

**ANTHROP 2F03**  
**Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: Listening Across Difference**  
**FALL 2022**

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**Lecture:** Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:20

**Location:** PGCLL B131  
**Office:** CNH 502  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 12-1pm.

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## **Course Description**

Anthropology is a comparative study of cultures, societies, and the infinitely diverse ways of being in the world. The field seeks to provide knowledge about how people's lives and behaviors are shaped by social relations, politico-economic systems, and historical forces. Based on ethnographic accounts, the course will introduce you to the primary domains of social and cultural anthropology: race, and racism; gender, and feminism; inequality, power, and colonialism; religion and secularism; kinship; social suffering and economic exploitation. In this course, you will learn about anthropology's core concepts, theories, and methods, as well as some debates in the discipline.

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Define key terms and concepts in anthropology in your own words.
- Develop an understanding of how anthropologists use ethnography to comprehend, analyze, and translate cultural similarity and difference.
- Reflect on your own cultural biases and enhance your understanding of, and appreciation for, human difference.
- Apply the tools of anthropology to the analysis of current social problems and imagining alternative futures.
- Use the methods and sensibilities of anthropology for thinking about your own life, engaging in cross-cultural interactions with your peers, and building your own community.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- Hamdy, Sherine and Coleman Nye. *Lissa*.
- Additional materials are available through A2L.

*Lissa* is available for purchase at the Campus Store (paperback or ebook):

[https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/cgi-mcm/ws/txsub.pl?wsTERMG1=224&wsDEPTG1=ANTHROP&wsCOURSEG1=2F03&wsSECTIONG1=DAY%20C01&crit\\_cnt=1](https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/cgi-mcm/ws/txsub.pl?wsTERMG1=224&wsDEPTG1=ANTHROP&wsCOURSEG1=2F03&wsSECTIONG1=DAY%20C01&crit_cnt=1)

Please note that the library provides access to the book (ebook or paperback) *to only one person at a time*, which is why it is important not to rely on the library copy to do the reading the week before the reading is assigned.

All articles or other media are available through the library and/or accessible through Avenue to Learn.

**Important:** Some of the texts we'll be reading are about sensitive topics, such as drug addiction, racism, sexism, death of family members, and suicide. While I believe that one of the most important contributions of anthropology is to help us face and analyze

uncomfortable topics, I am also aware that some of you may find these topics too disturbing. Please be advised that doing the readings is required to complete all of the assignments and I will **not** be able to provide alternative readings.

## **Class Format**

Classes will be held in person at PGCLL B131 on Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:20. Attendance in class is **mandatory**. You are expected to come to class prepared and to have completed the assigned readings. During class, you will be introduced to key theories, methods, and topics in sociocultural anthropology and will have the opportunity to deepen your understanding and skills through in-class participation activities that will count toward your final participation grade. I am aware that unexpected events may occur from time to time. You may miss up to two class participation activities without penalty.

Weekly tutorial meetings will take place in person, and attendance is **mandatory**. In tutorials, you will have the opportunity to dig deeper into the readings and express your thoughts on them. Before attending the tutorial, you are expected to attend the lectures and complete the readings. I hope that you will find a satisfying rhythm and structure in these weekly meetings, as well as a platform for social and intellectual engagement. Tutorials will begin in the second week of class (September 12th) and will conclude in Week 13.

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Mid-Term Essay – 15% due October 6, 2022
2. Proposal for Final Project – 5% due October 21, 2022
3. Final Project – 30% due November 10, 2022
4. Take-Home Exam – 25% due December 8, 2022
5. Participation – 25% weekly during class and tutorial

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

The success of the course depends on your commitment to completing all the required readings for each tutorial, to critically reflect on the readings, to participate actively in group discussions, and to creatively integrate these insights in the assignments.

## Mid-Term Essay (15%), due October 6<sup>th</sup>

This mid-term essay will provide you with an opportunity to practice writing an essay. It will also provide us with an opportunity to communicate our expectations for the format, structure, and quality of future assignments. The assignment requires you to write a brief (500-600 word) essay in response to **one of the two given questions** about Lectures 3 and 4 (Racism, and Feminist Anthropology). You must respond to the chosen question in the form of an essay, with a brief introduction, a thesis statement, structured arguments supplemented with specific examples, and a brief conclusion synthesizing the thesis statement and arguments. You must use class materials (lecture and required readings) to back up your claims and cite them using in-text citations and a Reference Cited page.

## Final Project (35%)

More and more anthropologists are deciding to disseminate the findings of their research in unconventional ways and to audiences outside of academia (podcasts, op-eds, artwork, graphic novels, blog posts, etc.). The anthropologists Sherine Hamdy and Coleman Nye's graphic novel *Lissa* is a good example of this exercise. Public communication is an important skill to cultivate in order to use anthropological tools to respond to and analyze current events. This assignment requires you to create **a visual or written piece** aimed at a larger audience and based on the anthropological theories and concepts discussed in class.

I strongly recommend that you select a topic that is personally relevant to you. I would like you to view this assignment as an opportunity to reflect more deeply on an issue that is important to you and to express your informed opinion about it in the format with which you are most at ease.

This assignment consists of two components:

- **Proposal (5%), due October 21<sup>st</sup>:** This portion of the final project will allow me to evaluate your chosen topic and guide you through the second portion of the assignment. You will respond briefly to the following questions:
  - What is the topic of your final project, and how will it be presented (visual or written)?
  - Why is this topic important for you?
  - What is the thesis statement that this project will demonstrate?
  - Identify a theory or concept covered in class that you will apply to your project and accompanying essay. What relevance does this theory or

concept have to your topic? How will this theory or concept assist you in proving your thesis statement?

- **Project and Essay (30%), due November 10<sup>th</sup>:**
  - For your final project, you will use an anthropological lens to analyze and represent a topic of your choice in one of two formats: visual (graphic strip or poster) or written (short op-ed or blog post). I will not be grading the artistic or prose excellence of your piece for this part of the assignment, but rather the effort and thought process you have put into the creation of your project.
  - You will supplement your piece with a short essay (750 words) highlighting the anthropological significance and cultural relevance of your project. This essay should include a thesis statement that outlines the overall argument and message of your piece, as well as **one course material, one ethnographic example from the course, and one external source from a peer-reviewed journal** that have supported your thought-process behind the creation of your piece.

### **Take-Home Exam (25%), due December 8<sup>th</sup>**

In the last week of class, you will be given 24 hours to complete a take-home exam. The exam will require you to provide short definitions of concepts that I have covered in the lecture, in the conversations with our guests or that you have encountered in the readings. It will also ask you to provide slightly longer answers to a question prompt. The exam requires you to provide definitions and reflections of important concepts and debates in the discipline *in your own words*. Please note that your responses will be automatically scanned for plagiarism.

### **Participation (25%)**

This class involves significant participation. I recognize that there are different ways of participating: speaking up in class during lectures or participating thoughtfully in small group work, for instance. I do not expect all of you to show participation in the same way. At the same time, I believe that it is important to practice voicing your ideas and reactions to the class themes and readings through participating in conversation with your peers, your TAs, and me. In class, you will participate in activities that will enhance your understanding of the class material. In tutorials, you will discuss the ethnographic texts we are reading, and link them to the material presented in class meetings. Your participation grade is based on your performance in class and the tutorials. TAs and I will take note of who speaks, how often, and the quality of participation.

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1, September 7: *Course Introduction***

#### Readings:

The syllabus

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2014. "Acting French." *The Atlantic*. August 29, 2014.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/08/acting-french/375743/>

### **Week 2, September 14: *Culture and Cultural Relativism***

#### Readings:

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

Rosaldo, Renato. (1984) 2008. "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage: On the Cultural Force of Emotions." In *Anthropological Theory. An Introductory History*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed, eds. John R. McGee and Richard L. Warms, 552-61. New York: McGraw Hill.

### **Week 3, September 21: *Race, Racism, and Anthropology***

#### Readings:

Listen to the podcast (or read the script): "How a Few 'Renegade' Thinkers Helped Usher In a New Era of Anthropology." *Fresh Air*, NPR.  
<https://www.npr.org/2019/08/20/752630522/how-a-few-renegade-thinkers-helped-usher-in-a-new-era-of-anthropology>

Parikh, Anar. 2018. "Race is Still a Problem in Anthropology." *anthro{dendum}*. April 9, 2018. <https://anthrodendum.org/2018/04/09/race-is-still-a-problem-in-anthropology/>

Mariner, Kathryn A. 2022. "'Where Are All the Black People At?': Landscapes of Erasure in the Flower City." *Transforming Anthropology* 30(1): 3-19.

### **Week 4, September 28: *Gender, Sex, and Feminist Anthropology***

#### Readings:

Dumes, Abigail A. 2020. "Putting Ethnographic Flesh on New Materialist Bones: Lyme Disease and the Sex/Gender Binary." *Feminist Anthropology* 1(2): 248-259.

Martin-Hill, Dawn. 2006. "Onkwa nisteñhsera - Mothers of Our Nations." YouTube Video, 48:16.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYlwMI3LV6A&ab\\_channel=OhneganosOhnegahd%C4%99%3Agyo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYlwMI3LV6A&ab_channel=OhneganosOhnegahd%C4%99%3Agyo)

### **Week 5, October 5: *Magic, Beliefs, and Enchantment***

#### Readings:

Rountree, Kathryn. 2002. "How Magic Works: New Zealand Feminist Witches' Theories of Ritual Action." *Anthropology of Consciousness* 13(1): 42-59.

Stainova, Yana. 2017. "Enchantment as Methodology." *Savage Minds*. November 1, 2017. <https://savageminds.org/2017/11/01/enchantment-as-methodology/>

Mid-Term Essay due October 6 at 11:59 pm.

### **Week 6, October 12: Reading Week**

### **Week 7, October 19: *Anthropology as Art***

#### Readings:

Hamdy, Sherine, and Coleman Nye 2017. *Lissa: A Story about Medical Promise, Friendship, and Revolution*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Final Project Proposal due October 21 at 11:59 pm

### **Week 8, October 26: *Anthropology and the Legacies of Colonialism***

#### Readings:

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 2003. "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness." In *Global Transformations: Anthropology and the Modern World*, 7-28. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cole, Teju. 2012. "White Savior Industrial Complex." *The Atlantic*. March 21, 2012. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>

### **Week 9, November 2: *Anthropology of Religion and Secularism***

#### Readings:

Mahmood, Saba. 2001. "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival." *Cultural Anthropology* 16(2): 202-236.

Oliphant, Elayne. 2012. "The Crucifix as a Symbol of Secular Europe: The Surprising Semiotics of the European Court of Human Rights." *Anthropology Today* 28(2): 10-12.

### **Week 10, November 9: NO CLASS – Work on Final Project**

Final Project due on November 10, 11:59 pm

### **Week 11, November 16: *Kinship***

#### Readings:

Bjork-James, Sophie. 2020. "White Sexual Politics: The Patriarchal Family in White Nationalism and the Religious Right." *Transforming Anthropology* 28(1): 58-73.

Garcia, Angela. 2014. "Regeneration: Love, Drugs and the Remaking of Hispano Inheritance." *Social Anthropology* 22(2): 200-212.

### **Week 12, November 23: *Neoliberalism***

#### Readings:

Abadía-Barrero, César A. 2016. "Neoliberal Justice and the Transformation of the Moral: The Privatization of the Right to Health Care in Colombia." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 30(1): 62-79.

Ho, Karen. 2018. "Markets, Myths, and Misrecognitions: Economic Populism in the Age of Financialization and Hyperinequality." *Economic Anthropology* 5(1): 148-150.

### **Week 13, November 30: *Gifts and Commodities***

#### Readings:

Mauss, Marcel. (1925) 2008. "Excerpts from *The Gift*." In *Anthropological Theory. An Introductory History*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed, eds. John R. McGee and Richard L. Warms. 90-102. New York: McGraw Hill.

Strathern, Marilyn. 2012. "Gifts Money Cannot Buy". *Social Anthropology* 20(4): 397-410.

## **Week 14, December 7: *Final Exam***

NO CLASS: You have 24 hours to complete the take-home exam

### **Course Policies**

#### **Respect: Academic Discourse, Class Climate, and Inclusivity**

A core social value in anthropology is **respect**. Acting with respect means attempting to imagine the world through the eyes of another person, honoring their worth and their contributions to the community. In this classroom, you are likely to encounter ideas that you find surprising or even unsettling. You should feel free to voice your opinions; at the same time you should feel free to — respectfully — challenge ideas with which you disagree. When engaging in discussion, I encourage you to listen — to be attentive to the experiences and views of others (our authors and your peers) before formulating your own arguments, reactions, and critiques. One of the most important things I hope you will learn in this class is that a diversity of backgrounds and opinions is not a threat but an opportunity for thinking about and addressing social issues that concern us all.

#### **Email and communication**

As soon as an issue arises for you, please be in touch with me and your TA so we can work together to address it. My preferred method of communication with students is during office hours. You may also email me. I try to reply to emails or follow up in class **within 24-36 hours, except for weekends when I will be offline.**

#### **Submission of Assignments**

All assignments will be submitted in electronic copy through the Dropbox function on the course's Avenue to Learn website. All assignments are subject to evaluation for originality. This course uses an evaluation service provided by Turnitin.com, which students may opt out of; in this case, Grammarly.com will be used. If you would like to opt out of evaluation by Turnitin.com, please let the instructor know before October 1.

#### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

Turning assignments in late will lead to a cascading problem for yourself, your instructor, and your TA. However, I understand that we are all dealing with pressures that go beyond the classroom. There will be a 24-hour grace period for all assignments, with the exception of the take-home exam. You are **not** required to send me or your TA an email requesting permission to utilize this 24-hour grace period. After the grace period, your grade will be reduced by **5 percentage points** (5 points out of 100 of the value of the assignment) per calendar day (i.e., including weekends) that the assignment is late.

### **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

Attending tutorial and lectures *and* actively participating in them is an essential component of your grade. You are allowed to miss one tutorial and two lectures without explanation and without the absence affecting your grade. Further missed tutorials or lectures require justification from SAS.

### **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## **University Policies**

### **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Privacy Protection**

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class.
2. Return of materials to students during office hours.
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail.
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

### **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## ADVISORY STATEMENTS

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

**Some courses may** use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

**Some courses may** use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

## **ONLINE PROCTORING**

**Some courses may** use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

## **CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS**

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**. It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

## **REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK**

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”: <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=44&navoid=9020#requests-for-relief-for-missed-academic-term-work>

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## **COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING**

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

**EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

