course description

This is the final quarter of the three-quarter proseminar sequence required for graduate students in the PhD program in Anthropology. This course is only open to first-year graduate students in the Ph.D. program in the Irvine Department of Anthropology who have taken Proseminar A and Proseminar B in the same academic year. There will be no exceptions to this requirement.

In this term, students will explore the history of anthropological theory and ethnographic practice with explicit reference to the discipline’s practices of knowledge formation. We will also reflect on the work of the previous two quarters through the following organizing questions: How has anthropology built its claims about culture, power, and human nature? To what effect? What can this process tell us about theory-building and the practice of research and writing in the social sciences more generally? This quarter will consider works that critically challenge the knowledge claims of the works presented in the earlier quarters, and will also consider reflexivity and the debate over the status of knowledge in the humanities and social sciences.

This course places large demands on graduate students’ time. It is reading- and writing-intensive, and students will need to learn to skim productively. The course also requires attendance at three Friday evening seminars, at locations to be announced in class, which aim to provide an opportunity to talk in a more relaxed, informal setting, and hopefully to lay the groundwork for future productive collaborations.

course requirements

Attendance and participation: Weekly attendance is absolutely vital. The class will be run as a seminar, with occasional short introductory lectures. Your engaged participation is required. While the assigned reading will sometimes be a challenge, you should attend class and participate in class discussions regardless of how much of the reading you have finished. I will only accept absences in cases of dire emergency.

There will be three Friday seminars during the quarter, at times and locations to be announced. We will have dinner and you will read the ethnography assigned for that seminar and be prepared to engage in discussion about it.

3 short essays (2,500 words maximum, all-inclusive) will be due via email before the listed meeting date. No late papers will be accepted. Each counts for 15% of your final grade. Your grade will be based not just on your analysis of the readings, but how well you link your discussion to readings and themes from the previous two quarters.
Course meeting discussion facilitation: Each student will be responsible for helping to facilitate two course meetings. This involves a brief (5 minutes) introduction to the authors and their intellectual biographies, and how they relate to themes from the course and also from Proseminars A and B. Course meeting discussion facilitation accounts for 10% of your final grade.

Friday seminar discussion facilitation: Teams of students will be responsible for facilitating discussion for one Friday seminar. Facilitators should be prepared with a list of questions designed to generate discussion. Discussion facilitation will account for 5% of your final grade. Your discussion facilitation grade will be based not just on your analysis of the readings, but how well you link your discussion to readings and themes from Proseminars A and B.

Take-home final examination: There will be an essay-format, take-home final examination distributed during Week 9 and due emailed to tboellst@uci.edu by 5pm on Wednesday, March 16. It will account for 40% of your final grade.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>3 short essays</td>
<td>15% x 3 = 45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class presentation (2) and discussion facilitation (1)</td>
<td>5% x 3 = 15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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course readings: books

Obtain the following books. Note: some of the older books exist in multiple editions. You do not need to obtain the specific edition listed here. They will also be placed on course reserves. Books marked with ☑ will be made available as PDF files.


course readings: articles and book chapters

These course readings are accessible online, unless marked with 🔗, in which case they will be made available as PDF files.


course schedule

**week 1: knowledge and desire.**

1) Darwin — *On the Origin of Species*. Read: Introduction; Variation under Domestication; Variation under Nature; Struggle for Existence; Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest; Difficulties of the Theory; On the Imperfection of the Geological Record; Recapitulation & Conclusion.

2) Freud — *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

3) Kulick — Theory in Furs.

**week 2: imitation and the social.**

1) Candea — Revisiting Tarde’s House.

2) Hertz — *Death and the Right Hand*.

3) Latour — Gabriel Tarde and the End of the Social.

4) Tarde — *The Laws of Imitation*. Read: Introduction, Prefaces; Chapters 1, 2, 3.

5) Tarde — Monadology and Sociology.

6) Venbrux — Robert Hertz’s Seminal Essay.

**week 3: knowledge and the other—essay #1 due.**

1) Bateson — *Naven*.

2) Lamphere — Feminist Anthropology: The Legacy of Elsie Clews Parsons.

3) Parsons — *Fear and Conventionality*. Read: Preface, On Not Taking to Strangers; Travelers; Between the Sexes; Marriage; In the Family; An Unconventional Society.

4) Parsons — The Last Zuni Transvestite.

**friday seminar #1: ruth benedict—patterns of culture.**
week 4: kinships and structures.
   1) Leach — Rethinking Anthropology.
   2) Morgan — Ancient Society. Read: Introduction (by Leslie White), Preface, Chapters 1, 2, 3.
   3) Needham — Structure and Sentiment. Read: Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, 5.
   4) Schneider — A Critique of the Study of Kinship. Read: Preface and Parts 1, 3, 4.

week 5: culture and process—essay #2 due.
   1) Handler — What’s Up, Doctor Goffman? Tell Us Where the Action Is!
   2) Goffman — Where the Action Is.
   3) Goffman — Normal Appearances.

week 6: symbols and rituals.
   1) Douglas — Purity and Danger. Read: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 8.
   2) Turner — The Forest of Symbols.

friday seminar #2: hortense powdermaker—stranger and friend.

week 8: personhood and the social (note: no week 7 meeting)—essay #3 due.
   1) Daniel — Fluid Signs.
   2) Kockelman — The Semiotic Stance.
   3) Munn — The Fame of Gawa.

week 9: world orders.
   1) Holbraad and Pedersen — Planet M.
   3) Strathern — The Gender of the Gift.

week 10: political economies of difference.
   1) Asad, Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. Read: Introduction, Chapter 4.
   2) Ong — Neoliberalism as Exception. Read: Introduction, Chapter 3.

friday seminar #3: hugh raffles—in amazonia.

finals week: ontology and epistemology.
   1) Boellstorff — But Do Not Identify As Gay.
   2) Boellstorff — Rethinking Digital Anthropology.
   3) Carrithers et al — Ontology Is Just Another Word for Culture.
   4) de Castro — Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism.
   5) Ingold — Anthropology Is Not Ethnography.
   6) Latour — Perspectivism: “Type” or “Bomb”?
   7) Zhan — Worlding Oneness.

tuesday, June 18, 5pm: take-home final due (via email)