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ANTH 589.01: Anthropological Research Methods

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Anthropology 589
Anthropological Research Methods

Fall 2001
M 2:10 - 5:00
LA 302

Instructor: Dr. John Norvell
Office: Social Sciences 222
Email: norvell@selway.umt.edu
Telephone: 243-4106
Office hours: T 10-11, W 2-3, or by appointment

Objectives: This a graduate seminar on a variable topic in anthropological research methods. This semester we will focus on ethnographic methods. Students will discuss weekly readings, take turns leading discussions, develop a manageable one-semester ethnographic research project on a topic negotiated with me, present frequent progress reports, give a conference paper-style presentation on their research, and submit a final written paper on the project. The course will expose students to ongoing debates on epistemology and ethics in ethnographic research and develop skills in writing and oral presentation.

Grades: Your grade will based on four graded components: overall participation (consult with me part-way through if you have worries about your performance in this regard), leading (or co-leading) one discussion on the weekly reading, an oral presentation of your research (these three components together are worth half your grade, or 1/6 each, and a final term paper on the research (half your grade) in the 20-40 pp. range.

Required texts:

Research Methods in Anthropology, 3rd edition, H. Russell Bernard, Altamira Press, 2002 (your reference Bible)
Writing Culture, James Clifford and George Marcus, eds., Univ. of California Press, 1986
Laboratory Life, Bruno Latour et al., Princeton Univ. Press, 1979
Translated Woman, Ruth Behar, Beacon Press, 1994
Doing Critical Ethnography, Jim Thomas, Sage Publications, 1993
Basics of Qualitative Research, Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, Sage Publications, 1998

Readings on ERES:

Against Method, Paul Feyerabend, selected pages (pp. 5-9, 9-38, 152-164, 231-288)
Philosophy and the Human Sciences, Charles Taylor, selected pages (pp. 15-57, 91-115)
Introduction to Action Research, Davydd Greenwood & Morton Levin, selected pages

Ethics readings:

- ⑩ The AAA Ethics Committee Documents: <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethics.htm>
- ⑩ "The Fierce Anthropologist" (by Patrick Tierney, author of *Darkness in El Dorado*), *The New Yorker*
- ⑩ "Jungle Fever" Marshall Sahlins, *Washington Post*
- ⑩ "Macho Anthropology" Juno Gregory, *Salon*
- ⑩ Roundtable discussion on ethics and the Yanomami (details to be added)

For further interest, the following sites are compendia of just about everything that's been said and written in connection with the Yanomami scandal:

- ⑩ www.tamu.edu/anthropology/Neel.html
- ⑩ www.darknessineldorado.com
- ⑩ www.anth.uconn.edu/gradstudents/dhume/darkness_in_el_dorado

Each student is required to complete the NIH Human Subjects self-tutorial on line before beginning field research. The training site is http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/cbt/cbt_index.html

Communication: There will be a web site for this course which will contain a current/updated version of this document and a page to list any announcements or schedule changes given in class. The URL for this site is <http://www.anthro.umt.edu/notes/589/>. Please do not hesitate to request an appointment if my office hours are not convenient and you'd like to talk with me.

Schedule (subject to change; see web site for recent changes):

Week One (September 3) **No class, Labor Day**

Week Two (September 10) Read Bernard chapters 1-4 & 8 (if you have the *classic 2nd* edition, see me for chapter assignments!) and begin to research possible topics

Week Three (September 17) Present preliminary ideas for projects for extended class discussion

Week Four (September 24) Grounded Theory (*Basics of Qualitative Research*)

Week Five (October 1) Critical Ethnography (*Doing Critical Ethnography*)

Week Six (October 8) Ethics (AAA Statement, Case Studies, Yanomami readings)

Week Seven (October 15) Pragmatism and the Practice of Social Science (Feyerabend/Taylor)

Week Eight (October 22) PAR (Greenwood and Levin)

Week Nine (October 29) *Writing Culture* (Clifford, "Introduction"; Crapanzano, "Hermes' Dilemma"; Clifford, "On Ethnographic Allegory")

Week Ten (November 5) *Writing Culture* (Asad, "The Concept of Cultural Translation"; Marcus, "Contemporary Problems of Ethnography in the Modern World System"; Rabinow, "Representations Are Social Facts.")

Week Eleven (November 12) **No class, Veterans Day**

Week Twelve (November 19) *Laboratory Life*

Week Thirteen (November 26) *Translated Woman*

Week Fourteen (December 3) Oral presentations

Week Fifteen (December 10) Oral presentations

Final papers due by 5:00 p.m., Friday, December 21

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