Instructor
Prof. Pauline Turner Strong
Office: SAC 3.140
Office hours: Tuesdays, 3:00-4:30pm, and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces the central concepts, theories, and techniques employed by cultural anthropologists to explore the social and cultural dimensions of human experience. Readings include both classic and contemporary accounts of cultures and subcultures, and represent a variety of approaches to Cultural Anthropology. Texts will be supplemented with ethnographic films.

Topics to be considered include the nature of ethnographic fieldwork, interpretation, representation, and critique; primitivism, ethnocentrism, and cultural relativism; the relationship between nature and culture, culture and history, culture and power, and culture and subjectivity; beliefs, symbols, and rituals; and the cultural construction of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and citizenship.

The course is designed for Liberal Arts honors students, and carries a Cultural Diversity flag. Emphasis will be placed on developing skills in critical reading, expository writing, analytical thinking, and oral presentation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon successfully completing this course, students will:

1) Demonstrate an understanding of the central concepts and issues of cultural anthropology.
2) Be familiar with classic and contemporary ethnographic questions, approaches, and styles.
3) Demonstrate the ability to analyze and critique ethnographic texts and films.
4) Be able to apply an ethnographic perspective to their own experiences.

TEXTS
The following required texts for the course have been ordered from the University Co-op. The books will be read in the order listed. Additional readings will be posted on Canvas.


**REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:**
Regular class attendance and conscientious preparation for class meetings are necessary for success in this course. Four 4-5 page essays will be assigned on the required readings, each worth 20% of the final grade. All essays will be graded on clarity, organization, and content as well as on content. Presentations on the readings will comprise 10% of the grade, and general class participation accounts for the remaining 10%. The plus/minus grading system will be used for this course.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

T 20 Jan   Introduction to the course.

**I. Encountering other cultures: Levi-Strauss and Benedict**

Th 22 Jan   Ethnographic film: “Cannibal Tours”  
            In preparation, read the material on this film posted on Blackboard.

T 27 Jan    Levi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, parts 1-3 (especially chapters 4, 6, 9, 16)
Th 29 Jan    *Tristes Tropiques*, parts 4-6 (especially chs. 20, 22-23)
T 3 Feb     *Tristes Tropiques*, parts 7-9 (esp. chs. 26-27, 29-34, 38, 40)

Th 5 Feb    Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, pages vii-xxi & chapters 1-4
T 10 Feb    *Patterns of Culture*, chapters 5-6
T 12 Feb    *Patterns of Culture*, chapters 7-8

T 17 Feb    Ethnographic film: “Box of Treasures”  
            **ESSAY I DUE**

**II. Interpreting beliefs, symbols, and rituals: Hurston, Turner, and Geertz**

Th 19 Feb    Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*, xiii-76
T 24 Feb    Hurston, 77-182
Th 26 Feb    Hurston, 183-246

T 3 Mar     Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, chapter 1 (“Symbols in Ndembu Ritual”)
Th 5 Mar     Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, chapter 4 (“Betwixt and Between”)

T 10 Mar    Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, chapters 1 & 4 (“Thick Description” & "Religion as a Cultural System”)
Th 12 Mar    *The Interpretation of Cultures*, chapter 14 ("Person, Time, and Conduct in Bali")

**SPRING BREAK**

T 24 Mar    Ethnographic film: "The Goddess and the Computer"  
            **ESSAY II DUE**
III. Contemporary cultural anthropology: four ethnographies

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 31 Mar</td>
<td>Basso, chs. 3-4</td>
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<td>Th 2 Apr</td>
<td>Kohn, <em>How Forests Think</em>, Introduction and ch. 1</td>
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<td>T 7 Apr</td>
<td>Kohn, chs. 2-4</td>
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<td>Th 9 Apr</td>
<td>Kohn, chs. 5-6 and Epilogue</td>
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<td>T 14 Apr</td>
<td>Ethnographic film: &quot;In the Light of Reverence&quot;</td>
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<td><strong>ESSAY III DUE</strong></td>
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<td>Th 16 Apr</td>
<td>Valentine, <em>Imagining Transgender</em>, Part I</td>
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<td>T 21 Apr</td>
<td>Valentine, Part II</td>
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<td>Th 23 Apr</td>
<td>Valentine, Part III</td>
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<td>T 28 Apr</td>
<td>Holmes, <em>Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies</em>, chs. 1-2</td>
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<td>Th 30 Apr</td>
<td>Holmes, chs. 3-4</td>
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<td>T 5 May</td>
<td>Holmes, chs. 5-6 and Conclusion</td>
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<td>Th 7 May</td>
<td>Course conclusions</td>
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<td><strong>ESSAY IV DUE</strong></td>
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**OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

**Communicating with the Professor**

It is important that you remain in good communication with me. Please inform me personally or by email or telephone if illness, an emergency, a disability, or an unavoidable conflict is affecting your work in this course.

**Academic Integrity**

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code:

> The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Respect towards peers and community precludes inappropriate use of technology in the classroom. Please silence your electronic devices when class in session, and do not allow them to distract you and others from the class.

Any work submitted in this course for academic credit must be the student's own work. The work of others must be referenced correctly. Students who violate the Honor Code through plagiarism or other forms of cheating will receive no credit for the assignment. Repeated acts of plagiarism will result in referral to the Dean of Students.

**Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

It is your responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in your e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-
related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily.

**Services for Students with Disabilities**
Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Please notify the instructor as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible, or if other disability-related accommodations are required. See SSD’s website for more disability-related information: [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php)

**Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**
If you are concerned about yourself or another person, please consult the instructor or call the Behavior Concerns Advice Line, 512-232-5050.

**Q drop Policy**
Please be aware that the State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6).

**Emergency Evacuation Policy**
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instructor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.