

Anthropology and Social Justice
(ANTH 4031)
Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota

Spring 2008

Syllabus: http://www.geocities.com/davidvalentine2002/syllabi/ASJ_S2008.pdf

Ereserve: <http://eres.lib.umn.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=526>

David Valentine

Class Times: 11:15- 12:30

Office: 364 HHH Center

Office Hours: Tu/Th 1:00-2:00pm and by appointment

Class location: Blegen 335

Class Dates: Tu/Th. (01/22/2008 - 05/09/2008)

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Course Description

What are the possibilities and pitfalls of an anthropological perspective in public policy and social justice work? Anthropology has long been associated with an ethos of advocacy and activism, but anthropological analyses are not always welcomed by policy makers or, sometimes, by the very people anthropologists claim to want to help, raising a host of ethical, theoretical, and methodological issues. This seminar will look both at anthropologists' attempts to marry ethnography, advocacy, social justice, and ethical action, but also consider some of the darker moments of anthropology's history. The focus will be on diverse social justice movements and issues in the U.S. and globally in the context of U.S.-dominated globalization. We will consider how social differences – race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, age – are implicated in larger political, economic and social injustices, and how we as anthropologists might respond effectively and ethically to these injustices.

Some of the topics we will explore include: human rights as a paradigm; neoliberalism; HIV/AIDS and healthcare; female genital operations/mutilation; problems of studying the powerful; housing and homelessness; and ethical debates within anthropology. We will use these topics to discuss a series of questions: what are the relations of social power that pertain in ethnographic encounters? What are anthropologists' ethical responsibilities when their views of what is "right" clashes with those of their study participants? Who reads what an anthropologist writes, and who has rights over what is read? How does one write ethnography so that it is effective in public policy and social justice work? How is ethnographic data actually used or misused in public policy debates and social justice work? Is it possible to define "social justice" or "human rights" cross-culturally? How does an anthropologist use her/his data to aid her/his study participants -- and is that aid always welcome?

As well as an emphasis on cultural, social, political, and economic differences, this class thus also requires students to think about (and directly engage in the practice of) ethics and citizenship. We will discuss both cases from anthropology and students' own experiences which demonstrate the fine line between holding firm ethical positions while also recognizing that very often ethics and the practice of engaged citizenship is contextual and needs to account for competing positions.

There is no prerequisite for this class. It fulfills the following CLA requirements:

1. Citizenship and Public Ethics
2. Writing Intensive

Research Component

This 4 credit course includes a service learning component in which students will be expected to do ethnographic research in a grassroots, community, or social justice setting, for 4-6 hours a week for ten weeks over the course of the semester. A key part of the course will be training students in ethnographic research methods, interview methods, and qualitative data analysis so that students will have a useable skill upon leaving the class. The data from this research will form the basis for students' final papers.

Because your research involves human subjects, this class research has had to be approved by the university's Institutional Review Board. Because this research is done for a class, involves no risk to your informants, and will not be published, it falls into the category of "exempt" research. Your fieldwork will be covered under what is called a "class protocol," with myself listed as Principal Investigator.

However, each of you is required to familiarize yourself with the contents of the IRB webpage (<http://www.research.umn.edu/irb/>), and in particular, the following two on-line tutorials by class 3:

1. The Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) hosted by University of Miami Medical School. This can be accessed at <http://www.research.umn.edu/first/humansubjects.htm> (Item 1 on this page). Register for the training, complete it, and then return to the above page to report your completion.
2. Informed consent tutorial: <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent/>

Writing

This course fulfills a writing intensive requirement, meaning that a good deal of the work of this class is about writing. In addition to the writing tasks listed below, we will focus on how the authors we read *write* and what is effective about ethnographic writing. This will be a key component of our work since students will be writing their own ethnographic report, and learning about writing from reading is a useful strategy. After spring break, we will dedicate several classes to workshopping papers so that students will develop the skills to read and contribute to their classmate's work, and receive the same in return. In addition, during the first class we will discuss the issue of writing in several different genres: analytic papers, field notes, and ethnographic reports. See below for actual writing requirements.

Course Requirements

Class time: 30% Lecture, 70% Discussion/Seminar

You are expected to come to class having read the materials listed for each class. Once a week, you will be required to post a discussion point to the class's WebCT board. Seminar discussion will involve discussion of the readings, but also of your own projects once you have begun your ethnographic research.

Writing requirements:

1. Two five page analytic papers on topics that engage the class readings
 - a. The first paper will be submitted as a draft a week prior to the final deadline, and returned with comments for revision and refinement.
 - b. Students are strongly encouraged to submit a draft of the second paper to the instructor.
2. During the course of the research period,
 - a. fieldnotes of your fieldwork experience
 - b. a weekly two page field report (to be handed in).
3. Final research paper, based on your primary ethnographic research.
 - a. A draft of your research paper (8-10 pages) will be due after spring break and returned with comments.
 - b. Papers will be workshopped over several classes in the latter part of the semester
 - c. A final research paper of 10-15 pages is due at the end of the semester.
 - d. Final reports involve a presentation of your findings to the class (and potentially representatives of the agencies you have done research in)
4. Weekly postings to WebCT with discussion points for seminar discussions.

Grade breakdown

Your grade will be assessed according to a formula which takes into account not only your written work, but also your participation in classroom and section discussion, and your preparedness. As such, it is expected that you will have completed the reading assignments listed prior to attending class so that you can fully participate in discussions. The grade formula is:

1. Analytic papers	30%
2. Final research paper	50%
3. Field reports	10%
4. Seminar, WebCT, and paper workshop participation	10%

Policy on Lateness and Attendance

Please pay particular attention to the following: you are, naturally, expected to attend all classes. It is expected that if you have to miss a class for a valid reason (such as illness or family emergency), you will inform me prior to the class, or as soon thereafter as is possible. Since this is a seminar, your attendance and participation in class discussions is a central part of the course. I will take attendance in the first ten minutes of class. If you arrive late for class, you will not have the opportunity to sign the attendance sheet, and this will be noted as an absence. **Please note the attendance policy: every two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your grade by one grade point (e.g. from A- to B+)**

Required Texts

Vincent Lyon-Callo (2004) *Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry*. Broadview Press.

Farmer, Paul (2003) *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tate, Winifred (2007) *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Assigned books will be available at the reserve library. Additional course readings listed below will be available via e-reserve.

Course Outline

Part I: Setting the Scene

1. Introduction to the Course (1/22/08)

1. Introduction to the course and its themes
2. Information about research projects, ethics, and CITI tutorial
3. Discussion of the writing projects

2. Doing Ethnography/Ethnography as Social Action (1/24/08)

****Field Site Assignment w/CCLC**

Goffman, Erving

1987 On Fieldwork. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 18(2):123-32.

Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz and Linda Shaw

1995 Fieldnotes in ethnographic research. *In Writing ethnographic fieldnotes.* pp. 1-15. University of Chicago Press.

3. Ethics, Action and Anthropology I: Where Do We Stand? (1/29/08)

****Complete CITI Tutorial**

2001 Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association
(<http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>)

Shea, Christopher

2000 Don't talk to the humans: the crackdown on social science research. *Lingua Franca* 10(6):27-34.

Price, David

2000 Anthropologists as Spies. *The Nation*, November 20, 2000.

Glenn, David

2004 Anthropologists Act to Revoke 1919 Censure of Franz Boas, a Key Figure in the Field. *Chronicle of Higher Education* Friday, December 17, 2004

Packer, George

2006 Knowing the Enemy: Can Social Scientists redefine the "war on terror"? *The New Yorker*, 12/18/06.

Part II: Issues

4. Homelessness and Neoliberalism (1/31/08)

****Begin Fieldwork**

Lyon-Callo, Vincent

2004 Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry. Broadview Press.

5. Homelessness and Neoliberalism (2/5/08)

Lyon-Callo, Vincent

2004 Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry. Broadview Press.

6. Homelessness and Neoliberalism (2/7/08)

****Begin weekly submission of field reports**

Lyon-Callo, Vincent

2004 Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry. Broadview Press.

7. Homelessness and Neoliberalism (2/12/08)

****Draft of Paper 1 Due via email**

Lyon-Callo, Vincent

2004 Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry. Broadview Press.

8. Ethics, Action and Anthropology II: Studying Up, Studying Down (2/14/08)

Weiner, James F.; and Ron Brunton

2001 Do anthropologists have a moral responsibility to defend the interests of "less advantaged" communities? *In* Taking sides: clashing views on controversial issues in anthropology. Kirk M. Endicott and Robert Welsch (eds.) pp. 380-400. Guilford: McGraw-Hill/Pushkin.

Nader, Laura

1972 Up the anthropologist: perspectives gained from studying up. *In* Reinventing anthropology. Dell Hymes (ed). Pp.284-311. New York: Pantheon.

9. Pathologies of Power I (2/19/08)

Farmer, Paul

2003 Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. Berkeley: University of California Press.

10. Pathologies of Power II (2/21/08)

****Paper 1 Due in Class**

Farmer, Paul

2003 Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. Berkeley: University of California Press.

11. Pathologies of Power III (2/26/08)

Farmer, Paul

2003 Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. Berkeley: University of California Press.

12. Pathologies of Power IV (2/28/08)

Farmer, Paul

2003 Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. Berkeley: University of California Press.

13. Ethics, Action and Anthropology III: FGM or FGO? (3/4/08)

Walley, Christine

1997 Searching for "voices": feminism, anthropology, and the global debate over female genital operations. *Cultural Anthropology* 12(3):405-438.

Salmon, Merrilee H. and Elliott P. Skinner

2001 Should anthropologists work to eliminate the practice of Female Genital Mutilation? *In* Taking sides: clashing views on controversial issues in anthropology. Kirk M. Endicott and Robert Welsch (eds.) pp. 360-379. Guilford: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.

14. Suffering (3/6/08)

Kleinman, Arthur and Joan Kleinman

1996 The appeal of experience; the dismay of images: cultural appropriations of suffering in our times. *In* Social suffering. Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock (eds.) Pp. 1-23. Berkeley: University of California Press.

15. Human Rights as a Paradigm II (3/11/08)

Wilson, Richard A.

1997 Human rights, culture and context: an introduction. *In* Human rights, culture and context: anthropological perspectives. Richard A. Wilson (ed). pp. 1-27. London: Pluto.

16. Human Rights as a Paradigm III (3/13/08)

****Paper 2 Due in Class****

Goodale, Mark

2006 Introduction to "Anthropology and Human Rights in a New Key." *American Anthropologist* 108(1):1-8.

Merry, Sally Engle

2006 Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle. *American Anthropologist* 108(1):38-51

SPRING BREAK

17. Counting the Dead: Anthropology and Human Rights I (3/25/08)

Tate, Winifred

2007 *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

18. Counting the Dead: Anthropology and Human Rights II (3/27/08)

Tate, Winifred

2007 *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

19. Counting the Dead: Anthropology and Human Rights III (4/1/08)

Tate, Winifred

2007 *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

20. 1st Paper workshop (4/3/08)

Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz and Linda Shaw

1995 Writing an ethnography. *In* *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. pp. 169-210. University of Chicago Press.

21. 2nd Paper workshop (4/8/08)

22. 3rd Paper workshop (4/10/08)

23. Skull Wars (4/15/08)

****Draft of Research Paper Due**

Thomas, David Hurst.

2000 *Skull wars : Kennewick man, archaeology, and the battle for Native American identity*. New York: Basic Books (**prologue, chapter 9**).

Foster, George M.

1999 Responsibility for Ishi. *Anthropology News*, October 1999:5-6.

Killion, Thomas et al.

1999 The facts about Ishi's brain. *Anthropology News*, September 1999:9.

24. Multiculturalism and Cultural Diversity as a Paradigm (4/17/08)

Turner, Terence

1993 Anthropology and multiculturalism: what is anthropology that multiculturalists should be mindful of it? *Cultural Anthropology* 8(4):411-429.

Goldschmidt, Henry

2004 Food fights: contesting "cultural diversity" in Crown Heights. *In* Local actions: cultural activism, power, and public life in America. Melissa Checker and Maggie Fishman (eds.) pp. 159-183. New York: Columbia University Press.

25. Ethics, Action and Anthropology IV: The Meanings of Violence (4/22/08)

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy

1995 The primacy of the ethical: propositions for a militant anthropology. *Current Anthropology* 36(3):409-420. (also brief response by Crapanzano)

Valentine, David

2003 "The calculus of pain": violence, anthropological ethics, and the category transgender. *Ethnos* 66(1):27-48.

26. 3rd Paper Workshop (4/24/08)

27. 4th Paper Workshop (4/29/08)

28. Final Reports (5/1/08)

29. Final Reports (5/6/08)

30. Course Review (5/8/08)

****Research Paper Due in Class**