

ANTH 602: Theory I

Fall 2020

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Zoom office hours: Thursday 1 p.m-2 p.m. and by appointment

Description

The aim of this course is to read a series of texts in the history of anthropological theory that continue to inform the discipline and to consider their concepts, arguments, and form. By the end of the semester, students should know the main arguments and concepts in the assigned texts and should be able to draw connections between these texts and contemporary concerns in the discipline including their own emerging projects. The texts have been selected to introduce students to several traditions of anthropology but the collection is neither exhaustive nor does it constitute a canon. Instead, the course offers one route through the discipline. While the course is not organized historically, we will consider the contexts and conditions in which assigned text were written and circulated and when and how they became important to anthropology.

Reading

Readings on the course outline are divided into three categories, as follows.

Readings marked ** in the course outline are required. The reading is significant and demanding; if you find that circumstances make it impossible to complete the reading please be in touch. We will spend time talking about how to approach difficult, and long, texts.

The *further reading* section of the syllabus lists two types of texts. Readings marked * are *strongly suggested*. Other readings listed as *further reading* are texts that give further intellectual and/or historical contexts, texts that highlight where a particular concept has traveled in the discipline, texts that constitute debates about another text or argument. You are always encouraged to read more but I do not expect that you will be able to read everything in this section of the course outline. It is intended to give you some ideas, for now and now and going forward.

In addition to readings, I have made an effort, where possible, to include secondary material in the form of lectures or radio/television programs freely available online. I have listed these with the required readings as I think they provide very helpful introductions to the material. *I have posted many of these readings as PDFs; if you use your own copy, please be sure that the pagination is the same as the text on the syllabus.*

Note on language: A significant number of the assigned texts were originally written in a language other than English; if you read the language in which the text was originally published, you are welcome to read in that language and to bring questions of translation into discussions.

Assignments and Evaluation

Reflections. Each week, students will write 2-3 reflections on the readings, to be posted to the discussion board on MyCourses. The reflection posts should not be summaries. They can include questions, analyses, difficult passages, and responses to other posts. Students should be sure that some of their posts are substantive, in terms of quantity and quality, as they constitute a substantial part of class discussion.

Portfolios. Instead of papers, the written work for this course will be a portfolio, due **December 14**, which will include the following components:

1. *Reflection papers.* In addition to their regular reflections, students will submit weekly reflection papers (**500-1000 word**). These posts are not summaries but are argumentative, analytical pieces of writing usually focused on part of the text/s assigned that week. The posts will usually focus on several passages from the primary text/s and may raise questions; offer interpretations; consider the explicit and implicit assumptions of the argument and their consequences; analyze and identify weaknesses in an argument and propose counter-arguments. They can link the texts to previous readings and discussions. Posts may draw on the student's shorter reflections as well as on contributions other students have made on the discussion board, as long as these are properly cited.

Reflection posts are due **before class** every week except the first and last weeks of class. The papers must be posted on MyCourses in the *Reflection Papers* folder by **Saturday** prior to the seminar no later than 11:59 Montreal time. Students will receive half points for on-time completion and half points for content. Late posts will not receive points for on-time completion. At the end of the semester, students will collate ten of their responses, unedited, into the portfolio.

2. *Optional developments.* You may, if you wish, develop specific questions, interpretations, or evaluations of a single reading or across several.

3. *Introduction.* The portfolio should begin with an introduction (1000 words) that draws out themes, connections, and problematics in and between the papers. The idea is not to present the papers as a coherent whole but instead to think about what the collection of work shows about the changing and sometimes contradictory concerns of anthropology. The introduction should not be a summary of what follows but instead an analysis of the collection of papers.

4. *Conclusion.* The portfolio should end with a conclusion (500 words) that addresses the question: what theory of society undergirds your research? To answer the question, reflect on your PhD proposal in its most current form, and consider which of the arguments, concepts and approaches that we have studied together form the basis of and/or clarify your understanding of your own object of analysis.

Grading: *Reflections* (20%)

Portfolio: 80% (10 papers, 6% each; Introduction 15%; Conclusion 5%)

Other Class Policies

I seek to make the learning environment inclusive and respectful for all participants. Thus, violent or harmful language on discussion boards, in chats, or in discussions as well as in user names or visual backgrounds may be cause for disciplinary action.

If you experience barriers to learning in this course do not hesitate to discuss them with me or with the Office for Students with Disabilities: <https://www.mcgill.ca/osd/>

Accommodations are possible for students who experience barriers to learning—including disabilities or medical conditions but also inadequate internet access or living situations that make participation in live discussions difficult or impossible. **Students who need accommodations should contact me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as a barrier arises.**

If you have an ongoing mental health concern or one that arises during the semester and that interferes with your coursework, contact me as soon as you are able. You should also contact Counseling and Psychological Services (<http://www.mcgill.ca/counselling/home>) for a preliminary appointment.

Please let me and the other students know your preferred pronoun.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the instructor's or the university's control, the content and/or evaluation methods for this course may change.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

September 14 *France and New France: Ethnography in the 17th and 18th Centuries*

**Before beginning these readings, please listen to the introductory podcast on the MyCourses site.

**Greer, A. (2000). *The Jesuit Relations: natives and missionaries in seventeenth-century North America*. Boston, Bedford/St. Martin's.

Introduction

1635. Jean de Brébeuf on the Hurons pp. 37-69

**Denis Diderot. [1772]. 1992 *Political Writings*. Cambridge University Press.

Introduction, focus on xv-xxi

Supplément au Voyages de Bougainville. 31-75.

**<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/diderot/>

Further Reading

*Carson, J. T. 2016. "Brébeuf Was Never Martyred: Reimagining the Life and Death of Canada's First Saint." *Canadian Historical Review* 97(2): 222-243.

*Agnani, Sunil. 2013. Hating Empire Properly: The Two Indies and the Limits of Enlightenment Anticolonialism. Fordham University Press. PDF

Chapter 1: Doux Commerce, Douce Colonisation: Consensual Colonialism in Diderot's Thought.

Podruchny, C., & Labelle, K. M. 2011. Jean de brébeuf and the Wendat Voices of Seventeenth-century New France. *Renaissance and Reformation*, 34(1), 97.

<https://proxy.library.mcgill.ca/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1013444447?accountid=12339>

*Todorov, Tzvetan. 1993. *On Human Diversity : Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought*. *Convergences : Inventories of the Present*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Chapter 1, especially sections on Diderot and Montaigne: pp. 12-44.

Toscano, A. *By Contraries Execute All things: Figures of the Savage in European Philosophy*. *Radical Philosophy* 2.04, spring 2019,

<https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/by-contraries-execute-all-things>

Duchet Michèle. 1971. *Anthropologie Et Histoire Au Siècle Des Lumières: Buffon, Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvétius, Diderot*. Bibliothèque D'anthropologie. Paris: F. Maspero. Especially pp. 407-477.

<https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/les-nouveaux-chemins-de-la-connaissance/diderot-15-la-biographie-et-la-vie-de-diderot>

Week 2

September 21 *Civilization and Social Evolution*

** Darwin, Charles. [1871] 2017. *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (version Second edition.). Edited by Paul H Barrett and R. B Freeman. The Works of Charles Darwin, Vol. 22. London: Routledge.

Chapter XXI: General Summary and Conclusion

** Morgan, Lewis H. [1878] 1964. *Ancient Society*. Edited by Leslie A White. The John Harvard Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/979778324>

Preface

Part I, Chapter 1. Ethnical Periods

Part II, Chapter I. Organization of Society Upon the Basis of Sex

Chapter V. the Iroquois Confederacy

Part IV. Growth of the Idea of Property.

**Tylor, Edward B. [1871] 1891 *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*. London: J. Murray.

Preface; Chapter 1: The Science of Culture.

Further Reading

*Stocking, George W. "Matthew Arnold, E. B. Tylor, and the Uses of Invention." *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 65, no. 4 (1963): 783-99.

Kuper, Adam. 2005. *The Reinvention of Primitive Society*. Hoboken: Taylor & Francis. PDF Chapters 1 & 4.

Bloch, M. (2004). *Marxism and anthropology: the history of a relationship*. London, Routledge. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/mcgill/detail.action?docID=1474511>

Simpson, Audra. 2014. *Mohawk interruptus: political life across the borders of settler states*. Durham: Duke University Press. Chapter 3.

Week 3

September 28 *Marx, Part 1*

Yom Kippur-no Zoom session

**Marx, Karl and F. Engels. 1978. German Ideology: Part 1, pp 146-200. In Tucker, Robert C., Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels. 1978. *The Marx-Engels reader*. New York: Norton.

Part I

**Marx, Karl. 1971. *The Grundrisse*. New York: Harper & Row.

Introduction

****Watch:** David Harvey's lecture on the *Grundrisse* (Introduction)
<http://davidharvey.org/2020/01/reading-marxs-grundrisse/>

Further Reading

Althusser, L., 2016. *Reading Capital. The Complete Edition*. Translated by Ben Brewster and David Fehrnbach. New York: Verso.

Althusser, Louis. 2020. *On Ideology*. New York: Verso.

Week 4

October 5 *Marx, Part 2*

****Marx, Karl.** *Capital, Vol. 1*. New York: Penguin.
Part I, Chapter I. The Commodity.

****Watch:** David Harvey's introduction to *Capital* (Chapter 1)
<http://davidharvey.org/2019/05/reading-marxs-capital-volume-1-with-david-harvey-2019-edition/>

October 12: Thanksgiving Break

Week 5

October 19 *Making Society*

****Durkheim, Émile.** 2014 [1893]. *Division of Labor in Society*. New York: Free Press. Steve Lukes, Trans.

Introduction to the 1984 edition, Coser

Introduction to this edition, Lukes

Preface to the First Edition (1893)

Introduction

Book I, Chapter I. The Method of Determining This Function

Chapter II. Mechanical Solidarity, or Solidarity by Similarities

Chapter III. Solidarity Arising from the Division of Labor, or Organic Solidarity

Book III, Chapter I. The Anomic Division of Labor

Conclusion

****Durkheim, Émile.** 2013 [1895]. *The Rules of Sociological Method*. New York: Free Press. Steve Lukes, Trans.

Introduction to this edition, Lukes

Chapter I. What is a Social Fact?

Chapter II. Rules for the Observation of Social Facts

Chapter V. Rules for the Explanation of Social Facts

Further Reading

Celikates, Robin. 2018. *Critique As Social Practice : Critical Theory and Social Self-Understanding*. Translated by Naomi van Steenberg. Essex Studies in Contemporary Critical Theory. London: Rowman & Littlefield.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1973, "What Ethnology owes to Durkheim" in *Structural Anthropology Two*, pp. 44-48.

Listen:

<https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/la-suite-dans-les-idees/durkheim-la-fin-de-sa-vie-je-reviens-la-philosophie-et-je-nai-peut>

<https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/avoir-raison-avec-emile-durkheim>

Week 6

October 26 *Individual and Society*

** Tarde, Gabriel 2012 *Monadology and Sociology*. Translated by Theo Lorenc, re.press
<https://re-press.org/books/monadology-and-sociology/>

**Du Bois, W. E. B. (2000). "Sociology Hesitant." *boundary 2* 27(3): 37-44.
<https://doi-org.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/10.1215/01903659-27-3-37>

Further Reading

Alliez, E. (2004). "The Difference And Repetition Of Gabriel Tarde." *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 5(2): 49-54.

*Candea, M. (2010). *The social after Gabriel Tarde: debates and assessments*. London: Routledge. PDF

Judy, R. A. T. (2000). "Introduction: On W. E. B. Du Bois and Hyperbolic Thinking." *boundary 2* 27(3): 1-35.

Latour on Tarde <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/taxonomy/term/17.html>

Tarde, Gabriel de. 1962. *The Laws of Imitation*. Gloucester, Mass: P. Smith.

Week 7

November 2 *Exchange*

**Mauss, M., et al. (2016). *The Gift*. Translated by J. Guyer. Chicago, HAU Books.
Forward
Translator's Introduction

Part II: Essay on the Gift.

Further Reading

Derrida, J. (1992). *Given time. I, Counterfeit money*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Ginzburg, C. (2010). "Lectures de Mauss." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* (6): 1303-1320.

Godelier, Maurice. 1999. *The Enigma of the Gift*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1987). *Introduction to the work of Marcel Mauss*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Raheja, Gloria Goodwin. 1988. *The Poison in the Gift : Ritual, Prestation, and the Dominant Caste in a North Indian Village*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Strathern, M. (1988). *The gender of the gift: problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Week 8

November 9

** Weber, Max. 1978. *Economy and Society*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. 2 vols. Berkeley- University of California Press.

Introduction, 1-8 (xxxiii-lvii)

Volume 1, Part 1, Chapter I. Basic Sociological Terms

Volume 2, Chapter X. Domination and Legitimacy

Chapter XI. Bureaucracy

Chapter XIV. Charisma and its Transformations

Further Reading:

Weber, Max. 1949. *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Edited by Edward Shils and Henry A Finch. Glencoe Ill.: Free Press.

Week 9

November 16 *Society as Repression*

**Freud, Sigmund [1930] 1960 *Civilization and its Discontents*. Translated by J. Strachey. New York: Norton.

Further Reading

Michel de Certeau. 1986. *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Psychoanalysis and Its History

Lear, Jonathan. 2015. *Freud*. Second ed. Routledge Philosophers. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Week 10

November 23 *Participant Observation*

**Cushing, F. H. and J. Green [1880s/1928] (1979). *Zuñi: selected writings of Frank Hamilton Cushing*. Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press.
- Part I. Becoming Indian

**Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: an account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Forward

Introduction

I, III, IV, V, VI, XII, XVII, XXVII

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1989. *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*. Stanford University Press.

Further Reading

Fabian, Johannes. 2000 *Out of Our Minds. Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

<http://site.ebrary.com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/lib/mcgill/detail.action?docID=10064727>

Stocking, George. The Ethnographer's Magic. Chapter 1.

Stocking, George W. 1986. *Malinowski, Rivers, Benedict and Others : Essays on Culture and Personality*. History of Anthropology, V. 4. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press.
Anthropology and the Science of the Irrational. PDF.

Young, Michael. 2004. Malinowski: Odyssey of an Anthropologist, 1884-1920. Yale University Press. III: 1914-1920

Week 11

November 30 *Structure and Function*

**Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1940. *The Nuer, a description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a Nilotic people*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
<https://archive.org/details/nuerdescriptiono00evan/page/n7>

Introductory

I. Interest in Cattle

III. Time and Space

- IV. The Political System
- V. The Lineage System
- VI. Age-Set System, Part V

**Radcliffe-Brown.1952. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*.
 Introduction
 IX: On the concept of Function in Social Science
 X: On Social Structure.

Further Reading

Stocking, George. 1995. *After Tylor: British Social Anthropology 1888-1951*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Chapters 6 & 7.

Stocking, George. 1988. *Functionalism Historicized*. Chapters 6 and 7. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. PDF

Week 12

December 3 (Thursday) *From Volksgeist to Culture*

**Stocking. Boas and the History of the Culture Concept.

**Bunzl. Boas and Humboldtian Tradition.

**Boas, Franz. *Race, Language, and Culture*.
 The Aims of Anthropological Research (1932)
 Some Problems of Methodology in the Social Sciences (1930)
 Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology (1896)
 The Methods of Ethnology (1920)

Further Reading:

*Herder, Johann Gottfried von. [1774] 2002. *This Too a Philosophy of History*. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 280-284, 291-299, 358

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/herder/>
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/herder/supplement.html#HerRolBir>

Week 13

December 7 *Culture in American Anthropology*

** King, Charles. 2019. *Gods of the Upper Air : How a Circle of Renegade Anthropologists Reinvented Race, Sex, and Gender in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Doubleday. Selections TBA.

Reviews of King in TLS, NYRB, Nation. PDF

**Hurston, Zora Neale. *Mules and Men*.

Preface by Franz Boas
Part 1. Folk Tales

**Benedict, Ruth. 2005. Patterns of Culture. Mariner Books.
Chapter 1. The Science of Custom
Chapter 8. The Individual and the Pattern of Culture