

Anthropology 211/Urban Education 211: Social and Cultural Change

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Subject Area/Discipline: [Anthropology/Education](#)

School: [Temple University](#)

Project Area:

Summer 2001

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Semester: Summer II 2001 (July 9 August 18, 2001)

Time: T/R 12:55-3:50 PM

Place: GH 326

Listserv: @listserv.temple.edu

<http://listserv.temple.edu/archives/.html>

Memut elukunya nabo eng' eno. (One head does not encompass all knowledge.)
Iparakuyo Maasai proverb

Ideas that have overcome our intellect and conquered our conviction, ideas to which reason has riveted our conscience, are chains from which one cannot break without breaking one's heart...

Karl Marx

and if ever i touched a life i hope that life knows
that i know that touching was and still is and will always
be the true
revolution

Nikki Giovanni

Power is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself...would [the dominated] accept it if they did not see it as a mere limit placed on their desire, leaving a measure of freedom however slight intact? Power as a pure limit set on freedom is, at least in our society, the general form of its acceptability.

Michel Foucault

We have the moral and theoretical responsibility to employ the time for reflection

allowed by our relatively privileged status to address people's real problems.
Leith Mullings

Course Description

This is a service-learning course. Service learning puts course material into action (and question). It is an experiential learning technique where students do community work that relates to course work and vice versa. If I were teaching a math course, students would be learning math skills, then doing something like tutoring middle school students, building a bridge, or helping senior citizens with their taxes.

This service-learning course is an exploration of theories of society and culture and explanations of change and development. The way it will work is that we will read and discuss ethnography and anthropological theory that deals with change at the same time we are doing work in community organizations. Part of what we will be doing over the course of the summer is figuring out whether or not these organizations are engaged in social and cultural change, and, if so, how. We will discuss how our empirical findings reflect on our theoretical perspectives. Ideally, this is a dialectical (we'll discuss this) process that forces us to confront both our theories and practices in order to develop new ones.

We have four objectives:

(1) We will examine various theories of change in order to look at their assumptions regarding the nature of history, power, and "humanity." We could, for example, look at the idea, popular in the 19th Century, of placing poor people in labor camps for society's economic benefit (and their own moral benefit) and discuss its conceptions of the causes and remedies of poverty and the "nature" of the poor.

(2) We will question notions about the uniqueness and universality of "Western thought" by examining its development and its relationship to social thought in other societies. For instance, we will look at ideas about "progress" and notions of the "advanced" nature of (post-)industrial Western societies in comparison to other thinking about what makes living in a particular society meaningful or worthwhile.

(3) We will look at specific instances of social and cultural change. In addition to examining social and cultural change in our field sites, we will look at processes such as changes in the social service system in the US; the rise of Islam and consequent changes in gender practices in a Bedouin community; the effects of poverty and drug use on social groups in Philadelphia; the impact of HIV on societies in the US and Haiti.

(4) Because each of us grounds our actions in a set of beliefs about their effectiveness, we will relate our theoretical frameworks to our

ethnographic/pedagogic/social practice. You might find out, for example, that you're a postmodernist or a biological determinist. We will question the assumptions and limitations of our theoretical positions.

Among the questions we will discuss are:

- What is the relationship between social/cultural change and ideas about power, inequality, nationalism, race, gender, class, colonialism, modernity, and postmodernity?
- Is a universally applicable theory of social and cultural change possible?
- What are the implications of theories of social/cultural change for the epistemologies and practices of ethnography, education, and social movements?

Course Requirements:

There are no pre-requisites and non-majors are welcome.

Field Sites

You'll have the choice to either work with an organization you have some affinity for or history with, or you can pick from a list that I will have arranged. You'll need to spend 4-5 hours per week at your field site. Since the course will involve so much fieldwork, I will be assigning about half as much reading as I otherwise would and there will be no additional research required. Because this is a summer course and you probably have lives and jobs outside our class, please see me if the time commitment is too much and we will work something out.

Projects

Specific instructions will be distributed for each of the course projects. A brief description of the projects follows. Projects will include keeping a reflective journal, two short essays (2-4 pages) that will involve applying what we've learned to specific examples, and producing some sort of useful "product" for your field organization. All of your work will implicitly or explicitly engage the theories of social change we have discussed. Your journal will be a collection of thought - maybe not thought but your written reflections on both the readings and your experiences at your field site. Ideally, these will not (only) be disconnected ramblings, but will be an attempt to make sense of theory in light of experience (and vice versa). Further, the thoughts collected in your journal will serve as the basis for class discussions and will help you generate ideas for your essays. The first essay will require you to write a mission statement/manifesto/proposal for a student organization or a charter school that involves some approach to social change. The second essay will be a review of the documentary *Along Comes the Horse* that analyzes the film's approach to social change and proposes alternatives. The useful "product" will be the result of discussion and negotiation between the student, the organization, and me. It could be a survey, a manual, a

curriculum, a public service announcement, a music video, or a piece of sculpture. Whatever the product is, you will need to use your fieldwork and the coursework to write an essay of 8-10 pages that discusses what your product has to do with social change. Students will be required to present the final product and discuss its relationship with social change at the final class meeting.

I will provide examples of reflective journals, mission statements, and "products" for students to review.

Papers

There are several guidelines for papers. All papers should attempt to integrate field experience, readings, films, speakers, and class discussions. All papers must be typed, double-spaced, with approximately one-inch margins. Use 10-12 pt. fonts. Insert page numbers. Please don't turn in anemic printouts. Forget about fancy covers. A single paper cover sheet with the title, your name, student ID number, and the date will do. Before turning your paper in, have a kind and generous friend read it. Run spell check. Come see me. And use the Writing Center. Their service is free and the staff is very helpful.

Readings

All assigned readings must be completed by the time class begins. I recommend that you take notes while reading and incorporate these notes into your journal. You might try copying a quote (cite the text and page) or writing out a question you want to raise. You might also come to class with something that happened to you that relates to the reading a conversation you had, an article you read, a movie you saw. We each bring a unique set of experiences to the class, and part of what makes an intellectually charged conversation about the texts we'll read is the ideas we bring with us. And, as if the idea of an "intellectually charged conversation" weren't enough, I may ask you to write at the beginning of class about the reading or call on you to answer questions from the reading.

Any semester length approach to social and cultural change is bound to be partial. Given the brevity of the summer session and the addition of a service learning component, this is sure to be the case with this class. Students should consider that the readings are intended to introduce them to some of the important debates regarding social and cultural change and to stimulate discussion. They are by no means intended to draw the boundaries of a body of literature. We are going to focus on some of the main arguments regarding social and cultural change, broadly brushed, in order to discuss our role in understanding and fostering change. While race, gender, sexuality, colonialism, postmodernism, and globalization are all relevant to such a discussion; we will touch on these issues only lightly in the readings. I do intend to raise these issues, and, if students are interested, am willing to provide appropriate bibliographic materials.

Class Listserv

I use a listserv for announcements and for distribution of class materials. I will sign each of you up. We can also use the listserv to augment class discussion. Feel free to post questions, comments, or discussion about the readings or class discussions.

Academic Honesty

The Academic Honesty policy of the College of Arts and Sciences will be followed. Plagiarism can result in a failing grade for the course. If you use someone else's work whether the actual words or the ideas cite the reference. If you have any questions, see the TU policy on Academic Honesty on the web <<http://www.temple.edu>> or in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

Grades

Grades for the course will be based on the following:

- Class attendance, preparation, and participation: 10%
- Field notes/reflective journal: 30% (10% each collection) (Evaluation of fieldwork will constitute part of the grade for both attendance and journal)
- Two Short Essays: 30% (15% each)
- Final product: 30% (proposal and draft 5% each, paper 20%)

Schedule of Classes, Readings, and Assignments:

I. Social Change

Introduction: Service Learning and Social/Cultural Change
7/10 Class 1

Social Change and Development in the "Modern" World
7/12 Class 2 Patterson, 1-84 (84 pp.)

The Search for World Order: The Cold War, Decolonization and Third World Development
7/17 Class 3 Patterson, 85-150 (75 pp.)
Journals Collected

Postmodernity and Globalization
7/19 Class 4 Patterson, 151-184 (34 pp.)

II. Social Movements

Peasant Wars
7/24 Class 5 Wolf, Preface and 3-50 (54 pp.)
Mission Statement/Manifesto/Charter School Proposal Due

Poor Peoples' Movements

7/26 Class 6 Susser, 257-269 and Piven and Cloward, 1-37 (51 pp.)

Journals Collected

Culture and New Social Movements, Pt. 1

7/31 Class 7 Castells, 276-301 (26 pp.)

Product Proposal Due

Culture and New Social Movements, Pt. 2

8/2 Class 8 Escobar, 395-421 (27 pp.)

Along Comes the Horse Video

III. Politically Engaged Social Enquiry in the US

Pt. 1: Community and Responsibility

8/7 Class 9 Lyon-Callo, "Medicalizing Homelessness: The Production of Self-Blame and Self-Governing within Homeless Shelters," 328-43

Farmer, "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View From Below," 261-280 (46 pp.)

Product Draft Due

Pt. 2: Expertise

8/9 Class 10 Escobar, "Anthropology and the Development Encounter: The Making and Marketing of Development Anthropology," 16-40

Cruikshank, "The Will to Empower: Technologies of Citizenship and the War on Poverty," 29-55 (55 pp.)

Review of ACTH Due

Pt. 3: Policy Implications

8/14 Class 11 Williams, "'There Goes the Neighborhood': Gentrification, Displacement, and Homelessness in Washington, D.C.," 145-163

Maskovsky, "'Managing' the Poor: Neoliberalism, Medicaid HMOs and the Triumph of Consumerism Among the Poor," 121-146 (44 pp.)

Journals Collected

Presentation of Products

8/16 Class 12

Required Text (Available at Zavelle's):

Patterson, Thomas C.

1999 *Change and Development in the 20th Century*. Oxford: Berg.

Reading Packet (Available at DocuCare):

Castells, Manuel

1983 *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. Berkeley: University of California Press, Chapters 27 and 28.

Cruikshank, Barbara

1994 "The Will to Empower: Technologies of Citizenship and the War on Poverty." *Socialist Review* 23(4): 29-55.

Escobar, Arturo

1991 "Anthropology and the Development Encounter: The Making and Marketing of Development Anthropology." *American Ethnologist* 18(4): 16-40.

1992 "Culture, Practice, and Politics: Anthropology and the Study of Social Movements." *Critique of Anthropology* 12(4): 395-432.

Farmer, Paul

1997 "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View From Below." In *Social Suffering*, Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lyon-Callo, Vincent

2000 "Medicalizing Homelessness: The Production of Self-Blame and Self-Governing within Homeless Shelters." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 14(3): 328-45.

Maskovsky, Jeff

2000 "'Managing' the Poor: Neoliberalism, Medicaid HMOs and the Triumph of Consumerism Among the Poor." *Medical Anthropology* (19): 121-146.

Piven, Francis Fox and Richard A. Cloward

1977 *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail*. New York: Pantheon, Chapter 1.

Susser, Ida

1988 "Working-Class Women, Social Protest, and Changing Ideologies." In Bookman and Morgen, eds., *Women and the Politics of Empowerment*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Williams, Brett

1996 "'There Goes the Neighborhood': Gentrification, Displacement, and Homelessness in Washington, D.C.," in *There's No Place Like Home: Anthropological Perspectives on Housing and Homelessness in the United States*, Anna Lou Dehavenon, ed. Westport, CT: Bergen and Garvey Publishers.

Wolf, Eric R.

1999 *Peasant Wars of the 20th Century*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, Preface and Chapter 1.