

DEVELOPMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THOUGHT
ANTH 4250
Spring 2005
T-Th 12:30-1:50pm. Chilton #274

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Most of the students think that theory is arid, abstract, and has nothing to do with reality. Many students approach anthropological theory with an attitude of 'de-mystification' and pure aversion. At this point, most of the students know that anthropology's strength is about revealing the intricacies embedded in cultural stereotypes. That's the 'mysticism' that engages the students in this course: to unveil the intriguing social, political, economic and ideological tapestry intrinsic in the emergence of particular anthropological theories, as a way to 'de-construct' the stereotype of anthropological theory as dull, dry and a mere 'intellectual malabarism'.

"Why study the history of anthropological theory?" The answer is straightforward: the most effective way to understand anthropology today is looking at its past. To understand anthropology with sophistication, students need to know how it developed. Throughout this term, we will explore the historical background and philosophical principles embedded in the emergence of different anthropological theories as a way to explain them through their contexts of particular times, places, and personalities. This course will not however cover the entirety of anthropological theory; we will rather focus on trends, which are directly acting in the development of classic and current epistemologies in the discipline of anthropology.

Format

Each class session includes a lecture, which outlines the key concepts to link the topic of discussion with the anthropological principles. It goes without saying that student's opportunity to take full advantage of the course is maximized by reading assigned material before it is discussed in class. You are responsible for the assigned readings on the day of the corresponding class meeting.

Every week will have a class meeting devoted to students' presentations. One discussant will be assigned to each paper. It is the discussant's responsibility to present a formal oral critique of the paper for which he or she is presenting. This critique will open general discussion of the paper as it pertains to the weekly topic.

Course Requirements and Policies

1. Paper (25% of grade)

Each student is responsible for one paper during the semester. This paper is one of two written requirements for the course, and should, therefore, be written carefully. This requirement is more than a 'report'; it has to include your critical and informed analysis. Topics for these papers will be suggested in advance.

2. Two Take-home Exams (50% of grade; 25% each)

Each student will write two take-home exams base on several integrative questions, which I will distribute one week in advance. In composing the exam, I will draw from the readings, lectures, and discussions.

3. Formal Discussion of Papers (25% of grade)

Each student is also responsible for one critique of another student paper. A schedule of presenters and discussants will be elaborated and distributed within the first week of the semester. The discussant will present an oral commentary of no more than five minutes. Students have to 1) address key points in the paper; 2) evaluate and criticize the paper; 3) link the paper to the weekly topic, and 4) address key points for discussion.

4. Course Participation and Attendance

You are expected to come to each session having read the assigned material. Informed participation by everyone in discussions is expected. Those who fail to attend often disrupt class. Your regular attendance will be noticed by the performance in your presentations and discussions. Notify instructor of any planned absences.

5. Cellular phones, any type of food or drink, are not allowed in class.

6. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the University through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and educational goals. Direct questions or concerns to the equal opportunity office, (940) 565-2456, or the dean of students, (940) 565-2648. Tdd access is available through Rely Texas (800) 735-2989. If you have difficulty taking notes, please plan a visit early in the semester. If you need assistance in learning (hearing, reading, etc.), please see me **during the first week of class.**

ADA Statement. Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Program provides academic adjustments and aids to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities.

COURSE SCHEDULE

| Week No. | Dates | Topics |
|-----------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | Jan 18-20 | Historical Foundation of Anthropological Theory |
| 2 | Jan 25-27 | Nineteenth-Century Foundations and Forerunners I Evolutionism (McGee and Warms 1,2&3) |
| 3 | Feb 1-3 | Nineteenth Century Foundations and Forerunners II K. Marx and S. Freud (McGee and Warms 4&5) |
| 4 | Feb 8-10 | The Foundations of Sociological Thought (McGee and Warms 6,7,8&9) |
| 5 | Feb 15-17 | The Early Twentieth Century. Historical Particularism (McGee and Warms 10,11&12) |
| 6 | Feb 22-24 | Functionalism (McGee and Warms 13,14&15) |
| 7 | March 1-3 | Psychological Anthropology (McGee and Warms 16&17) |
| 8 | March 8-10 | Neoevolutionism and Ecological Anthropology (McGee and Warms 18,19&20) |
| | March 10 | FIRST TAKE-HOME EXAM |
| 9 | March 15-17 | SPRING BREAK |
| 10 | March 22-24 | Cultural Materialism and Marxism (McGee and Warms 21,22,23&24) |
| 11 | March 29-31 | Structuralism (McGee and Warms 25,26&27) |
| 12 | April 5-7 | Ethnoscience, Cognitive Anthropology and Sociobiology (McGee and Warms 28,29,30&31) Society for Applied Anthropology Conference |
| 13 | April 12-14 | Anthropology and Gender (McGee and Warms 32,33&34) |
| 14 | April 19-21 | Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology (McGee and Warms 35,36&37) |
| 15 | April 26-28 | Postmodernism (McGee and Warms 38,39&40) |
| | April 28 | SECOND TAKE-HOME EXAM |