

FYS 189L, Spring 2009

News Worthy Anthropology: Scientific versus Popular Portrayals of Anthropology

T/TH 8:30 -10:00 in Whitman 169

W 1:40 – 3:10 in Valentine 208

Instructor: Ms. Renee A. Koster

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or by appointment

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Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

Over the last few decades anthropology has become a popular source for news articles and television shows such as History Channel's *Digging for the Truth*. But how accurate is the information we receive from the media? Newspapers, magazines, TV, and film report scientific discoveries and information all the time, but are they getting the facts straight? Anthropology is just one of the many fields whose scholars and research are presented to the general public through the many forms of today's media. In this course we will explore and compare different forms of the media's representation of anthropology. Specific case studies involving archaeology, human origins, and Native Americans will be examined through a combination of news, popular magazines, film, novels, and scholarly reports and articles. Popular media sources will be examined and critiqued based on the actual scientific research. Students will learn the fundamentals of academic research while conducting a research project on an anthropological topic using a combination of media and scholarly work.

REQUIRED READINGS

News Worthy Anthropology Reader

2009 Available on ANGEL under "Course Materials"

Crichton, Michael

1980 *Congo*. Ballantine Publishing Group.

Mead, Margaret

2001 *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Perennial Classics.

Peters, Elizabeth

2007 *Tomb of the Golden Bird*. Harper.

Reichs, Kathy

1999 *Déjà Dead*. Pocket.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

****Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and radios during class.****

Angel Registration: All students must enroll in the Angel section for this course. In addition to having the reading packet, supplemental class materials will be posted on Angel rather than handed out in paper form. There will also be drop boxes for various assignments such as film guides and Notes on Sources (see Research Project). I also frequently leave important messages and reminders for students using Angel.

Readings: All readings are listed on the class schedule on pages 4 and 5. It is very important that students have completed the readings *prior* to class time in order to actively participate in class discussions and activities.

Online News Source Registration: All students must subscribe to an online news source and set up alerts in at least two fields/subjects. Ideally these two fields should be anthropology and your area of interest. For example if you know you're going to be pre-med one of your alerts should be for a medical related subject. If you know you are going to major in anthropology choose both anthropology and another subject area of interest to you. The stories that you gather from the news sources will supplement our class discussions and aid you in your project and other assignments.

Research Project: This is to be a semester long project, on the topic of your choice. However there are general guidelines that you must follow. The topic must relate to the reporting of anthropological topics in the news or other popular media. (I will discuss a number of possible topics in class). The project should follow the general format of the class. In other words in addition to scholarly or peer-reviewed books and articles you should include in your references at least one news article and two of the following: film, novel or other source of written fiction, popular article, and documentary. The project will also be divided into steps as follows:

- a) Problematic Assignment
- b) Bibliography
- c) Notes on Sources
- d) Functional Outline
- e) Written Paper
- f) Presentation Abstract (revision of the problematic assignment)
- g) Presentation
- h) Research Portfolio

Specifics for each part of the project and assignment sheets will be discussed at a later date. All parts of the research project, including a first draft, must be completed to receive a grade on the written paper.

Oral Assignments: There will be two oral assignments in addition to the final research presentation.

1. **Class Debate:** The class will be divided into four teams to debate on two issues concerning Anthropology and the Public; two teams for each issue. These teams will be assigned by the instructor at random, at least one week prior to the in class debate. Individuals will be graded on preparation, organization, presentation of argument, and ability to work with the team.
2. **Current Events – Student Press:** Students will give a short presentation on an anthropological issue currently being reported on in the news. These are free format presentations – you decide how you want to present the issue – but they should be 3-5 minutes long. A 2 page paper on the current event issue will also be due at the time of the presentation. Students will be graded on clarity/organization, content, and presentation skills.

Inherit the Wind Reaction Paper: Students will write a 3-4 page reaction paper to the film *Inherit the Wind*, incorporating the results of their Newspaper Archive Exercise and the information discussed in class. A first (and full) draft must be handed in to receive a grade for this paper. An assignment sheet and grading rubric will be handed out in class.

Participation: Due to the nature of this course participation is KEY, and thus you will be graded on your participation. Both quantity AND quality of participation in class discussions are of utmost importance. I expect each student to be prepared and participate at every class meeting. Attendance will be taken each class and will count towards your participation grade; .2 of 4.0 points will be deducted from your grade for each unexcused absences – this includes seminar and library visits. Unexcused and/or continued lateness will also be considered an absence. If at all possible please inform me before class either in person or via email that you will be out

Late Policy: The relevant due dates are indicated on the syllabus, and you are expected to meet them without fail. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day noted in the syllabus. Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of .2 per day (beginning at the moment that the assignment is due). The following is a list of excuses frequently offered but never compelling nor acceptable: computer problems of any sort; forgetfulness; oversleeping; loss of syllabus; travel conflict; other assignments (including tests) due for other courses; requirements of sports-related travel or participation (unless otherwise and previously arranged).

Point Distribution:

1) Class Debate	=	10%
2) Current Events	=	10%
3) Reaction Paper	=	10%
4) Written Research Project	=	40%
5) Presentation of Research Project	=	15%
6) Research Portfolio	=	5%
7) Participation	=	10%
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TOTAL		100%

SCHEDULE

Please read ahead in the syllabus and be prepared.
Film Guides will accompany each film and will be due the following class.

** *Syllabus subject to change!!* **

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Exams/Quizzes/Assignments
1	Jan 20	Introduction to Course: What gets reported in the news?		Survey (In Class)
	Jan 21	Introduction to Project Film: <i>Inherit the Wind</i>	Feder 2007 Durrenberger 2007	
	Jan 22	Film: <i>Inherit the Wind</i> Intro to Anthropology	Week 1 Articles*	

Controversies in Anthropology – Past and Present

2	Jan 27	Newspaper Archive Exercise		Watch <i>Science and Fiction</i>
	Jan 28	Intro to Anthropology/Evolution	Dart 1925 Gregory 1914	
	Jan 29	Evolution – <i>Homo floresiensis</i>	Week 2 Articles (5)	

3	Feb 3	AAA Citation Format	Mead: Forward, Preface	Research Topic Due
	Feb 4	Issues of ownership and ethics	Mead: Ch I-V	
	Feb 5	Issues of ownership and ethics	Mead: Ch. VI - X	<i>Inherit the Wind</i> Paper 1 st Draft

4	Feb 10	Individual Conferences	Mead: Ch XI –XIV	Watch <i>Coming of Age</i>
	Feb 11	Anthropology and the Public – Margaret Mead Discussion	Catch up on Readings	
	Feb 12	Anthropology and the Military		Class Debate

5	Feb 17	Library Webpage and database		Problematic Assignment Due
	Feb 18	NAGPRA and Repatriation		
	Feb 19	NAGPRA and Repatriation	Week 5 Articles	<i>Inherit the Wind</i> Paper Due

Issues and Portrayals of Identity – Anthropology and Beyond

6	Feb 24	Slavery and Diaspora	Mann 2007 Week 6 articles	
	Feb 25	WORD Studio- Research Workshop		
	Feb 26	Slavery and Diaspora		Preliminary Bibliography Due

7	Mar 3	Working with Sources		Quoting Exercise (In Class)
	Mar 4	Ideas of Age, Gender, and Race	Fernea and Fernea 2009	
	Mar 5	Ideas of Age, Gender, and Race	Herdt 2007	

* Week 1 Articles, etc refers to online news articles found in the appropriate folder in the Online Reader

8	Mar 10	Anthropology as Propaganda Film: <i>Pimpernel Smith</i>		Notes on Sources 1 Due
	Mar 11	Anthropology as Propaganda Film: <i>Pimpernel Smith</i>	Arnold 1990 Arnold 1992	
	Mar 12	Individual Conferences		

Spring Break

9	Mar 24	Current Events – Student Press	Reichs Ch 1- 20	Current Events Paper and Presentation Due
	Mar 25	Forensic Anthropology	Reichs Ch 21-43	
	Mar 26	Forensic Anthropology <i>Déjà Dead</i> Discussion		Notes on Sources 2 Due

The Extraordinary

10	Mar 31	Extraordinary Discoveries	Week 10 Articles (4)	
	April 1	Egyptology	Peters Ch 1-3	
	April 2	Workshop – Research Project	Peters Ch 4-7	Functional Outline Due Bring all research materials to class

11	April 7	Egyptology	Peters Ch 8-11 and Afterword	
	April 8	Egyptology: <i>Tomb of the Golden Bird</i> Discussion	Catch up on Readings	
	April 9	Presentation Workshop – Effective Visual Aids	Crichton Intro, Prologue, Days 1-3	

12	April 14	Extraordinary Places and Times	Crichton Days 4-7	
	April 15	Extraordinary Places and Times: <i>Congo</i> Discussion	Crichton Days 8-13, Epilogue	
	April 16	Presentation Workshop – How to build a presentation from a research paper.		1 st Draft of Research Paper Due Come prepared to talk about research project and presentations

13	April 21	The Place of Humans in the Natural World	Week 13 Articles	Presentation Abstract
	April 22	Individual Conferences		
	April 23	Conclusions Course Evaluations		Survey (In Class)

14	April 28	News Worthy Conference Day 1	No Readings or Assignments this week. Use the time to polish final drafts, and presentations.	
	April 29	News Worthy Conference Day 2		
	April 30	News Worthy Conference Day 3		

****Final Research Paper and Portfolio Due May 5th at 4:30 ****

STUDENT NEEDS

If you are a student who may need academic accommodations due to a disability, or other circumstances please contact me to discuss your individual needs.

STUDENT ATHLETES

Students involved in sports who anticipate missing class due to events in their sport must inform me in advance so that alternate arrangements can be made and so that I can mark your absence as excused. It is the students' responsibility to get notes and assignments for the classes that they missed. If you have any questions about the material covered in a missed classes come see me during office hours or make an appointment, but again this is your responsibility.

THE WORD STUDIO

The Munn Center for Rhetoric and Communication maintains The WORD Studio in ODY Library—a place to get feedback from peers on assignments in Writing, Oral communication, Research, and Design of visual projects. You can come for a consultation to plan a paper or presentation (you don't need anything but a blank piece of paper!); to find ways to improve the ideas, organization, and style of a draft; to videotape and review a presentation rehearsal; to practice a PowerPoint presentation, and more. Peer tutors are not proofreaders or editors who silently "fix" your work for you; instead, they are trained to have a conversation with you about ways you can fix problem areas yourself and become better overall communicators. You may use The WORD Studio for consultations on assignments for any of your courses, although for FYP assignments you should first seek out your course mentor during his or her office hours.

The WORD Studio is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. You may also IM the Studio during regular hours with quick questions about grammar, citation, and style: *SLUword*.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to submit their own work and properly cite ideas that are not their own. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero for the project and possible referral to Academic Honor Council.

As is stated in the SLU Student Handbook:

All students at St Lawrence University are bound by honor to maintain the highest level of academic integrity." By virtue of membership in the St. Lawrence community, every student accepts the responsibility to know the rules of academic honesty, to abide by them at all times, and to encourage all others to do the same.

The full Academic Honesty policy is found in your Student Handbook and at <http://www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academicintegrity.htm>

First-Year Seminars Research Project Learning Goals 2008-09

With respect to research skills specifically, our learning goals for the spring are that students should:

- Be introduced to ways of conducting productive and imaginative inquiry and research in order to become a part of the various conversations surrounding issues.
- Learn to differentiate among the various ways that information is produced and presented, between popular and scholarly journals and books, between mainstream and alternative publications, between primary and secondary sources.
- Learn how to evaluate and synthesize information, whether gathered from traditional sources, e.g., books and journals, or from websites or electronic media.
- Begin to develop the skills of critical analysis in the interpretation and use of information gathered from any source.
- Be introduced to the ethical obligations that scholars have to both responsibly represent their sources and inform their readers of the sources of their information, as well as learning, and being held responsible for the proper use of, the conventions of scholarly citation and attribution.
- Present the results of your research in written, spoken, visual and/or other forms that demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively using the conventions of the mode of communication adopted.

First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals 2008-09

A residentially-based, interdisciplinary first-year program is an ideal environment for beginning the four-year process of developing the complex intellectual and social skills that are at the heart of a liberal education and the habits of considered values and engaged citizenship that such an education should produce. The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the core of our institutional commitment to improving your ability to engage in critical inquiry and research, to design and deliver written, spoken and/or visual texts that demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity, and to be sophisticated readers, listeners, and viewers of the texts of others. We believe that these same competencies can help develop your ability to communicate across differences (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, political views) as you find ways to live and learn together in the residence halls and as engaged and ethically reflective citizens both during and after your college years. These goals should be understood as the first step in our work with you over a four-year process of helping you to meet the University's Aims and Objectives.

We hope to help you see that writing, speaking, research, and interacting with others are rhetorical endeavors. Effective communicators are, by definition, rhetorically sensitive. Rhetorical sensitivity means understanding that all communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, or visual. To become an effective communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of a meaningful and powerful message involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt in your communication, and the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, matter a great deal in creating your message. The choices you make in writing and speaking are central in determining how people read and hear your voice. Becoming conscious and reflective about those choices, and their ethical dimensions, is a central goal of the FYP and FYS.

Working with you so that you become more rhetorically sensitive means that you should be increasingly able to assess the requirements of a particular task and make intentional decisions about which mode or modes of communication and inquiry would be most effective in addressing it. To do so, you must develop specific writing, speaking, research, and technological competencies. To accomplish these goals, the FYP and FYS will present you with assignments that ask you to engage in a process that involves recognizing the rhetorical situation, planning communication strategies to address the task at hand, composing and presenting the message, and then engaging in critical assessment of your own work and that of others. The results of that assessment process will allow you to rethink, restructure, and revise your work. We further recognize that this process is not linear and that the effective creation of texts requires that you move back and forth among these four elements of the message creation process. This is why we require that your writing and speaking assignments be “projects” that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have made in constructing your message.

This process of increased rhetorical awareness and skill development is at the heart of the philosophical and pedagogical perspectives that inform the work of the FYP and FYS. Because this process both transcends and integrates a variety of specific skills, the program has a philosophical commitment to designing assignments that ask you to integrate various modes of communication in furtherance of the higher-level rhetorical goals in which they are situated.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that forward the writing, speaking, research, and literacy goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.

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