ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY  AN304 / Spring 2012 / SecB51/(#18423)
Professor Ida Tafari  Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 AM-12:15 PM
Office Hours: TBA  Email: tafarii@fiu.edu

Course Description:

The course is designed to provide a solid grounding in anthropological theory, concepts and perspectives of the nineteenth and twentieth century practitioners. The historical development of ideas and debates within anthropology will be studied through the readings presented in Philip Carl Salzman’s text, Understanding Culture. The course is designed to present the approaches anthropological theorist have employed and how ideas of culture itself have evolved. Contemporary readings have been added to critically assess the methodologies employed today, evaluate the premise, and analytical approach. As we survey the historical development of ideas and debates within anthropology through the reading of Salzman, we will also view scholarly assessments by African Diaspora scholars and Latin American scholars working in these same areas. The emergence of Cultural Studies has attracted many scholars from the rest of the world and their theories have sometime conflicted with those of the early cultural theorist. How do culturalist extend upon, re-invent and customize their own theoretical constructs about their own societies and cultures and that of the host country to which they have often migrated. How do contemporary scholars reposition anthropology within current social theory?

Today, anthropology is no longer confined to academic debate. It is increasingly part of the practice and theory of development agencies, voluntary organizations, political pressure groups, international organizations and governments. Anthropological theory has become less and less isolated from the communities studied. Communities are increasingly culturally diverse, and ‘other cultures’ are no longer in ‘other parts’ of the world. This course will encourage developing new ways of theorizing appropriate to changed circumstances. The course brings the reasoning of Europe, North America and those countries traditionally studied by anthropologists and their scholars to an intersection to interrogate the diversity of world views and inspire new paradigms. Many of the issues that concerned anthropologist of earlier periods remain relevant today. The course focus pulls heavily from the Caribbean and Africa, areas which continue to be highly exploited and ever changing. Ethnic cleansing and white supremacy remain a phenomenon.

Course Learning Goals:

Questions asked in a course on anthropological theory have to do with culture. What is the origin of culture and how can we study it? How do people organize social
relationships? The classical social thinkers were concerned with analyzing the ways that the economy, state, society, and culture interacted to form a historically specific type of social organization specialized and adaptive. Some theorists stressed the primacy of the economy, others the primacy of the state and bureaucracy, and others the function of modern culture and values. The prophecies and religious myths impact on the social realities of contemporary life are examined. The course examines all of these orientations. Questions such as does social change occur through shifts in people’s thinking or through changes in social structure, environmental changes, technology are evaluated? What is the origin of inequality? Is human behavior innate or learned, is it ‘nature or nurture’, are questions still asked today.

**Participation:**
Class discussions will focus not only on analysis but also on the relevance and implications for contemporary social and political issues. It will be necessary to keep up with the readings for class discussion, which accounts for 20% of your grade.

**Exams, Grades and Attendance:**
The course grade will be based primarily on five short analytical writings (topics to be assigned), one of which will be an in class writing. Class attendance is mandatory. More than four absences will impact your grade. The sessions are organized as seminars, which mean students will be participating in every session. There is only one text to purchase. Additional readings will be assigned and placed on reserve or on Moodle.

**Research Paper**
Theory is the foundation of anthropological reasoning. Every research initiative requires a theoretical approach. I know there is knowledge within the course context that can benefit you professionally and personally regardless of your major. I ask students to bring forward a positive collective attitude of cooperation and participation. This will be important in our peer reviewed final researched paper.

A research paper on an open topic is required. This is more of a critical essay or inquiry into an particular well defined issue. The paper offers a critical reading informed by textual evidence and observational, participatory evidence. I will give you a more complete rubric. I would hope you work on a topic you can develop into a future initiative (research paper, conference paper). The theoretical approach should complement the data you seek to obtain as evidence for your analysis.

**Grading:**

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes/ Essays</td>
<td>40 (four)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Event</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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Class Schedule:

January

Week 1

10 Introduction and Overview of the Course

12 Optional background reading: Peat, David, F.  
*From Certainty to Uncertainty: The Story of Science and Ideas in the Twentieth Century*:
See Moodle or attached list for an alternative reads questioning the objectivity of ‘science’.
-Reading: Salzman, Chapter 1, Schools of Culture Theory (pp1-6)
-Clips from *Ethiopia from the Ancient Nubians*

-Week 2,

17 -Film: Strange Beliefs
- Orville Taylor: IDEAZ
-Epistemological theories: Science, Certainty, and Uncertainty
  - Chapter 1 pp. 6-12, *Meta-theory*

19 -Film: Malinowski Off the Verandah
- King Anthony Introduction: *Spaces of Culture, Spaces of Knowledge.*

- Week 3

24 -Social Structure and Function
-Reading: Salzman, Chapter 2 the Functionalist: pp.13-18 (Malinowski); pp. 19-30, Durkheim; Radcliffe Brown:  Pp. 127-129

31 -Film: Margaret Mead Talking Notes

February

2 -Film: Ami Cesaire,
-Reading: Salzman, Chapter 3, *Agency in Human Action, Processes and Transactions*
Overview of chapter:
-Components to interrogate: Processualism, pp31-40
-Patterns of Culture as choices: Fredrik Barth- generative models, Exchange Theory, pp.41-48, pp. 129-130.
Read: Havana’s Timba: A Macho Sound for Black Sex. Ariana Hernandez Reguant

-Week 4

7 Rigby,Peter, Chapter 5, In: *African Images: Racism and the end of anthropology.“ Functionalism, Positivism, Bourgeois Science, Slavery, and Racism“*

Film: Roach in Reverse

-Week 5

14 -Film: France Fanon
-Reading: Salzman, Chapter 4 *Determining Factors: Cultural Materialism and Political Economy.* pp. 49-66; pp.130-131

16 -Film: Karl Marx
Cows, Pigs, and Witches
Modes of Production

**GRAND CENTRAL PARK ONE LOVE FESTIVAL: FEB.18,2012**

-Week 6
- Discussion of previous week

23
-Reading: Salzman, Chapter 5, *Coherence in Culture: Dominant Patterns and Underlying Structures*, pp. 67-75; pp. 121-125131-132
- Ruth Benedict Apollonian and Dionysian
- Etic/Emic and Marvin Harris: Looking for evidence. Understanding the deconstruction of social arrangements and cultural understandings to expose and debunk exploitation and oppression.

28
Film: -Ami Cesaire

28
Film: Franz Boas
- Neo-Benedictine Theory: Clifford Geertz, *The Symbolic of Power*

March
1 - Film: Herskovites: New World Anthropological Theory

6 - Natural Selection or Cognition, Biological and Socio-cultural evolutionists *Theoretical Issues in evolutionary thought* pp. 98-111; 133-134.
Complementary reading to be assigned
- Film: Herskovits At the Heart of Blackness

-Week 8
8 - Theory and Method in Qualitative Research
- The Logic of Qualitative Methodology
- DuBois (film clip)

**SPRING BREAK**

-Week 10
19 - *Last Day to Drop with WI/DR*


22 -Film: The Lunatic

27 - Chapter 8 *A Reflection on Anthropological Theory Again* pp. 135-142.

29 -Discussion
-Reading: David C. Korten *When Corporations Rule the World.*
-Week 11

Student Presentations: April, 3-5; 10-12;17-19
New Science Bibliography

Aczel, Amir D

Bartusiak, Marcia

Bolles, Edmund Blair, 1942-

Briggs, J. M. and F. David Peat

Briggs, J. M. and F. David Peat

Briggs, J. M. and F. David Peat

Bruce, Colin

Carlowicz, Michael J. and Ramon E. Lopez

Chown, Marcus

Clegg, Brian

Corsaro, Willliam A.
Einstein, Albert

Gamow, George

Gao, Shan

Gardner, Martin

Gibilsco, Stan

Gleick, James

Han, M. Y.

Hawking, Stephen W.

Hazen, Robert

Hoffman, Banesh

Jones, Roger S.

al-Khalili, Jim
Kuhn, Thomas S.

Mirza, Muhammad R. and Muhammad Iqbal Siddiqi, eds.
1986  Muslim Contribution to Science. Kazi Publication: Lahore, Pakistan

Morris, Richard
2003  The Last Sorcerers, the path from alchemy to the periodic table

Nadeau, Robert

Nadeau, Robert and Menas Kafatos

Newton, Isaac

Paras, Eric

Parrish, David

Peat, F. David

Penrose, Roger, Malcolm Longair, ed.
1997  The Large, the Small and the Human Mind, with Abner Shimony, Nancy Cartwright and Stephen Hawking. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Perkowitz, Sidney

Popper, Karl, R.

Radin, Dean

Rose, Steven, ed.

Rosenblum, Bruce and Fred Kuttner

Rosenthal, Jeffrey S.

Sherden, William A.

Siegrfried, Tom

Singh, Simon

Stapp Henry

Steel, Duncan

Strehl, Susan
Tyson, Neil DeGrass, Charles Liu, Robert Irion  

White, Michael and John Gribbin  

Williams, P. Garnett  

Wolf, Fred Allen  

Wolfson, Richard  

Zohar, Danah with I. N. Marshall  

A few more. These ancient articles were good then, and thought provoking now.

Horton, Robin  
