due (notes from a minimum of five different one-hour interviews with five different people) -- Go to the course website (www.laurenhasten.com/anth3.htm) for a grading rubric to attach to your submission!

WEEK 11: Social Stratification and Organization

[Discussing Chapters 10 and 11 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 10/31 - Totem Event #10 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Film: Love in the Sahel

WEEK 12: Communication

[Discussing Chapter 13 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 11/7 - Totem Event #11 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

WEEK 13: Religion

[Discussing Chapter 14 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 11/14 - Totem Event #12 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Ethnography Outline + Three (3) pages due -- Go to the course website (www.laurenhasten.com/anth3.htm) for a grading rubric to attach to your submission!

WEEK 14: Expressive Culture

[Discussing Chapter 15 in Miller's Cultural Anthropology]

Week of 11/21 - Totem Event #13 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

WEEK 15: Reading Ethnography, part one

[Discussing David N. Suggs' A Bagful of Locusts and the Baboon Woman, chapters 1 and 2]

Week of 11/28 - Totem Event #14 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

Garbage Project Due (optional)

Film: Wandering Warrior

WEEK 16: Reading Ethnography, part two

[Discussing David N. Suggs' A Bagful of Locusts and the Baboon Woman, chapters 3 through 5]

Week of 12/5 - Totem Event #15 -- Go to the course website for a link to this week's Totem questions!

WEEK 17: Course Wrap-up

Week of 12/12 - Garbage Project in Class; Final Exam Review.

****FINAL PAPER DUE on the last day of class, in person.****

Go to the course website (www.laurenhasten.com/anth3.htm) for a grading rubric to attach to your submission!

FINAL EXAM:

V01 (TTh) - Thursday, December 15th, 9:30 AM