

# INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY 2020

## ANTHROPOLOGY 112.01

Tuesdays 15:45-17:00 and

Thursdays 14:15-15:30

SCHW 156

Professor: L. Jane McMillan, PhD

Student Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:00 – 13:00

Virtual meetings in collaborate on Moodle or by appointment

To book an appointment email [ljmcmill@stfx.ca](mailto:ljmcmill@stfx.ca)

JBB 306

902.867.5021

*This course meets in Mi'kma'ki the territory of the Mi'kmaw Nation*

Sociocultural anthropology is the study of human beings and involves the comparative study of societies throughout the world and how and why they change over time. Students will learn the core concepts, fundamental key terms, issues, debates, theories and research methods of contemporary applied cultural anthropology.

### Course Objectives:

1. To introduce students to the field of social and cultural anthropology by providing a comprehensive overview of the discipline and drawing on ethnographic examples;
2. To provide students with an appreciation for the cultural diversity in the world today;
3. To demonstrate how the theories, insights, and methods of cultural anthropology have been and can be applied to students' everyday personal and professional lives;
4. To advance cultural competencies through enhanced critical thinking, reading and writing skills.

### REQUIRED TEXT

Ferraro G., Andreatta S., Holdsworth C. 2018. *Cultural Anthropology: An Applied Perspective Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Nelson.

Other materials as assigned throughout the course will be available on line through the StFX library or posted to Moodle. Course texts are available in the campus bookstore and in the Angus L. MacDonald library.

### PARTICIPATION

Get the most out of your university experience, be prepared for class, attend them all and explore the many extracurricular events available to you. Strive for informed participation

and full engagement in class. Readings are to be completed before class. Students are expected to raise questions, exchange ideas and participate in discussions and activities. Questioning the professor, or something from the readings, or others' comments during discussion is expected – exploring and analyzing different life experiences are part of what anthropology is about. Different viewpoints help us think through our own opinions and are important to developing our critical thinking skills. Share your ideas, but be respectful of each other. Together we will make this class a safe space for sharing divergent points of view.

*“Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space – both real and virtual – that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity”*. Please feel free to contact the Human Rights and Equity Advisor Megan Fogarty if you have questions or concerns about equity in the classroom or in the StFX Community in general. Megan can be contacted by email at [mfogarty@stfx.ca](mailto:mfogarty@stfx.ca) or by telephone at 902-867-5306.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE ACCUMULATION OPPORTUNITIES<sup>1</sup>**

10% Field Notes Assignment #1 – Due October 1, 2020

10% Field Notes Assignment #2 – bring list to class October 20 for comparative exercise and submit complete assignment on October 22, 2020

30% Midterm Test (in class) – October 27, 2020

20% Auto-ethnography Essay – November 17, 2020

30% Final Exam (take home) – December exam period

Periodically you will be asked to write short essays, one-minute papers, workshop questions, practice research methods in small, socially distanced groups and present findings, which will be assessed. This course is designed to be offered in face-to-face teaching, with flexibility to adapt to online delivery should that be necessary. Students are reminded that StFX may decide to move to online teaching if pandemic conditions warrant.

### **FIELDNOTES ASSIGNMENT #1**

**October 1, 2020**

When entering into a new space to conduct research, anthropologists need to prepare and familiarize themselves with the surroundings. Mapping takes many forms. Human culture exists in physical space and culture shapes the way space is constructed and used. Physical surroundings influence human culture, shaping the boundaries of behavior and imagination. Careful observation and description, recorded in maps and field notes, provide the material for the analysis of community dynamics. Consider the university / Antigonish community

your field site and take a look around to gain a spatial awareness of where people live, work, worship, play, eat, and study.

Develop your ethnographic skills of observation and description by drawing a map of a public space of your choice in the university / Antigonish community and write a narrative description of what you find. *Be sure to maintain social distance and wear a mask in public spaces.*

1. Select an interesting public location on campus or in town.
2. Spend an hour in the location paying attention to all the details.
3. Be patient and record your observations by taking careful field notes.
4. Describe the space in as much detail as you can. Consider the infrastructure, the flow of people, the light, sounds, smells and note in detail the characteristics of the people in the space and their interactions, activities and movements.
5. What location did you choose? What drew you to it? Describe what you found.
6. What did you notice in your observations that you've never noticed before in your own regular, day-to-day interactions with the space?
7. What is absent that you might have expected to find?
8. Visit the same space at a different time or day. How do your observations vary over time?
9. Draw a detailed map of your selected space.

Submit your map and narrative to Moodle October 1, 2020.

FIELDNOTES ASSIGNMENT #2 (Bring list to class on October 20 to make comparisons)

**October 22, 2020**

Culture is learned through a process of enculturation. Culture is taught as well as learned. Humans create cultural institutions (schools, medical systems, government, media, religious institutions) to enculturate their members through the promotion and enforcement of what is considered appropriate behavior and thinking. Some aspects of culture we learn from formal institutional instruction others we learn informally through family, friends, media.

This exercise is designed to help you think about how culture is created by considering the creation of a consumer culture. Global capital is deeply tied to a culture of consumerism. In parts of the world consumerism is more than an economic activity, it is a way of life, a way of looking at the world – a culture. Key cultural rituals focus on consumption. Advertising “teaches” us what we need to buy to “fit in” and be “successful”. Ask yourself what you need to feel like an average university student. Think about all of the things you own. Make a table (see below) and list your electronics, school supplies, household furnishings, appliances, transportation, grooming and cosmetic items and so on. Mentally go through your closets, list your seasonal clothes, accessories, foot ware, sports equipment etc. Once you have a list, assess what things cost. Ask yourself in each case are these things you need or things you want? For all the items that you identify as things you want more than absolutely need, ask

yourself how the desire to acquire them – to consume them – was cultivated? For example, was the desire cultivated by family, friends, advertising, government, religious institutions, schools, or something else, or a combination of factors?

Item	Cost	Need / Want	Desire to consume cultivated by:	Made in:

Bring your lists to class on October 20<sup>th</sup>. Compare your lists with your classmates. Are there differences in your lists? What are the differences based on? Take note of where things were made. What does this suggest to you about globalization?

Write a short narrative commenting on your list and answering the above questions. Submit your list and narrative to Moodle on October 22, 2020.

**MID-TERM TEST 30%**

**October 27, 2020**

This in-class test will cover all materials to date including lectures, readings, group activities, films, and presentations. The test format may include short answer, multiple choice and essay questions.

**AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY ESSAY on RACE and RACISM 20%**

**November 17, 2020**

Anthropologists find no scientific basis for classifications of race. Genetically, there is only one race – the human race, with all its diversity. Despite efforts by social scientists to counter the inaccurate belief that races are biologically real, race has remained a powerful framework through which many people see human diversity and through which those in power organize the distribution of privileges and resources. Race, although scientifically not real, has become culturally real in the pervasive racism found in many parts of the world. Race is a deeply influential system of thinking that affects people and institutions. Over time imagined categories of race have shaped our cultural institutions, schools, places of worship, media, political parties, economic practices and have organized the allocation of wealth, power, privilege at all levels of society. Race has served to create and justify patterns of power and inequality within cultures worldwide. Anthropologists examine racism: individuals’ thoughts and actions, as well as institutional patterns and policies, that create or reproduce unequal access to power, privilege, resources, and opportunities based on imagined differences among groups. How can the toolkit of anthropology help build relationships of rapport and trust that lead to deeper mutual understanding and opportunities for collective action?

Addressing issues of race and racism requires first reflecting on race and racism in our own lives (Guest, 2017: 22).

Write an auto-ethnographic essay on your experiences of race and racism. Consider the following questions to help frame your narrative.

1. What is your first recollection of race? Of encountering racism?
2. How would you describe the cultural environment in which you were raised: racially homogeneous? Multiracial-multicultural? Something else?
3. How did the racial environment differ between your home/community and school?
4. What patterns of race do you recall from high school?
5. What patterns of race do you find on the university campus? In Antigonish?
6. Are they different patterns from your experiences in high school?
7. Have you encountered race and racism on campus, in town, in your workplace?
8. Complete this sentence: The most important thing that our country (our university, our community) needs to do now about race is \_\_\_\_\_ ...
9. What obstacles do you encounter in discussing and addressing race and racism?
10. How can the toolkit of anthropology help combat racism?

Include the findings from 3 academic articles on race and racism from anthropology journals to support your arguments.

This assignment is intended to develop the following skills:

- 1) Locating a problem / topic of interest; (in this case race and racism)
- 2) Locating yourself within a relevant cultural experience / context to study in depth, critically and reflexively;
- 3) Construct an auto-ethnographic central research question relevant to cultural context
- 4) Conduct research, reading and citing current literature
- 5) Applying theoretical concepts to evidence to see what it can explain;
- 6) Using ethnographic and other anthropological evidence to support your argument;
- 7) Using the essay format to assemble field notes & reflections and academic readings to present an argument and support it with evidence.

Titled, maximum 10 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced, page numbers, in text citations (Author (last name) – Date) which then match up to an entry in a reference list, where full bibliographic information is accurately provided in alphabetical order. Essays are due on Moodle **November 17, 2020**

Follow the StFX Anthropology Department Academic Essay Guide

[http://stfx.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=3538355](http://stfx.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=3538355)

<http://stfx.libguides.com/c.php?g=101558&p=658461>

Please follow the rules of academic honesty; do not plagiarize and cite work correctly. Familiarize yourself with StFX's Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures and seek assistance from the library if you have questions.

[https://www2.mystfx.ca/registrar-office/sites/mystfx.ca/registrar-office/files/Academic%20Integrity-Mar\\_2015\\_0.pdf](https://www2.mystfx.ca/registrar-office/sites/mystfx.ca/registrar-office/files/Academic%20Integrity-Mar_2015_0.pdf)

FINAL EXAM 30%

**December 5-15<sup>th</sup> TBA** (date available October 9)

The final exam questions will be posted on Moodle after our last class on December 1. The completed exam will be submitted to Moodle during the exam period for this course as scheduled by the university. The exam will cover all course materials including lectures, readings, group activities, films, methods exercises, theoretical applications and presentations.

### **COURSE CALENDAR: READINGS & TOPICS SCHEDULE**

It is important to acknowledge that we are living in uncertain and stressful times due to the COVID – 19 pandemic. I recognize that this can have an impact on students' academic experiences. I will try to communicate clearly the necessary deadlines and criteria for succeeding in this course. Deadlines for coursework are clearly identified in this syllabus. If something happens that you cannot meet a deadline, please reach out 24 hours before the due date and we will work to find a solution. I will do my best to avoid making any changes to the course syllabus, but this syllabus may be subject to change. Below are the required readings per week, please complete the assigned readings prior to class. Additional readings will be posted on Moodle. All assignments and the final exam will be submitted on Moodle. We are all in this together.

#### **September 15: What is anthropology?**

We will discuss what this course is about, introduce the guiding principles of applied anthropology and get to know each other.

#### **September 17: Anthropology in a Global World**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 1 (preface to p. 24)

#### **September 22: The Concept of Culture**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 2 (p. 27-45)

#### **September 24: The Concept of Culture**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 2 Critical Thinking Questions (p. 45-46)

#### **September 29: Applied Anthropology**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 3 (p. 48-65)

#### **October 1: Applied Anthropology**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 3 Critical Thinking Questions (p. 64-65)

**FIELDNOTES ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE**

**October 6: Anthropological Theories**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 4 (p. 66-82)

**October 8: Anthropological Theories**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 4 (p. 82-93)

**October 13: Research Methods**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 5 (p. 94-120)

**October 15: Communication and Culture**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 6 (p. 122-156)

**October 20: Economics, Adaptation, and Subsistence Patterns**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 7 (p. 158-187). Bring consumer list for Field notes assignment #2 to compare with classmates.

**October 22: Economics, Adaptation, and Subsistence Patterns**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 7 Critical Thinking Questions (p. 187)

**FIELDNOTES ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE**

**October 27: MID-TERM TEST**

Your knowledge of all readings, lectures, films and activities to date will be tested, in class.

**October 29: Marriage, Family, and Kinship**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 8 (p.188-225)

**November 3: Sex and Gender**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 9 (p. 226-259)

**November 5: Social Inequality: The Meaning of Difference**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 10 (p. 260-291)

**November 10: Social Inequality: The Meaning of Difference**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 10 Critical Thinking Questions (p. 291)

**November 12: Political Organization and Social Control**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 11 (p. 292-320)

**November 17: Political Organization and Social Control**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 11 Critical Thinking Questions (p. 320)

**AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY ESSAY on RACE and RACISM DUE**

**November 19: Religion**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 12 (p. 322-351)

**November 24: Art**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 13 (p. 352-373)

**November 26: Colonialism and Globalization**

Cultural Anthropology Chapter 14 (p. 374-400)

**December 1: What did we learn? Critical preparatory review for final exam.**

CLASS ETIQUETTE

The use of phones, tablets and laptops for other than course related work is not permitted during class. Please try to arrive on time, but please come, even if you are late.

### IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATION DATES

September 22 – last day to change first-term or full-year courses & last day to receive full tuition refund (when applicable)

November 3 – last day for partial tuition refunds (when applicable)

November 4 – mid-term grades are submitted by Professors

November 13 – last day to drop first term courses – any changes must be made by students through Banner. Any changes after the deadline requires permission by the Dean.

### Information about requesting an accommodation at STFX

If you have a disability and would like to request accommodations, please contact the instructor during the first week of the semester so that your accommodations may be provided in a timely manner. Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) provides assistance in determining and facilitating appropriate accommodations for students with verified disabilities.

TRAMBLE CENTER FOR ACCESSIBLE LEARNING. The Tramble Center for Accessible Learning welcomes students with documented permanent disabilities and offers them a student-centered program of support. Located in Room 108 of the Angus L MacDonald Library, new and returning students meet with program staff to discuss options for support. Deadline for registering with the Center is two weeks prior to the end of classes each semester and 3 Business Days' notice is required for booking all accommodated tests and exams. To book an appointment please use the following link:

[stfxcal.mywconline.com](http://stfxcal.mywconline.com)

Phone 902.867.5349

Email: [tramble@stfx.ca](mailto:tramble@stfx.ca)

### Well-being Resources

St.F.X. Health and Counselling Centre

- o Location: 305 Bloomfield Centre
- o Phone: (902-867-2263)
- o Website: <https://www2.mystfx.ca/health-and-counselling/>

Margie McKinnon, Director of Health, Counselling and Accessible Learning

- o Email: [mmckinno@stfx.ca](mailto:mmckinno@stfx.ca)

Heather Blackburn, Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate

- o Location: 313D Bloomfield Centre
- o Phone: (902-867-5601)
- o Email: [hblackbu@stfx.ca](mailto:hblackbu@stfx.ca)

Flourish @ X

- o Website: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Health---Wellness-Website/Flourish-at-X-2031554250297237/>



Nova Scotia Crisis Line

- Phone: (1-888-429-8167)

Good2Talk Nova Scotia

- Phone: (1-833-292-3698)

Crisis Text Line

- Text "GOOD2TALKNS" to 686868

Mindwell U

- Website: <https://app.mindwellu.com/novascotia>

ICAN (Conquer Anxiety and Nervousness) – Anxiety Program

- Website: <https://login.strongestfamilies.com/folder/1963/>

HealthyMindsNS

Website: <https://healthymindsns.ca/stfx>

The Eskasoni Crisis Centre is open 24/7. If you need to reach out to talk to someone please call the Crisis Line **Toll-Free: 1-855-379-2099** 24-Hour Crisis and Support Line \* Within Nova Scotia or Facebook message "*Eskasoni Crisis Worker*".

## COPYRIGHT & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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<sup>1</sup> Guest, K. 2017 *Cultural Anthropology Fieldwork Journal* (New York: W. W. Norton). Several assignments for this course are adapted from Guest's Cultural Anthropology journal.