

REINVENTING APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY: ANTHROPOLOGY TO WHAT END?¹

ANTH-542, Fall 2007

Mondays, 6:45-9:20 p.m., McKinley 108

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Office Hours: Mon 12-2, 5-6 p.m.; Tue, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; by appointment, Battelle-Tompkins T-49

I will never again play anything that does not have social significance.
Max Roach, 1961²

Each anthropologist must reinvent [anthropology], as a general field,
for him or herself, following personal interest and talent where best they may lead.
Dell Hymes, *Reinventing Anthropology* (1999[1969]), p. 48.

This course will explore how anthropology can be used to help create progressive social change, challenging forms of oppression and injustice, working to ensure the equal enjoyment of basic human rights and opportunities for all peoples, and building a more peaceful world. Through readings, discussion, and practice, we will examine and radically reconsider what anthropology has been, what it is, and what it can be as a tool for changing the world outside of academia.

As the course subtitle indicates, we begin by considering the relevance and ends of anthropology, as well as (social) science more broadly. We will explore the work of anthropologists who have served as agents of change on issues including human rights, health, poverty and inequality, homelessness, humanitarian aid, and war. And we will reflect on the troubling history of the discipline and its “applied” wing, from those who worked as colonial agents to anthropologists who promulgated the concept of race to those working for institutions of war and espionage.

Over the course of the semester, every student will conduct a project that attempts in some way to affect the world primarily outside of academia. Grounding our work in social theory and an understanding of how social change happens, we will grapple with issues of methods, ethics, advocacy, and writing involved in such work. Ultimately, the course asks every class member to shape a personal vision and practice of anthropology as a mechanism for social change.

Structurally, the class will be a participatory discussion-based seminar. The class assumes continually active and thoughtful involvement from every student, with the classroom a space for passionate, engaged discussion. Everyone will be encouraged to express views freely and to dissent with me and with others, while recognizing the responsibility to respect others’ right to free expression. Beginning with the syllabus and throughout the semester, students will have opportunities to shape the direction of the class, choose subjects of discussion, and improve the course design through regular feedback.

¹ From Mexican anthropologists’, “¿Antropología para qué?” (Farmer 2005:16). The course’s title derives from Hymes 1999[1969].

² See <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/08/27/1425234>.

CLASS LEADERSHIP

Students will be placed in groups to lead parts of each class. Each group should prepare a one-paragraph question based on the week's readings to stimulate discussion. Using Blackboard, the paragraph should be sent electronically to the class at least 24 hours prior to the start of class (i.e., Sunday, 6:45 p.m.). Students should also prepare an approximately ten-minute-long presentation engaging critically with the readings to further stimulate discussion. In addition to the question outlined in the pre-circulated paragraph, each presentation should offer at least one provocative argument about the issues under consideration with which you want the class to grapple. Each member of the group must participate in the presentation. Students not presenting in a given week are responsible for reading circulated questions in advance of class.

SEMESTER-LONG PROJECTS

Students will design and carry out a semester-long project that attempts in some way to use anthropology and anthropological skills to affect some aspect of the world outside of academia. Students should craft projects in consultation with me but will have broad freedom to develop a project that conforms to one's own vision of the discipline's potential for creating social change. Projects can build on work or research already underway or lead toward future work or research. Just a few possibilities include research and other work to assist community-based organizations, NGOs, political organizations, or other social movements; policy research, planning, or advocacy; program evaluation; research-informed writing, art, and other media aimed at non-academic audiences; and research-informed advocacy work. Students must complete a final product, appropriate to one's project, as outlined below.

SERVICE LEARNING CREDIT

As part of the semester-long projects, I encourage students to earn an additional credit through a service learning credit (undergraduates) or independent study (graduates).

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

- 1) Meeting with me to discuss the course and project ideas: **Due before 9/17.**
- 2) 2-page minimum project proposal outlining your project, methods, ethical issues involved, participant protections employed, and projected outcomes: **Due 10/1.**
- 3) 2-page minimum AU Public Anthropology Workshop critical response paper: **Due 10/15.**
- 4) Preliminary 5-minute project presentations and discussion: **Due 10/15.**
- 5) Final project (public?) presentation: **Due 11/26, 12/3, or 12/10**
- 6) Final project product: To be determined in consultation with me. The product need not be written but must include a minimum of 6 written pages offering your thoughts about anthropology's potential as a mechanism for social change, critical reflection on your project and its outcomes, and the intersection of the two. **Due 12/10.**

WRITING REQUIREMENTS

All written assignments must be double spaced, 12-pt. font, with 1-inch margins on all sides, and comply with all other academic rules of writing and style. For guidance, see the American

Anthropological Association style guide: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.htm; the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (see <http://thewritesource.com/mla.htm>); or the *Chicago Manual of Style* (see <http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/chicagogd.php>).

All writing assignments must be turned in on paper (i.e., not electronically) at the beginning of the class on which they are due. If there is a legitimate reason why you must turn in a paper late, you must contact me more than 24 hours before the due date to explain the problem and make other arrangements. For help with your writing, visit the Writing Center, Battelle-Tompkins 228 (885-2991 for appointments), the Academic Support Center Writing Lab, or feel free to see me.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By registering for this class and at the university, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code (<http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/code.htm> or see the “Student Handbook and Planner”) and are responsible for making yourself familiar with its standards of academic conduct. Violations of the code will not be taken lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the code or its applicability in this course.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES

I pledge to make this as enriching and exciting an academic experience as possible for every student; to come prepared to lead engaging class sessions; to create a safe and nurturing academic environment in the classroom that encourages the free exchange of ideas; to remain open to all dissent, critique, suggestions about the class, and other feedback; to adapt the class as appropriate in response to student feedback; to meet personally with students during my office hours and at other times by appointment or otherwise to discuss any aspect of the course; to read carefully and return all written assignments in a timely fashion; and to be fair in my evaluation and grading.

CLASS SCHEDULE

All the texts should be available in the campus bookstore, on 2-hour reserve in the library, and at inexpensive prices when purchased (often used) online. All other required readings will be available on Blackboard, on 2-hour reserve in the library, on the internet, or in class.

All assignments and readings are due on the date indicated.

August 27: Introductions

September 3: Labor Day, No Class

September 10: Paul Farmer and Partners in Health

Kidder, Tracy

2003 *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World*. New York: Random House.

Farmer, Paul

2005 *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Pp. xix-xxx, 1-22, and read at least one of chapters 3-7.

September 17: Anthropology to What End?: Some History of the (Applied) Discipline MEETING DUE

Hymes, Dell

1999[1969] *The Use of Anthropology: Critical, Personal, Political*. In *Reinventing Anthropology*. Dell Hymes, ed. Pp. 3-79. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Van Willigen, John

1986 *Applied Anthropology: An Introduction*. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey Publishers. Pp. 3-39.

D'Andrade, Roy, and Nancy Scheper-Hughes

1995 *Objectivity and Militancy: A Debate*. *Current Anthropology* 3(6):399-440. [Two-part article; see both on Blackboard.]

Leacock, Eleanor

1987 *Theory and Ethics in Applied Urban Anthropology*. In *Cities of the United States*. Leith Mullings, ed. New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. 317-336.

September 24: Research Methods: Participatory, Collaborative, and Community-Based 5 MINUTE PROJECT DISCUSSIONS

Mullings, Leith, et al.

2001 *Qualitative Methodologies and Community Participation in Examining Reproductive Experiences: The Harlem Birth Right Project*. *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 5(2):85-93.

Morgan, D., et al.

2004 *Youth Participatory Action Research on Hustling and Its Consequences: A Report from the Field*. *Children, Youth and Environments* 14(2):201-228.

Nader, Laura

1999[1969] *Up the Anthropologist—Perspectives Gained from Studying Up*. In Hymes. Pp. 284-311.

Farmer 2005. Pp. 23-50.

**October 1: Theorizing Social Change [Mid-Semester Review]
PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE**

Piven, Frances Fox

2006 *Challenging Authority: How Ordinary People Change America*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Graeber, David

2004 *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.

**October 6: AU Public Anthropology Workshop: Activism and Academia, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
You should attend at least two sessions.**

October 8: Ethics: Research and Action

Bourgois, Philippe

1990 *Confronting Anthropological Ethics: Ethnographic Lessons from Central America*. *Journal of Peace Research* 27(1):43-54.

Mwaria, Cheryl

2001 *Biomedical Ethics, Gender, and Ethnicity: Implications for Black Feminist Anthropology*. *In Black Feminist Anthropology: Theory, Politics, Praxis, and Poetics*. Irma McClaurin, ed. Pp. 187-210. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Farmer 2005. Pp. 196-212.

Pearson, Charles, and Philippe Bourgois

1995 *Hope to Die a Dope Fiend*. *Cultural Anthropology* 10(4):587-593.

American Anthropological Association.

1998 *Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association*, June.

National Association for the Practice of Anthropology

NAPA Ethical Guidelines for Practitioners.

Society for Applied Anthropology

Ethical and Professional Responsibilities.

**October 15: Preliminary Project Presentations and Discussions
WORKSHOP REACTION PAPER DUE**

October 22: Research Methods: Participatory, Collaborative, and Community-Based
Review readings from 9/24.

October 29: “Development,” Humanitarian Aid, NGOs

Cernea, Michael.

1993 Anthropological and Sociological Research for Policy Development on Population Resettlement.” *In Anthropological Approaches to Resettlement: Policy, Practice, and Theory.* M. M. Cernea and S. E. Guggenheim eds. Pp. 13-38. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

DeLoria, Vine, Jr.

1969 Anthropologists and Other Friends. *In Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto.* Pp. 78-100. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Fisher, William F.

1997 Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26:439-464.

Escobar, Arturo

1991 Anthropology and the Development Encounter: The Making and Marketing of Development Anthropology. *American Ethnologist* 18(4):658-682.

Farmer 2005. Pp. 213-256.

November 5: Iraq, the Military, and Empire

Lutz, Catherine

2002 Making War at Home in the United States: Militarization and the Current Crisis. *American Anthropologist* 104(3):723-735.

Vine, David

2007 Island of Injustice: The U.S. Has a Moral Duty to the People of Diego Garcia. *Washington Post* January 2:A17.

McFate, Montgomery

2005 Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The Strange Story of their Curious Relationship. *Military Review*, March-April.

Price, David

2007 Buying a Piece of Anthropology: Part 1: Human Ecology and Unwitting Anthropological Research on the CIA. *Anthropology Today* 23(3):8-13.

González, Roberto J.

2007 Towards Mercenary Anthropology?: The New US Army Counterinsurgency Manual FM 3-24 and the Military-Anthropology Complex. *Anthropology Today* 23(3):14-19. [See also We Must Fight the Militarization of Anthropology. *The Chronicle Review* 53(22):B20. Available at <http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i22/22b02001.ht>.]

Kilcullen, David

2007 Ethics, Politics and Non-State Warfare: A Response to González in this Issue. *Anthropology Today* 23(3):20.

McFate, Montgomery

2007 Building Bridges or Burning Heretics?: A Response to González in this Issue.” *Anthropology Today* 23(3):21.

Gusterson, Hugh

2007 Anthropologists and War: A Response to David Kilcullen (AT 23[3]). *Anthropology Today* 23(4):23.

November 12: Policy, Advocacy, and the Perils Thereof

Hopper, Kim

2003 *Reckoning with Homelessness*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. [Chapter 2 can be skimmed; read at least 1 of chapters 4-6.]

November 19: Writing Outside Academia

Gusterson, Hugh, and Catherine Besteman

2005 Introduction. *In Why America’s Top Pundits Are Wrong: Anthropologists Talk Back*. Catherine Besteman and Hugh Gusterson, eds. Pp. 1-23. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy

2001 *The Global Traffic in Human Organs: A Report Presented to the House Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, United States Congress*. Report, June 27. Available at <http://www.publicanthropology.org/TimesPast/Scheper-Hughes.htm>.

González, Roberto J., ed.

2004 *Anthropologists in the Public Sphere: Speaking Out on War, Peace, and American Power*. Austin: University of Texas Press. Pp. 22-33, 97-101, 153-157.

Optional:

Vine, David

2002 Saying No to “Culture.” *The Brooklyn Rail*, March-April:10.

Vine, David

2003 Billions for Brooklyn—No Questions Asked: The Borough's New Power Brokers. The Brooklyn Rail, Winter:2-3.

November 26: Final (Public?) Presentations

November 28-December 2: American Anthropological Association Annual Meetings, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road NW (Connecticut Avenue); see www.aaanet.org for the complete preliminary program.

Suggested Sessions:

Friday, Nov. 30, 1:45-5:30pm

AAA Presidential Session: What Do We Mean by Public Anthropology?

| Organizer(s)/Chair(s): Rebecca Etz Participant(s): Karen Brodtkin, J C Salyer, A Lynn Bolles, Barbara Voss, Paule C

Takash, Richard Handler, Rebecca Etz, Deborah Gewertz, William L Leap, Alaka Wali Discussant(s): Judith Goode, Mark R Goodale, Rena Lederman

Thursday, November 29, 8:00 am–11:45 am

Public Anthropology in a Borderless World

Organizer(s): Carl A Maida Introduction: Sam Beck Participant(s): Robert Borofsky, Thomas H Eriksen, Sonya Atalay, Robert

T O'Brien, Carl A Maida, Udi Butler, Raul G Acosta, Billie J Isbell, Vincent Lyon-Callo, Brian M McKenna, Howard B Rosing

Discussant(s): Judith Goode

Thursday, November 29, 1:45-3:30 Understanding Difference or Making a

Difference? The Role of Public Anthropology in the 21st Century | Organizer(s)/Chair(s): Rachel Newcomb, Haley Duschinski Participant(s):

Rachel Newcomb, Nolan Kline, Kirsten L Scheid, Shubh Mathur, Haley Duschinski Discussant(s):

Monique Skidmore, Philippe Bourgois

Thursday, November 29, 1:45-5:30

American Ethnological Society, Society for the Anthropology of North America | Invited Session: The Insecure American

Organizer(s)/ Chair(s): Hugh Gusterson, Catherine Besteman Participant(s): Catherine Lutz, Janine R Wedel, Susan F Hirsch, David R Graeber,

Christine J Walley, Lee D Baker, Setha M Low, Brett Williams, Joseph Dumit, Tanya M Luhrmann, Nancy Scheper-Hughes Discussant(s):

Robert Borofsky, Barbara Ehrenreich, Eugene Robinson, Derrick Jackson

Thursday, Nov 29, 6:15 pm–7:30 pm

Special Event., Society for Psychological Anthropology

Helping Paul Farmer | Organizer(s): Robert Borofsky Chair(s): Paul Farmer

Sat, Dec 1, 8-9:45am

AAA Presidential Session: Collaborative Anthropologies, Public Engagements and Epistemologies of Equity

Organizer(s)/Chair(s)/ Introduction: Luke Eric Lassiter Participant(s): Regna D Darnell, Les Field, Melissa D Hargrove,

Dorothy T Lippert, Carla Guerron-Montero, Samuel R Cook, Jean J Schensul, Mary M Overbey, James Peacock

Discussant(s): Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Louise Lamphere

December 3: Final (Public?) Presentations

December 10: Final (Public?) Presentations [Note Class Meets 8:10-10:40 p.m.]
FINAL PROJECT PRODUCT DUE, 8:10 P.M.

LEARNING AND LIFE RESOURCES

If you encounter any difficulty this semester for any reason that affects your participation in the course, please don't hesitate to speak with me. In addition to the department's assistance, the

university offers a variety of learning and life resources to take advantage of. See: <https://my.american.edu/content.cfm?load=includes/help.cfm> or the following:

Academic Support Center: 885-3360, MGC 243, www.american.edu/ocl/asc.

Counseling Center: 885-3500, MGC 214, www.american.edu/ocl/counseling.

Disability Support Services: 885-3315 (V/TDD), MGC 206, www.american.edu/ocl/dss.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Ally Resource Center: 885-3347, MGC 201, www.american.edu/ocl/glbta.

International Student and Scholar Services: 885-3340/50, Butler 410, www.american.edu/ocl/iss.

Judicial Affairs and Mediation Services: 885-3328, Butler 408, www.american.edu/ocl/jams.

Multicultural Affairs: 885-3651, MGC 204, www.american.edu/ocl/oma.

New Student Programs: 885-3303/74, Butler 407, www.american.edu/ocl/orientation.

Student Health Center: 885-3380, McCabe Hall 1st Floor, www.american.edu/healthcenter.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

My evaluation of your work will focus on full participation in class, completion of all assignments (reading, writing, oral, and otherwise), and improvement over the course of the semester. Because I am required to assign grades, I will do so based on the following guidelines:

- A: Superior, original, thoughtful work in completion of all course requirements;
- B: Very good work in completion of course requirements;
- C: Satisfactory work in completion of course requirements;
- D: Unsatisfactory or incomplete work in course requirements and/or a failure to meet minimum attendance requirements;
- F: Failure to meet minimum course standards for assignments, participation, attendance.³

³ See "Guideline of a General Education Syllabus," online document, available at <http://www.american.edu/academics/gened/faculty.htm>.