

# ANTH 495 – Honours Essay Seminar

**Course Director:**

**Dr. Maximilian C. Forte**

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Concordia University

Office: H-1125-11

Office Hours, Fall 2006:

Thursdays, 3:00pm–6:00pm

Office Hours, Winter 2007:

Thursdays, 9:30am–12:30pm

Fall Semester, 2006, and Winter Semester, 2007

06 credits

Thursdays: 6:00pm–8:15pm

Campus: SGW, Room H-539-2

Winter semester office appointments for

Honours students:

Thursdays, 1:00–6:00pm

Course Website: <http://www.centrelink.org/ANTH495/>

## A. Purposes and Objectives

The Honours Essay Seminar in Anthropology is provided to students so that they can focus on an anthropological subject that is of interest to them and to develop their work in the form of, in the first instance, a research proposal and stemming from that, a thesis. As a way of concluding the seminar experience, students will be asked to summarize and present their finished work in a joint Sociology-Anthropology undergraduate student conference, tentatively scheduled for the Winter 2007 “make up day” (Weds., 11 April, 2007). Students will meet collectively to discuss their proposals and will also meet individually with the honours advisor to address the specific progress of their projects. In the second semester, students will meet on an individual basis with the honours advisor, on a bi-weekly basis in January, and on a weekly basis through most of February and March. One formal gathering of the seminar group will take place at the end of March and at the start of April, to plan for the undergraduate conference mentioned above (although documents and guidelines will be furnished in advance), and for students to present summaries of their theses.

The intention of the seminar as a whole is to have students demonstrate that they can apply and extend what they learned during the course of their undergraduate careers in a manner that will serve to highlight their research and analysis skills, which are vital for pursuing either graduate studies or work outside of academic settings. Students in this course will undertake extended library research for their research proposals, and in some if not most cases, for their thesis as well. Ethnographic fieldwork (inevitably of short duration) is permitted, *if* it follows the progress of this course, not if it preceded the course, for reasons that shall become obvious during the first semester. Students interested in conducting ethnographic field research should consider basing their projects in Montreal or its environs. Long-term research, in a field setting located at a significant distance from Montreal, is not recommended and will likely cause significant problems. Students who have conducted their own independent and informal field research prior to this course are allowed to *build on* and *extend* their interests and the knowledge they gained by considering a wider body of related research of both an ethnographic and theoretical nature. Otherwise, no research proposal can be accepted for research that has been already completed and without mentoring in the honours seminar.

Assigned readings, seminar discussions, and individual meetings with the honours advisor (throughout the course of the second semester), are all vital components of this course and are the basis for evaluating your research engagement (in addition to the assignments indicated below).

*There are no formal lectures in this course.* Students must therefore come fully prepared for discussions ranging from intensive review to analysis, critique, questioning, and suggestions of desirable alternatives. The assigned readings will form a starting point for discussions, structured in such a way that they support the development of your research proposal and address the main components of a standard research proposal in the social sciences. Given their relationship with the research proposal, there are no assigned readings for the period of your research or the writing of the thesis (two stages that begin after the end of the last class of the Fall semester).

## **B. Expectations**

One of your immediate challenges will be to conceive and envision a research project that truly fascinates you, that addresses questions you think are important, and that promises to teach us all something we might not have adequately known or considered. The second (related) challenge is to show what you can do with anthropology. The third challenge is to muster all your energies, skills, and knowledge gained from many courses to produce a final piece of work that rivals anything you have encountered as an assigned reading in a course—in other words, the aim should be a piece of work of publishable quality. Ask yourself: *Why do we need to know about this? What are the important ideas here?* In organizational terms, choose a theoretical paradigm, a particular “community” at the focus of your research, and the significant concepts to be applied, extended, or developed in addressing your central research question. In summary, these are the “three C’s” of research design: you need to develop a Case study, focused on a particular Community, explained with the aid of specific Concepts. Of course variation is permitted, but this should be raised in collective discussions.

As the honours advisor my challenges revolve around producing meaningful discussions that in some shape or spirit stimulate your own research production, to assist the student in transforming herself/himself from a *consumer* of research into a *producer* of research. I will not be able to equally advise all students on the “nitty gritty” of their research projects, meaning that I will not have equal expertise in all possible areas of research. However, I can and will serve as an evaluator who is well acquainted with the structures, methods, and qualities of significant research in anthropology. One of my primary aims is not to criticize you as a student, but to question you as a colleague. It is my hope that in addressing questions posed to you, both by myself and members of the seminar, that your thinking will be deepened and developed.

## **C. Assigned Readings**

All of the assigned readings are contained in a Course Reader available for sale in the Concordia University Bookstore. At the time of writing this syllabus, no prices for this were available.

Please keep in mind that you will develop your own reading list, both for your research proposal and your thesis, and you should be prepared to do a much higher level of reading (in both quantity and quality) than you have ever done thus far.

Inevitably, some students demand the assurance of quantity, and will ask how many pages per week would be a safe guide to follow: for both your own research topic and the assigned readings combined, you should be reading approximately 120 to 160 pages per week, for 13 weeks. For the thesis itself, especially for projects based on library research, that number should double and be sustained for roughly 12 weeks (December is counted as part of the research period for this course).

For their part, the assigned readings are simply oriented toward the basics of your work for the research proposal and the thesis. Thus the readings cover *theoretical cornerstones*, *research design*, *research methods*, *ethics*, and *writing*. The readings are by no means comprehensive, and in some instances are designed to galvanize what you have already learned as a basic and critical guideline as to what you need to remember and further consider when developing your research.

### D. Grading

All of your work in this seminar will be evaluated using the following scale, and please note the qualitative translations for each grade since these will be paramount in making my evaluation.

|  |        |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
|--|--------|----------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|--------|----|--------|---|------------------|----|--------|---|--------|----|--------|--|----|--------|---|---------------------|---|--------|----|--------|---|----|--------|---|-------------|---|--------|----|--------|------------------|---|----------|------------|--|--|---|-----------|
| <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">A+</td> <td style="width: 15%;">90-100</td> <td rowspan="2" style="font-size: 3em; vertical-align: middle;">}</td> <td rowspan="2" style="vertical-align: middle;"><b>EXCELLENT</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>85- 89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A-</td> <td>80- 84</td> <td rowspan="4" style="font-size: 3em; vertical-align: middle;">}</td> <td rowspan="4" style="vertical-align: middle;"><b>VERY GOOD</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>B+</td> <td>77- 79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>73- 76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B-</td> <td>70- 72</td> </tr> </table> | A+     | 90-100   | }                   | <b>EXCELLENT</b> | A                | 85- 89 | A- | 80- 84 | } | <b>VERY GOOD</b> | B+ | 77- 79 | B | 73- 76 | B- | 70- 72 | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">C+</td> <td style="width: 15%;">67- 69</td> <td rowspan="3" style="font-size: 3em; vertical-align: middle;">}</td> <td rowspan="3" style="vertical-align: middle;"><b>SATISFACTORY</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>63- 66</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C-</td> <td>60- 62</td> </tr> </table> | C+ | 67- 69 | } | <b>SATISFACTORY</b> | C | 63- 66 | C- | 60- 62 | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">D+</td> <td style="width: 15%;">57- 59</td> <td rowspan="3" style="font-size: 3em; vertical-align: middle;">}</td> <td rowspan="3" style="vertical-align: middle;"><b>POOR</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>53- 56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D-</td> <td>50- 52</td> </tr> </table><br><table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;"><b>VERY POOR</b></td> <td style="font-size: 3em; vertical-align: middle;">{</td> <td style="width: 30%;">F or FNS</td> <td style="width: 30%;">40 (30-49)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>R</td> <td>20 (0-29)</td> </tr> </table> | D+ | 57- 59 | } | <b>POOR</b> | D | 53- 56 | D- | 50- 52 | <b>VERY POOR</b> | { | F or FNS | 40 (30-49) |  |  | R | 20 (0-29) |
| A+   | 90-100 | }        |                     |                  | <b>EXCELLENT</b> |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| A  | 85- 89 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| A-   | 80- 84 | }        | <b>VERY GOOD</b>    |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| B+   | 77- 79 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| B  | 73- 76 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| B-   | 70- 72 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| C+   | 67- 69 | }        | <b>SATISFACTORY</b> |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| C  | 63- 66 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| C-   | 60- 62 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| D+   | 57- 59 | }        | <b>POOR</b>         |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| D  | 53- 56 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| D-   | 50- 52 |          |                     |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
| <b>VERY POOR</b>   | {      | F or FNS | 40 (30-49)          |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |
|  |        | R        | 20 (0-29)           |                  |                  |        |    |        |   |                  |    |        |   |        |    |        |  |    |        |   |                     |   |        |    |        |   |    |        |   |             |   |        |    |        |                  |   |          |            |  |  |   |           |

For details of how much each assignment is worth in terms of the overall grade, please see section E.

#### Academic Regulations

Section 16 (Academic Information: Definitions and Regulations) of the Undergraduate Calendar will be strictly administered - particularly on deadlines, Failing Grades, Administrative Notations, Late Completions='INCompletes' (Grade/INC), 'Failed No Supplementals' (FNS), 'Did Not Writes' (Grade/DNW). Make sure you get a copy of the undergraduate calendar, also available online at <http://registrar.concordia.ca/calendar/calendar.html>, and read that material.

**PLEASE NOTE that plagiarism is an offence that will not be tolerated. In instances where plagiarism is detected, the instructor is *obligated* by Concordia's Academic Code to report this to the Dean's office. Please visit the following URLs into the address bar of your Internet browser:**

<http://secretariat.concordia.ca/policies/academic/en/Code%20of%20Conduct-Academic.pdf> =  
**Concordia Code of Academic Conduct in PDF format**

<http://cdev.concordia.ca/CnD/studentlearn/Help/handouts/WritingHO/AvoidingPlagiarism.html> =  
**Concordia University Library document to help you Avoid Plagiarism**

### **Reference Formatting**

For all written work in this course, students must use the formatting for citations and bibliographies developed by the American Anthropological Association (AAA), or, if preferred, the American Psychological Association (APA).

## **E. Assignments**

### **(1) Statement of Intent:**

This is the very beginning of formulating the basis for your research proposal, and we will undertake this exercise first so that no time is lost in your developing a focus. You are being asked to produce a statement of your intended research topic. Please provide a working title (which may change), a couple of paragraphs describing and explaining the intended focus of your research project, and a short list of five to ten likely published sources that you will be using for your project. To prevent disarray and a harmful loss of time, you should not revise your intended focus after October. Any revised project interests must be registered by submitting a new statement of intent.

**Due date: Thurs., Oct. 5, 2006**

**1 page**

**4% of final grade**

### **(2) Article/Chapter Analysis (i.e., sample literature review exercise):**

This exercise is not meant to distract from your main task for the Fall semester, which is to produce a research proposal. The aim here is to supplement and guide your efforts toward that goal by carefully selecting a significant piece of work that is central to your research interest—this may be a primarily theoretical or ethnographic journal article (or a balance of the two), or a chapter from an edited volume, or the first chapter of an author's ethnography. The item must be one authored by an anthropologist. In a 10 minute presentation to the class, as well as a two-page summary provided to all members of the seminar, you will provide an analysis of: (i) the central issue/problem/question being addressed by the author; (ii) an indication of why the issue/problem/question is important; (iii) the way in which the author relates the specific research to wider scholarly literature of relevance to the author's project; (iv) the original material presented by the author, whether it is primarily theoretical, ethnographic, or a balance of the two; (v) methodologies employed by the author; (vi) the strengths and weaknesses of the given piece. Finally, (vii) provide a brief reflection on how this item will likely shape or inform your research project. You will learn that a literature review is *not* a summary of the contents of other people's research, but an assessment of avenues for further exploration.

**Due date: Thurs., Oct. 19, 2006**

*(All students will present in class on this date.)*

**2 pages (single spaced)**

**8% of final grade**

**(3) Ethics Exercise:**

As your work for the research proposal is nearing an end, you are asked to consider ethical implications, which will vary depending on the nature of your project (i.e., one that is primarily based on your intended ethnographic work versus one based primarily on library research). In both cases, you are asked to synthesize the main elements of the statement of research ethics produced by the American Anthropological Association, and relevant sections of Canada's Tri-Council Statement on Research Involving Human Subjects (those sections will be identified as we get closer to the assignment, and both documents are available online). In addition, you will integrate assigned readings on ethics into this exercise. The final part of this exercise will differ depending on the nature of your research project. For those intending to conduct ethnographic research, you will be required to complete and submit an application for ethics review (forms to be provided). For those conducting a library-based project, you will be asked to select the most significant authors for your project and analyze and otherwise consider the kinds of ethical issues that may or should have arisen for these authors who have conducted research on your chosen topic, either during their fieldwork and/or with the subsequent presentation of their findings.

**Due date: Thurs., Nov. 2, 2006**

**3 pages (single spaced)—not including an ethics review application**

**8% of final grade**

**(4) Research Proposal:**

The *research proposal* is the culmination of your work for this first semester. A research proposal is typically organized with the following main sections: (i) **a statement of the research problem/question**; (ii) **background to the problem/subject area**: this is essentially a literature review, that incorporates both theoretical and ethnographic dimensions of the related research; (iii) **analytical orientations**: having told us what you are interested and why, and having provided an overview of what others have done, here you tell us where you will be heading with this research, what you expect to argue, how your approach may differ from, or add to, extant research; (iv) **methods**: if pursuing an ethnographic field research project, you will specifically, although briefly, outline your chosen research methods, with an explanation of why you chose them—however, in the case of library research, you will indicate the methods by which you chose certain authors as “the significant ones,” and you will also indicate the *primary documents* (reports, newspaper articles, interviews, oral histories, etc.) that you will be using; (v) **ethics**: given the two different types of research projects that are possible (ethnographic and library-based), and the previous ethics exercise, all you should do here is simply copy and paste a *revised* and *summarized* version of your ethics exercise here; (vi) **working bibliography**: this is a comprehensive list of *both* the sources you actually referenced for the proposal *and* the range of sources that you are likely to consult for this project.

**Due date: Thurs., Nov. 23, 2006**

**5-7 pages (single spaced)—not including the bibliography**

**15% of final grade**

**(5) Thesis (plus conference report):**

The final essay, reflecting in both its structure and expression any advanced piece of work that can often be found in an anthropology journal, is the ultimate product of your seminar work. You will have a chance to revise your thesis, and to present a summary at the seminar, during one of the two meetings scheduled for the end of the Winter semester.

**Due date, first draft: Thurs., March 1, 2007**

**Due date, final draft: Thurs., April 5, 2007**

**Presentation of Summary in class: Thurs., March 29 & Thurs., April 5, 2007**

**Report for Conference: Weds., April 11, 2007**

**50 pages (double spaced)—*not including the bibliography***

**50% of final grade**

(the conference report is worth 5% of the final grade)

**(5) Seminar Participation:**

In some instances, your oral presentations to class are factored into the grades assigned for those exercises (see Article/Chapter Analysis and Thesis/Conference Report). However, in all cases you will always be “the audience” for someone else’s presentation, and you are also expected to attend regularly and address assigned readings. In addition, you are required to keep regular appointments in the second semester, and to attend the two final seminar sessions and the undergraduate conference. These weigh considerably in your final evaluation.

**15% of final grade**

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**Summary Schedule of Assignments**

Statement of Intent: Oct. 5, 2006

Article/Chapter Analysis: Oct. 19, 2006

Ethics Exercise: Nov. 2, 2006

Research Proposal: Nov. 23, 2006

Thesis: first draft, March 1, 2007; final draft, April 5, 2007

Report for Conference: Weds., April 11, 2007

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**Summary of Graded Components:**

Statement of Intent: 4%

Article/Chapter Analysis: 8%

Ethics Exercise: 8%

Research Proposal: 15%

Thesis/Report for Conference: 45 + 5%

Seminar Participation: 15%

## F. Schedule of Meetings, Assigned Readings, Other Dates to Remember:

### Fall 2006

#### 1. Thurs., Sept. 7

##### *Seminar Introduction*

#### 2. Thurs., Sept. 14

##### *Theory*

- Ortner, Sherry B. 1994. "Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties." In Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, Sherry B. Ortner, eds., *Culture/Power/History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 372–411.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1991. "Writing Against Culture." In Richard G. Fox, ed., *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press. 137–162.

#### 3. Thurs., Sept. 21—class cancelled (make up day scheduled for Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>)

##### *Work on your statement of intent*

- Moore, Henrietta L. 1996. "The Changing Nature of Anthropological Knowledge: An Introduction." In Henrietta L. Moore, ed., *The Future of Anthropological Knowledge*. London: Routledge. 1–15.

#### 4. Thurs., Sept. 28—class cancelled

##### *Work on your statement of intent*

#### 5. Thurs., Oct. 5

##### *Theory*

- Marcus, George E., and Fischer, Michael M.J. 1986. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Ch. 2, Ethnography and Interpretive Anthropology, 17–44)
- Geertz, Clifford. 2000. *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Ch. 5, The State of the Art, 89–142)

#### 6. Thurs., Oct. 12

##### *Research Design*

- Babbie, Earl. 1995. *The Practice of Social Research*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company. (Ch. 4, Research Design, 82–108)
- Robson, Colin. 2002. *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Blackwell. (Ch. 2, Approaches to Social Research, 16–44)
- Bernard, H. Russell. 2000. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage. (Ch. 3, Preparing for Research, 65–99)

#### 7. Thurs., Oct. 19

##### *Ethics*

- Geddes, Bill. 1993. "The Use of Informants and Research Assistants in Field Research." In Malcolm Crick and Bill Geddes, eds., *Research Methods in the Field: Ten Anthropological Accounts*. Geelong: Deakin University Press. 59–82.

- AAA Code of Ethics
- AAA Ethics Committee Briefing on Informed Consent

#### 8. Thurs., Oct. 26

##### *Ethics*

- AAA Ethics Committee Briefing Paper on Consideration of the Potentially Negative Impact of the Publication of Factual Data about a Study Population on Such Population
- Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Research Involving Humans—  
[http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/pdf/TCPS%20October%202005\\_E.pdf](http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/pdf/TCPS%20October%202005_E.pdf)—  
Read: i.4, i.5, i.6, i.7 & 2.1 through 2.10 & 3.1 through 3.6

#### 9. Thurs., Nov. 2

##### *Methods*

- Hammersley, Martyn, and Atkinson, Paul. 1995. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Routledge (Ch.1, What is Ethnography? 1–22)
- Madison, D. Soyini. 2005. *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance*. London: Sage (Ch. 2, Methods: “Do I Really Need a Method?” A Method...or Deep Hanging—Out. 17–41)
- Bernard, H. Russell. 1995. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press. (Ch. 7, Participant Observation, 136–164)

#### 10. Thurs., Nov. 9

##### *Methods*

- Hastrup, Kirsten. 1983. “Fieldwork among Friends.” In Anthony Jackson, ed., *Anthropology at Home*. London: Tavistock. 95–108.
- Muetzelfeldt, Michael. 1989. “Fieldwork at Home.” In John Perry, ed., *Doing Fieldwork: Eight Personal Accounts of Social Research*. Geelong: Deakin University Press. 41–60.

#### 11. Thurs., Nov. 16

##### *Methods*

- Hannerz, Ulf. 1976. “Methods in an Urban African Study.” *Ethnos*, 68–98.
- Colson, Elizabeth. 1967. “The Intensive Study of Small Scale Communities.” In A.L. Epstein, ed., *The Craft of Social Anthropology*. London: Tavistock. 3–15.

#### 12. Thurs., Nov. 23

##### *Methods*

- Clifford, James. 1990. “Notes on (Field)notes.” In Roger Sanjek, ed., *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 47–69.
- Rapport, Nigel. 1991. “Writing Fieldnotes: The Conventionalities of Note-Taking and Taking Note in the Field.” *Anthropology Today*, 7 (1) Feb: 10–13.
- Neuendorf, Kimberly A. 2002. *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. London: Sage (Ch. 1, Defining Content Analysis, 1–25)
- Middleton, John. 1983. “The End of Fieldwork.” In J.B. Cole, ed., *Anthropology for the Eighties*. New York: Macmillan. 14–29.



13. Thurs., Nov. 30

*Writing Ethnography*

- Emerson, Robert M.; Fretz, Rachel I.; and, Shaw, Linda L. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Ch. 7, Writing an Ethnography, 169–210)
- Czarniawska, Barbara. 2004. *Narratives in Social Science Research*. London: Sage (Ch. 1, The ‘Narrative Turn’ in Social Studies, 1–16)

14. Tues., Dec. 5

*Writing Ethnography*

- Herzfeld, Michael. 1983. “Looking Both Ways: the Ethnographer and the Text.” *Semiotica*, 46 (2/4): 151–165.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2000. “Participant Objectivation.” Huxley Memorial Lecture, Roul Anthropological Institute, December 6.



Research Period: Dec. 5, 2006, through to January 31, 2007

Writing Period: February–April 5, 2007



Winter 2007

Thurs., Jan. 11

Thurs., Jan. 25

Thurs., Feb. 1

Thurs., Feb. 8

Thurs., Feb. 15

Thurs., March 8

Thurs., March 15

Thurs., March 22

Appointments: 1:00–6:00pm  
(fill in time sheets on office door  
to select a slot)

Thurs., March 29:

Part I, presentations of summaries of theses in class & preparation for conference

Thurs., April 5:

Part II, presentations of summaries of theses in class & preparation for conference

Conference: Weds., April 11

PLEASE SEE THE REVISED SCHEDULE THAT FOLLOWS:

## Winter 2007 – Classes and Appointments:

Class sessions will be devoted to achieving a number of objectives, including: (i) on the basis of one-on-one meetings, discussion of problems or other issues that appear to be important to many or most students in the course; (ii) ensuring that a writing plan is developed and followed, with in-class presentations of short extracts/sample writing from student projects; (iii) allowing students to discuss their work with other members of the class.

Individual appointments, lasting 25 minutes at a minimum, will concentrate on discussing: (i) the current state of your research; (ii) your main research findings; (iii) theoretical directions; (iv) sources used for your analysis; (v) individual writing issues. If not all students can commit to an appointment, more time will be allowed for each of those who can, if needed.

In both cases (individual appointments and class sessions), students are expected to come prepared with questions, issues to raise concerning research and writing, and in some instances actual writing samples. Formal attendance will be taken by the course director.

### Schedule:

- 1) **Thurs., Jan. 4** – research period; no office hours
  - 2) **Thurs., Jan. 11** – appointments, 1:00pm to 6:00pm [*current state of your research, compared to your original research proposal*]
  - 3) **Thurs., Jan. 18** – class session [*review of the status of your projects in light of your research period*]
  - 4) **Thurs., Jan. 25** – appointments, 1:00pm to 6:00pm [*your main research findings and how you propose to analyze them*]
  - 5) **Thurs., Feb. 1** – class session [*establishment of a writing plan*]
  - 6) **Thurs., Feb. 8** – appointments, 1:00pm to 6:00pm [*theoretical directions, sources to be used for your analysis*]
  - 7) **Thurs., Feb. 15** – class session [*short extracts of student writing, from the introductory sections of the theses, with an emphasis on writing methods*]
  - 8) **Thurs., March 1** – break from meetings – **first draft of all theses are due**
  - 9) **Thurs., March 8** – appointments, 1:00pm to 6:00pm [*review of your thesis first draft, only half of the students can be accommodated for this session*]
  - 10) **Thurs., March 15** – appointments, 1:00pm to 6:00pm [*review of your thesis first draft, the remainder of students who have not previously discussed their first draft*]
  - 11) **Thurs., March 22** – class session [*orientation for preparing presentations for the conference—structure, timing, detail, emphasis, visual aids, etc., preview of video by Curell & Teeple*]
  - 12) **Thurs., March 29** – class session [*half of the class will present the first draft of their conference papers—students to whom first drafts were returned on March 8*]
  - 13) **Thurs., April 5** – class session [*the remainder of the class will present the first draft of their conference papers—students to whom first drafts were returned on March 15*]
  - 14) **Final draft of all theses due on Thurs., April 5 (hard copy and by email)**
  - 15) Conference: **Weds., April 11** [*details to be provided as the date nears*]
- Office hours end on Thurs., April 5.  
--Final grades will be submitted by Fri., April 13.

## G. Doing Research

### THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

A research proposal commonly has the following main elements (the section titles do not need to be reproduced exactly as they appear below):

#### 1. INTRODUCTION:

What is your topic? What are the main question(s) you are addressing? Why is this important?

#### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

You can never exhaust all relevant literature—just show that you have tackled some of the more significant items. The purpose of this section is to outline main approaches in the established literature, their strengths and weaknesses, and where your proposed research fits in. The overall aim is to provide some of the *ethnographic* and *theoretical* background to your problem.

#### 3. ANALYTICAL ORIENTATIONS:

In the past, this might have been called the “hypotheses” section of your proposal. Having given the reader a clear sense of what you are interested in, why it is important, and how extant research is insufficient or somehow inadequate—you now present us with your core arguments, your perspective, the points you hope to prove in your research. Outlining the theoretical approach and the defining concepts of relevance to your project are critical components of this section.

#### 4. METHODS:

In this section you outline the methods you intend to use in your ethnographic fieldwork. Try to be detailed. Show a balanced evaluation. Justify your use of certain intended research methods.

#### 5. ETHICS:

*For ethnographic projects*

In the final section, you consider some of the ethical implications of your research and how you will protect the rights of your informants whilst safeguarding the integrity of your research. Insert a summarized and revised version of your ethics exercise here.

*For library research projects*

Consider some of the ethical questions that arise from the most important items you will be consulting for your research, that is, ethical problems and issues that may have arisen, could have arisen, and how they should be handled. Insert a summarized and revised version of your ethics exercise here.

## SOME FIRST STEPS

This is meant as a series of suggestions for those who are uncertain about how to proceed; for others, it will serve as a checklist, reminding you of steps that you might have wanted to take.

1. The FIRST step in doing research for this course is to decide on a topic. I suggest that you think in these terms—you will need to:
  - A. Decide on an ISSUE AREA, i.e., gender, race, ethnicity, globalization, terrorism, advertising, indigenous peoples;
  - B. Specify a geographic LOCATION for your research;
  - C. Choose a particular CONCEPT or theory that you wish to use or critique; and,
  - D. Think of a THEORETICAL perspective that you will employ.
  
2. The SECOND step involves the creation of a concrete research problem:
  - A. Having done the above, you now realize that without a background in some of the theories and some of the concepts, you are going nowhere. You *may* choose to start by getting a grip on some of the theories and concepts; *or*, you may decide that you first need to have a handle on the empirical data, i.e., indigenous peoples' usage of the Internet, before you can decide on the theory and concepts you will use. You can choose either direction.
  - B. Now is the time to establish your RESEARCH QUESTION/PROBLEM: this is the central theme of your whole paper—breaking it down into component key words can help you to articulate the questions you will be addressing, even the main paragraphs of your work.
  
3. You should read purposefully: know what you are looking for and what you need for developing your argument, your analysis, your directions for further research. You will rarely need to read complete books, just the most relevant chapters. Take notes, and make sure you have the exact source for the notes, and the page number(s) from which a quotation, idea, or “factoid” comes. Remember, we are using AAA or APA format for referring to works in the main body of your paper and for the bibliography. Also, review the university policy on plagiarism. That will be strictly enforced.
  
5. Since ethnographic methods and the ethics of research are critical concerns in this course, you must do your best at covering the print and online sources we use for this course.

**ANTH 495 – HONOURS ESSAY  
EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**Research Proposal** (graded out of 90 points, 15% of final grade):

1. Clear statement of a research problem/question, indicating the unit of analysis and the outline of an analytical position on the problem/question. (5 points)
2. The anthropological significance of the research project, involving a meaningful problem, an important reflection/analysis on social relations and/or cultural meaning, and likely to attract positive attention as a serious contribution to our understandings of a given problem. (10 points)
3. Literature review: efficient and critical analysis of sources that are pivotal for outlining and understanding a problem, and that are treated in a manner that opens up room for the student's own contribution to knowledge. (20 points)
4. Analytical orientations: Has the student developed a preliminary argument that is logical, consistent and interesting? Does the argument look plausible in light of the student's handling of the extant literature on the topic (or related topics)? Does the argument look like it can be fulfilled given the intended empirical research? (25 points)
5. Methods: Has the student clearly identified and discussed the research methods to be used and justified his/her choice of methods? Does it appear that the student weighed alternatives in coming to a decision on which methods to use? How effective do the research techniques appear to be with respect to the particularities of the research project? Can one surmise that the student has made effective use of assigned readings on research design, methods, and is incorporating what they have learned in the core courses of the Honours program? (15 points)
6. Ethics: Has the student shown a balanced and comprehensive understanding of the likely or possible ethical implications of his/her research (or of the research of others in the case of library-based projects)? (5 points)
7. Bibliography: is the student demonstrating a good understanding of the nature of their problem and their intended approach through a judicious selection of relevant resources? (10 points)

## ANTH 495 – HONOURS ESSAY EVALUATION CRITERIA

**Thesis** (graded out of 150 points, worth 45% of the final grade):

### **General considerations (in no particular order):**

**1. From the course syllabus:**

“The...challenge is to...produce a final piece of work that rivals anything you have encountered as an assigned reading in a course—in other words, the aim should be a piece of work of publishable quality. Ask yourself: *Why do we need to know about this? What are the important ideas here?*”

**2. Is the paper of a quality that would make it a likely candidate for publication in an anthropology journal?**

- if the answer to this question is **yes**, the grade is in the “**A**” range (excellent, outstanding, brilliant, advanced work)
- if the answer is **yes but** pending some important revisions and improvements, the grade is in the “**B**” range (very good)
- if the answer is **no**, it would likely be sent back to the writer without a commitment to reconsider the item, the grade is then in the “**C**” range, meaning “satisfactory—for addressing the basics in the setting of an advanced undergraduate course in anthropology”
- if the paper is objectionable on several grounds, the grade is in the “**D**” range (very poor, well below what is expected of a student at this level)

**3. What made the problem *a problem*? Is it a significant problem for addressing key issues and questions in anthropology? Does the project consist of simply identifying a niche or actually hitting upon a social and cultural problem whose importance is clearly and convincingly explained by the student?**

### **Specific considerations:**

1. Clear statement of a research problem/question, indicating the unit of analysis and the outline of an analytical position on the problem/question. Discussion of what makes the problem *a problem*, with some introductory background analysis of how and why others have identified this as a problem, or a very convincing explanation as to why no others have identified this problem. (10 points)
2. What makes this problem an important one? Why do we need to read this study? Why do we need to know about this? The anthropological significance of the research project, involving a meaningful problem, an important reflection/analysis on social relations and/or cultural meaning, and likely to attract positive attention as a serious contribution to our understandings of a given problem. The ability to identify, delineate, and focus a project. (15 points)

3. Theoretical treatment: efficient and critical analysis of extant theoretical and ethnographic literature; a clear, consistent, logical and compelling argument. (40 points)
4. Ethnographic description: lucid, condensed, and engaging presentation of the vital empirical core of the project, demonstrating advanced writing skills. (40 points)
5. Logical structure, at a minimum following this outline: introduction, description, analysis (students may choose to switch the order between analysis and description), conclusion (10 points)
6. Conclusion: what has this project shown us? What should we have learned from it? What future research could be done on this topic (i.e., questions and facets that remained unexamined in this project or that had to be downplayed)? (15 points)
7. Sources: items that were referred to in the text of the thesis, demonstrating superior coverage and advanced research fitting of a an article published in a contemporary anthropology journal. (20 points)

**Conference presentation** (worth 5% of the final grade):

- effective presentation, showing control of one's material and skill in delivery
- solid summary of one's key empirical base, findings
- well organized, insightful, thought provoking argument
- ability to address questions and comments posed by those in the audience with intelligent and constructive replies

[Please note that failure to participate in the conference, except on serious medical grounds that are legitimately documented, will result not only in the loss of 5% of the final grade but in addition the loss of the total participation grade worth 15%]

**ANTH 495 – HONOURS ESSAY  
VIDEO PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA**

1. **Video** (worth 30% of the final grade)
2. **Theoretical treatment of your subject** (worth 7.5% of the final grade, 7-10 pages double-spaced)
3. **Methodological self-analysis:** what were the decisions guiding your choices when editing; why did you choose certain ways of framing the subjects in your video over others; what you intended to convey through video; what your video achieved that a written treatment could not; what you thought were the limitations of your video; your overall self-evaluation of the project and whether you would do this project again knowing what you know by March 2007 (worth 7.5% of the final grade, 7-10 pages double-spaced)
4. Statement of the specific work done by you as an individual for this project: actual duties performed, approximate times spent performing them (required, but no grade is assigned for this, nor is there any specified length, and, the information can be presented in bullet point form)

**General considerations (in no particular order):**

1. *From the course syllabus:*

“The...challenge is to...produce a final piece of work that rivals anything you have encountered as an assigned reading in a course—in other words, the aim should be a piece of work of publishable quality. Ask yourself: *Why do we need to know about this? What are the important ideas here?*” -- *In the case of an ethnographic video: the challenge is to produce a video of a quality that resembles anything of comparable length that one would normally find shown in an anthropology course.*

2. **Is the VIDEO of a quality that would make it a likely candidate for use in a university classroom setting?**

- if the answer to this question is **yes**, the grade is in the “**A**” range (excellent, outstanding, brilliant, advanced work)
- if the answer is **yes but** pending some important revisions and improvements, the grade is in the “**B**” range (very good)
- if the answer is **no**, it would be highly unlikely that anyone would order this item or find a place for it in an anthropology class, the grade is then in the “**C**” range, meaning “satisfactory—for taking the first steps toward producing a video of anthropological interest”
- if the video is objectionable on several grounds, the grade is in the “**D**” range (very poor, well below what is expected of a student at this level)

3. What made the problem at the centre of the project *a problem*? Is it a significant problem for addressing key issues and questions in anthropology? Does the project consist of simply identifying a niche or actually hitting upon a social and cultural problem whose importance is clearly explained by the student?



**Specific considerations for evaluating the video:**

1. Does the video indicate what its subject matter is and why the project was undertaken?  
This need not be stated bluntly or only in one form.
2. Is the editing effective in preserving the integrity of short sequences of action, or in reconstructing longer sequences of action through careful editing?
3. Does the video allow the viewer the opportunity to reflect on what is being shown, or is it instead a rapid and confusing collage of images?
4. Do the images appear to have been carefully composed, or does one instead get a sense of random, unguided, aimless recording?
5. Can the viewer experience moments of (illusory) immersion in a situation being shown in the video?
6. Do we get a sense that this is a project that could meaningfully be handled by video more than by writing?
7. In the case of “intangibles” that may have no visible surface appearance, how successful was the video in creating at least an illusion that we (the viewers) could somehow sense the presence and import of the intangible(s)?
8. Do the images aid in conveying meaning or was there an over reliance on narration to fill the gaps which the video recording itself created or left unattended?
9. Did any one facet of the ethnographic situation receive more attention than other facets, and if so does the choice appear to have been a reasonable one?
10. Has the editing been undertaken with the view of presenting a perspective, an argument, that can reasonably be ascertained from viewing the video?
11. Was that perspective effectively conveyed by the video (was it consistent, clear, and convincing)?
12. Could the video meaningfully fit into a session in an undergraduate anthropology class?
13. Do we get any sense that anthropologists made this video (apart from being plainly told in the narration), or does it instead reflect the influences more of popular culture than anything else?
14. Can we see that subjects and/or situations were recorded with “an anthropological eye”?
15. Overall, was the video presentation done with a certain degree of “professionalism”? Does it avoid sensationalizing its subject? Does it show care and cleverness in its construction?

**Theoretical treatment (written as an individual endeavour):**

1. Discussion of what makes the problem at the centre of the video *a problem*, with some introductory background analysis of how and why others have identified this as a problem, or a very convincing explanation as to why no others have identified this problem.
2. What makes this problem an important one? Why do we need to see this video? Why do we need to know about this? The anthropological significance of the research project, involving a meaningful problem, an important reflection/analysis on social relations and/or cultural meaning, and likely to attract positive attention as a serious contribution to our understandings of a given problem.
3. Condensed, efficient and critical analysis of extant theoretical and ethnographic literature; a clear, consistent, logical and compelling argument to accompany the video.

To a certain degree then, this theoretical treatment allows you the freedom to explore and extend an argument beyond what you were able to do in the video itself. This is written in the vein of, very loosely stated: “If you were wondering what we were getting at, this is it:”

**Methodological self-analysis (written as an individual endeavour):**

1. Choices made in editing—what was excluded and why?
2. How did the video-makers' perspective on the subject structure the presentation of images and sequences in the video?
3. Reflection on how this work intended to draw upon and/or modify another recognizable approach in ethnographic film.
4. Discussion of the role of narration.
5. Revisiting debates key debates in visual anthropology and positioning one's visual practice within those debates.
6. Was this worth doing as a video, and would you do it again? What might you do differently?
7. *In general terms*, this methodological treatment should follow the examples set by Edgar Morin in his “Chronicle of a Film” and the published discussion between Akos Ostor and Robert Gardner on the making of *Forest of Bliss*.

**Sources for both of the written theoretical and methodological components:** while not as voluminous as with a written thesis, the expectation is that *very vital* sources of direct theoretical, ethnographic, and methodological relevance were used for the project.

**Deadlines:**

1. Rough cut of video, to be shown in class on Thursday, March 22 (you will have up to 60 minutes for this version, allowing 15 minutes for discussion—to be safe, have a DVD and VHS copy ready in case one or the other format fails to show in H-539-2)
2. Theoretical, methodological, and individual statements of work performed, to be submitted on Thursday, April. 5. These will be the only drafts to be submitted, so please consult well in advance and especially use the opportunities presented during individual interview appointments and class sessions to present drafts of your theoretical and methodological treatments.
3. In place of presenting the draft of a conference paper, as other students will be doing in the final two sessions of the second semester, please come ready to discuss changes you have made or are about to make to the first version of the video shown on March 22. You will have this opportunity on April 5.
4. Final version of the video to be shown during the conference, on April 11. Please prepare a DVD version for the course director.

**Conference video presentation** (worth 5% of the final grade—rules of non-attendance apply as with all other students):

[if the conference is to be held in H-1120, consult in advance with Elizabeth Szekely, Secretary to the Chair, on which video format can be shown, and perhaps try out the facilities before the conference—be prepared with a DVD, a video file on CD, and a VHS tape, each with the complete video—if everything is unsatisfactory, inform the course director at least a week in advance so that he can arrange with IITS to make a TV and DVD or VCR player made available in the room for the conference]

- audience reaction will play a critical role in determining how successful this video was within the conference setting
- the ability of the editors to explain the project, its theoretical import, and raise two or three key methodological issues will be an important part of the spoken presentation
- the manner in which the video presenters handle questions from those attending the conference, the depth of their answers, and their demonstration of competence will also be vital for determining the value of the overall presentation
- 20 minutes for the film, 5 minutes for Curell, 5 minutes for Teeple to address the audience, followed by questions (one presenter should focus on the theoretical analysis at the centre of the ethnography, the other should bring to the fore key methodological issues that faced the team in constructing the video).