



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
*Te Kura Mahinga Tangata*

## *Cultural Anthropology*

# ANTH 204

## Modern Anthropological Thought

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 2 2013

### **Important dates**

**Trimester dates:** 15 July to 17 November 2013

**Teaching dates:** 15 July to 18 October 2013

**Mid-trimester break:** 26 August to 8 September 2013

**Last assessment item due:** 17 October 2013 – In-Class Test

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds)

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination (aegrotats), refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)

## **Class times and locations**

Lectures: Monday and Thursday 15.10-16.00 Hunter LT 119  
Tutorials: Tuesday 10.00 am or 11.00 am or 2.10 pm Cotton 119

## **Names and contact details**

**Course Coordinator** Jeff Sissons  
Murphy Building, MY 1017  
Tel: 04 463 6131  
Email: jeff.sissons@vuw.ac.nz  
By appointment

## **Communication of additional information**

Additional information related to the course will be made available on BlackBoard. You will automatically receive all Blackboard announcements as an email sent to your @myvuw.ac.nz email address. If you are not going to use this Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

## **Prescription**

This course explores inspiring and influential ideas in recent Anthropology by discussing the writings of some of the discipline's greatest thinkers. Among the topics considered are: symbolism and the interpretation of cultures; culture and globalisation; ethnography and morality; culture and history; culture and evolution; culture and power; culture and experience.

## **Course content**

The course engages critically with contemporary thought in the discipline of cultural anthropology. Cultural anthropology has been defined in many ways, but for the purposes of this course it is defined as the comparative study of culture, the symbolic or meaningful dimension of social life. In Weeks 1 and 2 we consider the work of Clifford Geertz, who first narrowed down the definition of culture to 'webs of meaning', and discuss criticisms of his views. At about the same time that Geertz was redefining culture as meaning, others were approaching it as the logical product of the human mind (Week 3) or as meaningful logics operating in history (Week 4). More recently, culture has been approached as global flows rather than local meanings, although this approach has also come in for criticism (Week 5). In a context of global capitalism the interpretation of culture through ethnography is inevitably political (Week 6). Culture is being further understood as practices (Week 7) or as discourses tied to regimes of power/knowledge (Week 8). Others emphasise the ways that culture always directs and underpins experience (Week 9). In Weeks 11 and 12 we critically discuss the distinction between nature and culture and consider whether society itself is a culturally specific concept that has outlived its usefulness.

## **Course learning objectives (CLOs)**

Students who pass this course will be able to:

- (1) Have a deeper understanding of some central currents within contemporary anthropological thought
- (2) Develop a greater ability to critically analyse anthropological writing in general and
- (3) To think and write about human society and culture in more theoretically informed ways.

The forms of assessment will assist in achieving the aims and objectives outlined above and to develop particular study skills.

- The essays are designed to enhance general research and analytical skills in cultural anthropology and to enhance writing skills generally.
- The in-class test is designed to measure how well the readings and lectures for this course have been understood.

## Teaching format

Lectures and tutorials.

While attendance at lectures and tutorials is not compulsory, students are expected to regularly attend them, and will be advantaged if they do so.

There are nine tutorials for this course. All are on Tuesdays. Students may choose one of the following times: 10.00 am, 11.00 am or 2.10 pm.

## Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- Submit essay 1 and essay 2
- Sit the in-class test.

## Workload

University guidelines stipulate that a 20-point course should require 13 hours per week, including class time, of student work.

## Assessment

This course is 100% internally assessed and requires three pieces of work (two essays and one in-class test). Essay topics will be handed out during lecture and posted on Blackboard.

**Essay One: word count of 2000 words**

**Weighting: 30%**

*Due: 4pm, Monday 12 August*

**Essay Two: word count of 2500 words**

**Weighting: 40%**

*Due: 4pm, Monday 7 October*

***In-class test***

**Weighting: 30%**

***10-10.50 am Thursday, 17 October***

A guidance statement on the test will be handed out at least two weeks before the date of the test.

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	2000 word essay	30	2,3	12 August
2	2500 word essay	40	2, 3	7 October
3	In-Class test	30	1, 2, 3	17 October

## Submission and return of work

Assignments must be placed in the assignment box on level 9, Murphy Building, to the side of the lifts. The Assignment Box is cleared at 4pm on the due date. All work is date-stamped and receipt recorded. Every effort will be made to return marked assignments within two-weeks of the due date. Marked assignments not collected in lectures or tutorials can be collected at the Murphy 9<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk, between **2.00 and 4.00 pm only** from Monday to Friday.

The in-class test will be collected up at the end of the class on 17 October.

## Penalties

Penalties will apply for lateness in presenting assignments. Unless an extension has been approved before hand or a medical certificate is later presented 5% will be deducted from the marks for each day that the assignment is late (counting that piece of work as 100%).

## Practicum/placement/field trip/internship arrangements

There are no other arrangements for this course.

## Set texts

There are no set texts for this course. All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

## Recommended reading

Moore, J.D., 2009. *Vision of Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theories and Theorists*.

'Film Interviews with Anthropologists' is the title of a good collection on YouTube.

**Note that an extensive list of readings related to the course and assignments will be available on blackboard**

## Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:
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## Student feedback

In response to student feedback the essays topics have been written to give students more guidance and also to allow for more flexibility for students with a particular interest in a topic area to follow that up.

You will have an opportunity to participate in the evaluation of this course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

## Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism)

- Aegrotats: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades)
- Resolving academic issues: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances)
- Special passes: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter)
- Student Contract: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)

### **School Contact Information**

Head of School: Dr Allison Kirkman, MY1013

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International Student Liaison: Dr Hal Levine MY1023

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Maori and Pacific Student Liaison: Dr Trevor Bradley, MY1101

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School Manager: La'Chelle Pretorius, MY918

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School Administrators: Suzanne Weaver, Alison Melling, MY921,

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School of Social and Cultural Studies: [www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs/)