

Making Sense of a Changing World: Anthropology Today
(ANTH1120 A)

Department of Anthropology, York University

FW 2023-2024

Professor: Jillian Fulton-Melanson
Email: fultonjs@yorku.ca

Course Description

Welcome to *Making Sense of a Changing World: Anthropology Today*, an issues-based **introductory** course in anthropology.

Social anthropology is a social science that examines contemporary questions and problems. Social anthropologists are specialists in **culture** and how it is bound up in the social and political systems in the world today. In this course, you will learn to think critically about these systems, challenging the way that you think about the world. We will do this through reading local-level case studies that are each relevant to our lives on an individual and societal level today. We will explore these case studies and issues through active engagement, discussion, and debates while learning about the academic discipline of anthropology. Through this course, you will begin to understand how people identify with and navigate through different social and political systems in different social and cultural contexts.

This course has six modules. Each module will allow you to develop a critical sensibility for issues of inequality and injustice and gain insights into how people in different social and cultural contexts know, reproduce, change and represent themselves and the world around them.

Learning Objectives

In this course, you will develop research and analysis skills that can be applied to various disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. By the end of this course, you should be able to understand a set of basic anthropological concepts and use them effectively in written and oral communication. This process will involve challenging your worldview and perspectives on social justice, and refining your knowledge of human history throughout the world. By the end of this course, you will know what makes anthropology unique as a

social science and how each of the social sciences contribute to create a better understanding of people and the world around you. Finally, you should be familiar with many of the ways people use social and cultural tools to respond to the world they live in.

In this course, you will begin to develop critical information literacy. This will build digital fluency, information literacies, critical thinking, and the ability to ask good questions, marshal evidence, and communicate effectively across varied media. You will learn about the information creation process, how authority is contextual and constructed, the value of information, how research is inquiry, scholarship is conversation, and how to search in strategic exploration.

This course requires participation. You must make posts on discussion forums monitored by your TA. **You must participate** by engaging in the written discussion.

Readings

Readings should be completed prior to the lecture assigned for that week. In order to succeed in this course, readings must be read.

The required texts to **purchase** in this course are one **textbook** and one **ethnography**:

Textbook:

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ethnography:

Schiller, Anne. 2016. *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

The remainder of the readings are journal articles and book chapters, and will have links on the **eclass page**.

Rules for Productive Discussion and Respectful Communication

This course covers a number of topics that are potentially controversial. In order to keep the discussion productive, everyone must follow these rules:

1. Feel free to say what is on your mind as long as it is respectful.

2. Personal opinions and experiences can be productive parts of anthropological discussions. Try to think about them (and even critique them!) by using the anthropological concepts you are learning in this course.
3. Focus on the content of the readings, films, listening material, and lectures. Use the evidence and research that we study in this course to rethink your previous opinions and guide your questions.
4. Respect the fact that the student population of York University is very diverse, in terms of ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, and sexuality. Each person in the class might not agree with your perspective and it is important to respect where each other is coming from as well as embrace and relish in the rich discussion that such diversity brings.
5. Remember that we are all individuals. Our identity can influence how we see things, but no one person is a representative of their entire “community”.
6. For the benefit of everyone in the course, please do your part to conserve time and resources by avoiding unnecessary email – **the answers to many of your questions are likely in the assignment instructions and/or the course syllabus**. If you cannot find the answers in these documents, please ask your questions during online tutorials or in the Eclass message boards rather than by email.
7. You can email your TA for help with assignments, but they cannot read drafts before submissions or give hints for take home exams.
8. If you need to request an extension, additional feedback, or an assignment regrade, these must be submitted by email and in all cases must follow the policies outlined below.
9. TAs will not reply to any emails that break any of the rules for productive discussion, or emails that are otherwise rude, aggressive, or inappropriate. These emails will be reported.

Office Hours

Your TA will hold office hours. Appointments with Dr. Fulton-Melanson will be upon request.

Grade Breakdown and Due Dates

Assignment 1	Critical Reading Exercise	10%	October 6
Assignment 2	Film Review	10%	November 26

Midterm	Online Exam	15%	December 4
Assignment 3	Research Proposal	10%	February 16
Assignment 4	Final Essay	15%	March 31
Final	Online Exam	20%	April 8
Participation	Discussion Board	20%	weekly
COURSE TOTAL		100	

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities. Here is York University Senate's policy on accommodation:

<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities-policy/>

Students should register with Student Accessibility Services (<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>).

Please feel free to discuss your needs and their impact on your participation in the course with Dr. Fulton-Melanson. If you have an accommodations letter, please have it sent to Dr. Fulton-Melanson by the third week of class.

Instructions: Instructions for each assignment will be posted on Eclass well in advance of the due dates.

Submitting Assignments

Submitting Work on Time: All assignments must be uploaded to your **Eclass tutorial page** by 11:59p.m. on the due date. The late penalty is 10% per day including weekends. After seven days, late work will not be accepted at all. Assignments will not be accepted by email. Late penalties are strict, out of fairness to your colleagues who submitted their work on time.

Extensions: Extensions are only granted for documented medical and serious personal issues, and for religious observances. There are no extensions for computer crashes or other technology failures – back up your work regularly, in multiple formats, to avoid problems.

Zero Tolerance for Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas, writing, or other intellectual property as your own.

There is zero tolerance for plagiarism, and the penalties are serious even on a first offence.

Any assignment which contains one or more instances of uncited or improperly cited material from other sources will receive a grade of zero, and will result in an **Investigation of Potential Academic Misconduct** as per Senate policy, and possible further sanctions.

Even if you state someone else's idea in your own words (paraphrasing), you must always provide a citation that includes the number of the page you got the idea from.

Feel free to ask any questions about plagiarism and how to avoid it. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism.

Sharing work is an equally serious act of academic dishonesty. In cases in which two or more assignments include matching sentences or paragraphs, and/or sentences that include a blend of matching content and variations in wording, these assignments will be flagged by Turnitin, receive grades of zero, and result in **Investigations of Potential Academic Misconduct** as per Senate policy.

Policy on Students' Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In this course, all work should be completed by you and you alone. As such, you are not allowed to use generative artificial intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, to help you complete any of your work in this course (e.g., tests, papers, assignments, presentations, essay outlines, presentation scripts, etc.). If you do not know whether an online resource or tool can be used in this course, please contact Dr. Fulton-Melanson or your TA for guidance. For more information, please review [AI Technology & Academic Integrity: Information for Students](#).

Requests for Additional Feedback and Regrades

Requests for additional feedback: Your TA will provide a numeric grade and written feedback on all coursework.

If you have questions about your grade or would like additional feedback, you can contact your TA via email. Please be as specific as possible in outlining which points you need clarified.

TAs will only respond to only one request for additional feedback per assignment. If you have further questions after your TA's reply, you must address these with Dr. Fulton-Melanson.

Requests for additional feedback are due seven days after you received the feedback.

TAs will not engage with attempts to negotiate or bargain for grades. All requests for regrades must follow the policies outlined below.

Requests for regrades: If you believe your TA has made an error in grading your work, you can request a regrade by Dr. Fulton-Melanson.

The request should be one or two paragraphs long. It must identify the specific error(s) that you believe were made in grading your work. It must explain why your work merits a different grade by quoting the exact wording of the assignment instructions and of your submission.

The only issue considered in regrading is whether or not your TA made an error. Please do not mention other issues such as the effects of the grade upon your course total or GPA, as these are not considered in regrading.

Your mark may increase, decrease, or remain the same as a result of reassessment. The reassessed grade is final.

Requests for regrades are due within seven days of receiving the grade.

Dr. Fulton-Melanson will inform you of the results by email.

Course Schedule

MODULE 1: Decolonizing Anthropology

1. Sept 11 – Sept 17: Colonialism and the Discipline of Anthropology

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 1: The Story of Anthropology". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 1-28. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 2: History in Context". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 29-52. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

2. Sept 18 – Sept 24 : Ethnocentrism & Cultural Relativism

Miner, Horace. 1956. "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema". *American Anthropologist* 58(3): 503-507.

Bohannan, Laura. 1966. "Shakespeare in the Bush". *Natural History*, Aug.-Sept., 28-33.

3. Sept 25 – Oct 1: Good Citational Practice

Lysloff, René T.A. 2006. "Mozart in Mirrorshades: Ethnomusicology, Technology, and the Politics of Representation". In *Ethnomusicology: a Contemporary Reader*, 206-219. New York: Routledge.

Oneka LaBennett. Short Bio on Zora Neale Hurston:
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Grand-Jean/Hurston/Chapters/siteintroduction.html>

Hurston, Zora Neale. 1935. "Preface", "Introduction", and "Chapter 1". In *Of Mules and Men*. University of Virginia. <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Grand-Jean/Hurston/Chapters/index.html>

4. Oct 2 – Oct 7: Anthropological Methods

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. "Chapter One". In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*, 1-25. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Fleuhr-Lobban, Carolyn. 2000. "Antenor Firmin: Haitian Pioneer of Anthropology". *American Anthropologist* 102(3): 449-466.

Geertz, Clifford. 1972. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight". In *Interpretive Social Science*, edited by R. Rabinow and W. Sullivan, 181-223.

READING WEEK OCT 7 – 13

MODULE 2: What and Where is "The Field"?

5. Oct 16 – Oct 22: Globalization and Ethnographic Methods

Bonilla, Yarimar & Jonathan Rosa. 2015. #Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States. *American Ethnologist* 42(1) 4-17.

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 11: Anthropology, Cultural Change, and Globalization". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 237-264. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

6. Oct 23 – Oct 29: Globalization and Neoliberalism

Harvey, David. 2005. "Introduction"; and "Chapter One: Freedom's Just Another Word...". In *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 1-38. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 4: Making a Living". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 73-91. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

7. Oct 30 – Nov 5: Globalization and Indigenous Worldviews

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 7: Health, Medicine, and Society". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 139-162. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Adelson, Naomi. 2000. "Chapter One: 'If the Land is not Healthy then How Can we be?'" In "Being Alive Well": *Health and the Politics of Cree Well-Being*, 3-20. Toronto: University of Toronto Press..

Scott, Dayna Nadine. 2015. "Situating Sarnia: 'Unimagined Communities' in the New National Energy Debate". *Osgoode Legal Studies Research Paper Series*. Paper 83.

8. Nov 6 – Nov 12: Globalization and Urban Environments

James, Ryan. 2010. "From 'Slum Clearance' to 'Revitalization': Planning, Expertise and Moral Regulation in Toronto's Regent Park". *Planning Perspectives* 25 (1): 69-86.

Simmel, George. 1995 [1903]. "The Metropolis and Mental Life". In *Metropolis: Centre and Symbol of our Times*, 30-35. P. Kasinitz, ed. New York: New York University Press.

MODULE 3: Worldviews

9. Nov 13 – Nov 19: Nationalism and Ethnicity

Anderson, Benedict. 2006. The Origins of National Consciousness. In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 37-46. New York: Verso.

Mackey, Eva. 1998. "Localizing Strategies: Celebrating Canada". In *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, 104-119. New York: Routledge.

Fulton-Melanson, Jillian. 2021. "A Sonic Mapping of Arab Canada." *Asia Research Briefs* 43: 1-2.
https://ycar.apps01.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/YCAR_ARB0043-Fulton.pdf

10. Nov 20 – Nov 26: Race and Racism

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 9: Race, Science, and Human Diversity". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 185-210. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

McIntosh, Peggy. 1989. White Privilege; Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. *Peace and Freedom*, July-August, 10-12.

11. Nov 27 – Dec 3: Religion and Meaning

Gmelch, George. 1971. Baseball Magic. *Trans-Action* 8, no. 8, 39-41.

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 6: Symbol, Myth, and Meaning". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 115-138. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

12. Dec 4: MIDTERM EXAM RELEASED

MODULE 4: BODIES, PERFORMANCE, AND REPRESENTATION

13. Jan 8 – Jan 14: The Family

READ:

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 5: The Ties That Bind: Kinship and the Social Order". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 91-114. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

McGranahan, Carole. 2015. "What is a Family? Refugee DNA and the Possible Truths of Kinship". *Somatosphere: Science, Medicine, and Anthropology*.

14. Jan 15 – Jan 21: Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

Kenny, Michael G. and Kristen Smillie. 2017. "Chapter 8: Gender and Social Expectations". In *Stories of Culture and Place: An Introduction to Anthropology, Second Edition*, 163-183. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Martin, Emily. 1991. "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Male-Female Roles". *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16(3): 485-501.

15. Jan 22 – Jan 28: Power, Representation, and Resistance

Abu Lughod, Lila. 2002. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?: Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others. *American Anthropologist* 104(3): 783-790.

16. Jan 29 – Feb 4: Anthropology of Tourism

Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. "Introduction". In *Colonising Egypt*. University of California Press.

MODULE 5: THE SENSES AND SOCIETY

17. Feb 5 – Feb 11: Visual Anthropology

***February 8 is the last day to drop a course without receiving a grade

Hamdy, Sherine, Coleman Nye, Sarula Bao, Caroline Brewer, and Marc Parentau. 2017. "Part 1: Cairo" and "Part 2: Five Years Later". In *Lissa: a Story about Medical Promise, Friendship, and Revolution* by Sherine Hamdy, Coleman Nye, Sarula Bao, Caroline Brewer, and Marc Parenteau, 16-143. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

18. Feb 12 – Feb 16: Sound and Ethnomusicology

Robinson, Dylan. 2020. "Introduction". In *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*, 1-36. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

READING WEEK FEB 17 – FEB 23

19. Feb 26 – March 3: The Anthropology of Food

Seremetakis, Nadia. 1994. "The Memory of the Senses, Part I: Marks of the Transitory". *The Senses Still: The Senses and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, 1-18. Boulder: Westview Press.

20. March 4 – March 10: The Anthropology of Smell

Ameeriar, Lalaie. 2012. "The Sanitized Sensorium." *American Anthropologist* 114 (3): 509-520.

MODULE 6: Reading Ethnography**21. March 11 – March 17: Merchants in the City of Art I**

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Index". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Chapter 1: San Lorenzo Neighborhood and Its Globalized Markets". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Chapter 2: A Mercantile Neighborhood Across Time". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

22. March 18 – March 24: Merchants in the City of Art II

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Chapter 3: Lives and Livelihoods on Silver Street". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Chapter 4: Into the Heart of Florence". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

23. March 25 – March 31: Merchants in the City of Art III

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Chapter 5: Saving San Lorenzo". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Schiller, Anne. 2016. "Chapter 6: Fiorinitinità in a Post-Florentine Market". In *Merchants in the City of Art: Work, Identity, and Change in a Florentine Neighborhood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

24. April 1 – April 7: Review: Where Can You Go From Here?

NO READINGS

25. April 8 – FINAL EXAM RELEASED