

ANTH 5015
Anthropology: A Postgraduate Introduction
Fall 2021

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Office Hours: Friday 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM, and by appointment
Reader: Isabel Briz Hernández

Anthropology is a four-field discipline addressed to the question of what it means to be human; researchers may be trained in the biological sciences, archaeology, linguistics, and/or the ethnographic method. While the semester begins with the biocultural, we will primarily attend to major subfields in socio-cultural anthropology by exploring the many approaches and positions that have and can be taken in trying to understand the human condition, cultural variation, and social organization. Students will learn to think and see the world in a distinctly anthropological way.

Required Texts

Clara Han, *Life in Debt: Times of Care and Debt in Neoliberal Chile*.

All other readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Resources

The following titles are not required reading, but they may be helpful in clarifying concepts and ideas:

Barnard, Alan, and Jonathan Spencer. 2010. *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. London, NY: Routledge. (ACCESS VIA EBRARY)

Barfield, Thomas. 1997. *The Dictionary of Anthropology*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. (UL REFERENCE COLLECTION: GN307 .D485 1997)

Levinson, David, and Melvin Ember. 1996. *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Henry Holt. (UL REFERENCE COLLECTION: GN307 .E52 1996)

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will:

1. Have a general understanding of the subdisciplines of anthropology
2. Know the key concepts of the field
3. Know the major theories that explain human cultural and societal diversity and complexity
4. Be able to use the discipline's holistic approach to understand human societies and cultures

Evaluation

<i>Grade Item</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Paper No. 1	25%	October 15
Paper No. 2	25%	November 19
Final Paper	35%	December 17
Participation	15%	--

All assignments must be submitted to VeriGuide. Assignments without a signed declaration from VeriGuide will not be graded. Please visit:

https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jspx

TIP FOR SURVIVAL: The diversity of topics and perspectives surveyed in this class can feel overwhelming. I encourage you to form small study groups, and talk to me if you are having difficulty.

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Week 1 (September 9): INTRODUCTION

📖 Malinowski, "Introduction," from *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*

Week 2 (September 16): ECOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

📖 Moran, "Human Adaptability to Arctic Zones," in *Human Adaptability: An Introduction to Ecological Anthropology*

📖 West, "Preface," in *Conservation is Our Government Now: The Politics of Ecology in Papua New Guinea*

📖 West, "The Practices of Conservation-as-Development," in *Conservation is Our Government Now: The Politics of Ecology in Papua New Guinea*

📖 *Games of the North* (2011)

Week 3 (September 23): BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

📖 Sapolsky, "The 2% Difference," in *Annual Editions: Physical Anthropology*

📖 Boesch and Boesch-Achermann, "Dim Forest, Bright Chimps," in *Annual Editions: Physical Anthropology*


📖 Stanford, "Got Culture?," in *Annual Editions: Physical Anthropology*


📖 Hrdy, "Mothers and Others," in *Annual Editions: Physical Anthropology*


📖 Anderson, "A Telling Difference," in *Natural History*


 (OPTIONAL) Interview with Jane Goodall

Week 4 (September 30): LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION


 McWhorter, “Most of the World’s Languages Went Extinct,” in *Making Sense of Language: Readings in Culture and Communication*

 Tannen, “New York Jewish Conversational Style” in *Making Sense of Language: Readings in Culture and Communication*

 Blum, “Naming Practices and the Power of Words in China,” in *Making Sense of Language: Readings in Culture and Communication*

 clip from *Annie Hall* (1977)

PAPER NO. 1 DUE: October 8 (Friday)

 Guiding questions will be posted October 1 by 12:00 noon. Paper is due on October 8, by 11:59 p.m. Please follow instructions for submission in the prompt.

Week 5 (October 7): KINSHIP

 Fox, “Introduction” in *Kinship and Marriage: An Anthropological Perspective*


 Fox, “Unilineal Descent Groups,” in *Kinship and Marriage: An Anthropological Perspective*


 McKinnon, “Productive Paradoxes of the Assisted Reproductive Technologies in the Context of New Kinship Studies,” in *Journal of Family Issues*

Week 6 (October 14): Public Holiday

 No class.

Week 7 (October 21): ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

 Bohannan, “The economic integration of society” in *Social Anthropology*

 Bohannan, “Multicentric economies, conversion, and the conflict of economies,” in *Social Anthropology*

 Chin, “Anthropologist Takes Inner-City Children on Shopping Sprees,” from *Purchasing Power: Black Kids and American Consumer Culture*

 clip from *The Godfather* (1972)

Week 8 (October 28): POLITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

📖 Sahlins, “Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia,” in *Comparatives Studies in Society and History*

📖 Nugent, “Governing States,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*

🎧 *Ongka’s Big Moka* (1976)

Week 9 (November 4): Congregation for Conferment of Degrees

☞ No class.

Week 10 (November 11): GENDER

📖 Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” in *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture*

📖 Ortner, “So, Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” in *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture*

📖 Mahmood, “Agency, Gender, and Embodiment,” from *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*

🎧 clips from *Paris is Burning* (1990)

PAPER NO. 2 DUE: November 19 (Friday)

📅 Guiding questions will be posted November 12 by 12:00 noon. Paper is due on November 19, by 11:59 p.m.

Week 11 (November 18): American Anthropological Association annual meeting

☞ No class. I will be away on a conference leave.

📖 Han, Introduction and Chapters 1 – 2 from *Life in Debt*

Week 12 (November 25): RELIGION AND RITUAL

📖 Lienhardt, “The Control of Experience,” in *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*

📖 Boddy, “Spirits and Selves in Northern Sudan,” in *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*

🎧 *Les Maîtres fous* (1954)

Week 13 (December 2): MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

- 📖 Good and Good, “Learning Medicine”: The Constructing of Medical Knowledge at Harvard Medical School,” in *Knowledge, Power & Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life*
- 📖 Mattingly, “Narrative Matters,” from *The Paradox of Hope: Journeys through a Clinical Borderland*
- 📖 Kaysen, *Girl, Interrupted* – read pp. 1-43, and pp. 73-48

Class make-up (December 7): ETHNOGRAPHY

- 👉 Please note December 7 is a Tuesday evening.
- 📖 Han, Chapters 3 – 4 and Conclusion, from *Life in Debt*
- 🎧 clips from *Kitchen Stories* (2003)

FINAL PAPER DUE: December 17 (Friday)

- 📖 Guiding questions will be posted December 3 by 5:00 p.m. Paper is due on December 17, by 11:59 p.m.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Criteria for 1) the course and 2) for coursework</i>
A	1) Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. 2) The work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way. The argument is based on concrete evidence. The discussion is well-organized, logical and cohesive. The writing is clear.
A-	1) Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. 2) The work synthesizes course materials and key ideas in an original way, but there are areas for improvement.
B-range	1) Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. 2) The work demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.
C-range	1) Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. 2) The work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged. The argument and the writing is not clear, and/or there is no evidence for statements and claims made.
D-range	1) Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. 2) The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are major problems with clarity of argument and writing.
F	1) Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. 2) The work has failed respond to the assignment prompt.

TIPS & POLICIES

Opinions vs. Arguments

There is a difference between opinion and argument. Your personal viewpoints are welcome during class discussion, but your papers will be evaluated based upon your ability to formulate an argument rather than your ability to express an opinion. An argument is analytical. Arguments propose relationships between variables, and they support assertions with empirical evidence.

There is also a difference between opinion and perspective. An opinion usually contains some kind of judgment about how the world should or should not operate. A perspective, on the other hand, is a way of looking at the world. In other words, having perspective involves the ability to see patterns and themes, or differences and divergences, which may not be obvious at first glance. Having an opinion is easy. Having the insight that comes with perspective is much harder.

Late Submissions

Papers submitted after the due date will suffer a fraction of a grade deduction for every day it is late. For example, an A- will become a B+, a B will become a B-, et cetera.

Academic Honesty

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on academic honesty, and adopts a policy of *zero tolerance* on academic dishonesty. Any such offence will lead to disciplinary action including possibly termination of studies at the University. Students should know how to properly use source material and how to avoid plagiarism. Detailed guidelines and examples for the acknowledgement of sources can be found on the University's website at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. All papers must be submitted through VeriGuide.