

**Course Syllabus**  
**Contemporary Theories and Methods of Social Anthropology:**  
**Kinship and Gender**

**Fall 2017 Modules 1 and 2**

**Tuesdays room 415** (lectures and seminars) Promyshlennaia, 17

**First class: 5 September**



Social anthropology explores social and cultural diversity of contemporary world drawing on a distinct research method of ethnography — an in-depth participant observation of human communities and institutions. This English language-taught minor offers a project-oriented introduction to contemporary theories and methods of social anthropology. The minor's first course introduces anthropological approaches to social and cultural analysis by looking at anthropology's foundational problematic of kinship and gender. These topics formed the core of anthropology since its inception and constitute vibrant fields of study today. The aim of the course is thus both to convey one of the state-of-the-art areas of anthropological research while also serving as a window into the history of anthropology.

Full list of the disciplines of the minor:

1. Contemporary theories and methods of social anthropology: kinship and gender (modules 1 and 2, 2017-2018 academic year)
2. The anthropology of religion and science (modules 3 and 4, 2017-2018 academic year)
3. Economic and political anthropology (modules 1 and 2, 2018-2019 academic year)
4. Applied anthropology (modules 3 and 4, 2018-2019 academic year)

**Instructors:**

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**Instructors' office hours:** Tuesdays after classes (room 103, Promyshlennaia, 17)

**Methods of Instruction**

The course consists of both lectures and seminars that will focus on marked\* key readings. Students present in teams of two or three on underlined (student presentations) select readings below in the syllabus and conduct library or ethnographic projects for their course papers.

**Grading System:**

- 20% seminar participation: seminar attendance, discussion of seminar core readings; team presentation on one of the topics of the course
- 40% individual research paper based on team or individual ethnography or library research
- 40% take home 2-day final essay exam: this exam is essay-long discussion of randomly selected two questions from the list of exam questions. Exam asks students to debate across empirical material and different approaches covered in the course. Specifically, **in answering each of these questions**, students are required to use **at least three** individual pieces of marked\* key readings from this course syllabus and **not to repeat material** in discussion of each of the two questions.
- late assignments will be marked down by 10% of the mark per day.
- if you plagiarize, you fail.

Sample course paper topics:

- Giving birth at home: ethnics of health and family ideology
- Family budget and “women’s money”
- Ethnography of love/ ethnography of dating and expenditure
- Surrogate motherhood/New Reproductive Technologies
- Family history, class and status
- Kinship terminologies
- Virtual kinship and gender
- Margaret Mead: gender, ethnography, empire
- Royal kinship
- Repression: from Freud to Foucault

Sample exam questions:

- How has the distinction of nature and culture been used in the anthropological approaches to kinship and gender?
- Why is turning different parts of bodies and selves into commodities perceived so differently?
- What the relationship between class and status, and kinship and gender?
- Why anthropology is interested in the history of anthropology?
- The Kabyle house is the world reversed (Bourdieu). Might this be true of any home?

Core ethnographies:

- Morgan, L.H. (1851) *League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois* [League of the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois. 2 vols. 1851 [Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1901]
- Berend, Zsuzsa. *The Online World of Surrogacy*. Berghahn Books, 2016.

## 5 September

### Lecture 1: Introduction

### Lecture 2: Matrilineal kinship

From armchair and evolutionary anthropology to “field science”; human biology and culture; four fields; cultural anthropology, social anthropology, ethnography; fieldwork; basic assumptions: why kinship? The discovery of matrilineal kinship; classificatory and descriptive kinship systems; virtual *versus* real.

Boellstorff, Tom. *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Brace C.L. Does Race Exist? An Antagonist’s Perspective // *Anthropology: Taking Sides – Clashing Views in Anthropology* / Ed. By K. Endicott, R. Welsch. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Fabian J. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Gill G. Does Race Exist? A Proponent’s Perspective // *Anthropology: Taking Sides – Clashing Views in Anthropology* / Ed. by K. Endicott, R. Welsch. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Jurman R., Kilgore L., Trevathan W. *Essentials of Physical Anthropology*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011.

- Hodgen, Margaret T. *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965.
- Kuper A. *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion*. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: G. Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1922.
- Quintyn C.B. *The existence or Non-existence of Race?* New York: Teneo Press, 2010.
- Stocking G. *Victorian Anthropology*. New York: The Free Press, 1987.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry. *League of the Ho-De-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois*. New York: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry. *Ancient Society; or, Researches in the Lines of Human Progress From Savagery, Through Barbarism to Civilization*. New York: H. Holt, 1878.
- Engels, Frederick. *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972
- Trautmann T. The Whole History of Kinship Terminology in Three Chapters: Before Morgan, Morgan, and after Morgan // *Anthropological Theory*. 2001. Vol. 1, No. 2. P. 268-287
- Kuper A. *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion*. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Клакхон К.К.М. *Зеркало для человека. Введение в антропологию*. СПб. 1998. Гл. Странные обычаи и Антропология за работой.
- Ссорин-Чайков, Н. В. “О дискурсе как обмене и изобретении Запада в антропологии антропологии: предварительные заметки.” *Исторические Исследования* 4 (2016): 78–110.
- Эриксен Т. 2004. *Что такое антропология?* Москва: Изд. Высшая Школа Экономики.

## 5 September

### Seminar 1. Introduction to the course

Seminar structure and readings; exams; introduction of course instructors; O&A

## 12 September

### Seminar 2. Matrilineal kinship

Questions for discussion:

- Why the discovery of matrilineal kinship was so revolutionary for anthropology?
- How is matrilineal kinship linked with *Iroquois* tribal structure?
- How classificatory kinship is explored through the genealogical method?

Readings:

\*Morgan, *League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois*. Ch. IV (pp. 74-98) and Ch. II (pp. 35-50).

\*Rivers, W.H.R. “The Genealogical Method of Anthropological Inquiry.” *Sociological Review* 3 (1910): 1–12.

## 19 September

### Lecture 3 and 4: Anthropology and gender

Gender and the discovery of matrilineal kinship; evolutionary anthropology and cultural relativism; Freud; the school of culture and personality; contemporary scope of gender theory.

Mead, Margaret. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Study of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies*.

Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1943. (Chs. III and VIII) (Student presentation)

Foerstel, Lenora and Angela Gilliam, eds. *Confronting Margaret Mead: Scholarship, Empire, and the South Pacific* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994

Freud, Sigmund. A Case of Hysteria, Three Essays on Sexuality and Other Works (1901-1905) Vol. VII; Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Leonardo and Other Works (1910) Vol. XI of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Trans. from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey, in collaboration with Anna Freud, 24 volumes, London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1953-1974.

Freud, Sigmund. "Female Sexuality" *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 13 (1932): 281-297  
**(Student presentation)**

Ortner, S. 1974. "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" in *Women, Culture and Society*.

Ortner, Sherry B. 1991. "Reading America: Preliminary Notes on Class and Culture," in Fox, Richard G. (ed.), *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, pp. 163-190

Reiss, Albert J. 1961. "The Social Integration of Queers and Peers," *Social Problems* 9 (2): 102-120.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 1995.

Leacock, Eleanor. "Relations of Production in Band Society," In *Politics and History in Band Societies*, edited by Eleanor Leacock, and Richard Lee, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

## 19 September

### Seminar 3: Alliance

Questions for discussion:

- Is there a difference between kinship logic of politics (e.g. alliances & conquests) and political logic of kinship?
- Is conflict more likely to arise with distant or closely-related groups?

Readings:

\*Morgan, *League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois* Ch. I (pp. 3-34) Ch. V (pp. 99-119)

\*Evans-Pritchard, E. E. *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelyhood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1940. (Introduction and Ch. 4 "The political system")

## 26 September

### Seminar 4 Gender and class

Questions for discussion:

- Why, if at all, it is useful to distinguish sex and gender?
- Is gender/sexuality "classed" just as class is "gendered/sexed"?

Readings:

\*Ortner, Sherry B. 1991. "Reading America: Preliminary Notes on Class and Culture," in Fox, Richard G. (ed.), *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, pp. 163-190

## 3 October

### Lectures 5 and 6: Production versus exchange

Division of labor and types of solidarity; labor, exploitation and kinship; exchange theory; dual organizations; descent versus alliance.

Engels, Frederick. *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972. Ch. II The Family (Student presentation)

Durkheim, Emile. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Chs. II and III Mechanical and Organic Solidarity New York: Free Press, 1997. (Student presentation)

Mauss, Marcel. *The Gift: Expanded Edition*. Chicago: HAU Books and University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.

### 3 October

#### Seminar 5 Practices *versus* structures

Questions for discussion:

- The Kabyle house is the world reversed (Bourdieu). Might this be true of any home?
- Do practices follow from structures?

Readings:

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press, 1977. (Chs. Land and the matrimonial strategies; The Kabyle House or the World Reversed) OR Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Berber House or the World Reversed." *Information (International Social Science Council)* 9, no. 2 (1970): 151–70.

### 10 October

#### Seminar 6. Cross-cousin marriage

Questions for discussion:

- What are different ways to interpret incest taboo and cross-cousin marriage?

Readings:

Levi-Strauss, Claude. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969. Ch. XXVII "Cycles of reciprocity" and XXIX "The principles of kinship." (**Student presentation**)

\*Urbach, Karina, ed. *Royal Kinship. Anglo-German Family Networks 1815-1918* München: K.G. Saur, 2008.

\*Sahpera, Isaak. The Tswana Concept of Incest, pp. 104-120, in: *Social Structure: studies presented to A. R. Radcliffe-Brown*, Ed. by M.Fortes. New York: Russell & Russell 1963

### 17 October

#### Lecture 7: Anthropology of anthropological optics (i): history of kinship studies

The critical role of kinship studies, and the critique of the study of kinship; the emergence of anthropology of anthropology; anthropology as cultural critique

Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (1988): 575–99.

Schneider, David. "What Kinship is All About?" In *Kinship Studies in Morgan Centennial Year*, edited by Prescilla Reining, 32–63. Washington, D.C.: The Anthropological Society of Washington, 1972.]

Schneider, David. *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984

Kuklick H. *The Savage Within: The Social History of British anthropology, 1885-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991

Kuper A. *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion*. London: Routledge, 1988.

Stocking G. (ed.) *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

Derrida, Jacques. "Structure, Sign and Play," In *Writing and Difference*, London and New York:

Routledge, 2001.

Haraway, Donna. *Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

## 17 October

### Seminar 7: Meanings of paternity

Questions for discussion:

- Why anthropology of kinship is interested in the history of anthropology?
- How differently conception is understood across cultures?

Readings:

Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1988): 519–31. **(Student presentation)**

\*Delaney, Carol. "Meaning of Paternity and the Virgin Birth Debate." *Man* 21, no. 3 (1986): 494–513

## 31 October.

### Lecture 8. Anthropology of anthropological optics (ii): partial perspective

Interpretive anthropology (Geertz); the condition of postmodernity; critique of objectivism and metanarratives; the concept of situated knowledge (Haraway) and feminist critique of cultural critique; postcolonial theory.

Film "Paris is burning" dir. Jennie Livingston (1990)

Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (1988): 575–99.

Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1988): 519–31.

Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997.

Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Asad, Talal, ed. *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* New York: Humanities Press, 1973.

Rabinow P. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*. London; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977.

Clifford, James. "Introduction: Partial Truths" in: *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* Ed. by J. Clifford, G. Marcus. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986. P. 1-26.

Clifford, James. "On Ethnographic Authority." *Representations* 2, no. Spring (1983): 118–46.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

Abu-Lughud, Lila. "Writing Against Culture," In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, edited by Richard G. Fox, 137–62. Santa Fe: School of American Research, 1991.

Behar, Ruth and Deborah A. Gordon, eds. *Women Writing Culture* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

### Seminar 8: Situated knowledge

Questions for discussion:

- What do we learn about sociocultural reality by asking who the observer of it is?

- Is situated knowledge not objective?

Readings:

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973. Ch. I Thick Description (Student presentation)

- \*Buckley, Thomas. "Menstruation and the Power of Yurok Women: Methods in Cultural Reconstruction." *American Ethnologist* 9, no. 1 (1982): 47–60.
- \*Haraway, Donna. "Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City" in her *Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

## 7 November

### Seminars 9 and 10: No room for love? The GDAT debate reenactment

Questions for discussion:

- Why fixation on reciprocity leaves no room for love?
- Is romantic love universal?

Readings:

Venkatesan, S., Jeanette Edwards, Rane Willerslev, Elizabeth Povinelli, and Perveez Mody. 2011 "The anthropological fixation with reciprocity leaves no room for love: 2009 meeting of the Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory" in *Critique of Anthropology* September 2011 31: 210-250. **[DEBATE REENACTMENT Student presentation]**

- \*Mody, Perveez 2002 "Love & the Law: Love-Marriage in Delhi", *Modern Asian Studies*, 36, 1, pp. 223-256, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- \*Heywood, Paolo. "Topographies of Love: Two Discourses on the Russian 'Mail-Order Bride Industry'." *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology* 29, no. 2 (2009): 26–45.

## 14 November.

### Lecture 9: Partial perspective versus partial connections

Strathern's critique of postmodernist perspectives on truth, gender and society; the concept of partible self and "dividual."

Strathern, Marilyn. *Partial Connections*. Savage, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1991.

Strathern, Marilyn. *Gender of the Gift: Problems With Women and Problems With Society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (1988): 575–99.

Clifford, James. "Introduction: Partial Truths" in: *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* Ed. by J. Clifford, G. Marcus. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986. P. 1-26.

Clifford, James. "On Ethnographic Authority." *Representations* 2, no. Spring (1983): 118–46.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

## 14 November.

### Seminar 11: Partial connections

Questions for discussion:

- What are connections between social ties and science in NRTs?
- Do new reproductive technologies disrupt nature or help to fulfill it?



Readings:

Haraway, Donna. *A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s*. *Socialist Review* 1985 (80):65-107 (**Student presentation**)

\*Berend, Zsuzsa. *The Online World of Surrogacy*. Berghahn Books, 2016 **Chapter 1**. The Virtual Meeting Ground for Real People **Chapter 2**. Journey **Chapter 3**. Contract

## 21 November

### Seminars 12 and 13: Persons and commodities

Questions for discussion:

- Why is turning different parts of bodies and selves into commodities perceived so differently?
- Might it be useful to think about individual as “dividual”?

Readings:

\*Day, Sophie. *On the Game: Women and Sex Work*. London: Pluto Press, 2007. (Chapter to be selected)

\*Berend, Zsuzsa. *The Online World of Surrogacy*. Berghahn Books, 2016 (Chapter to be selected)

## 28 November

### Lecture 10: History of sexuality: from Freud to Foucault

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, 1980

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1977.

Dreyfus, Hubert L., Paul Rabinow, and Michel Foucault. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London and New York: Routledge, 1970.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Avon Books, 1965.

Ginzburg, Carlo. “Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method,” In *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce*, edited by Umberto Eco and Thomas A. Sebeok, 118–81.

Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983

Voloshinov, V. N. *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*. New York: Academic Press, 1976.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 1995.

## 28 November

### Seminar 14: Foucault

Questions for discussion:

- What does Foucault mean when he says that we look at ourselves as if through a keyhole?
- What is repressive hypothesis?

Readings:

Voloshinov, V. N. *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*. New York: Academic Press, 1976. (**Student presentation**)

\*Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, 1980

## 5 December

## Seminar 15 and 16 Kinship and the state

Questions for discussion:

- Why family is a state matter?
- The Kabyle house is the world reversed (Bourdieu). Might this be true of any home?

Readings:

Kligman, Gail. "Political Demography: The Banning of Abortion in Ceausescu's Rumania," In *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction*, edited by Faye D. Ginsburg, and Rayna Rapp, 234–55. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. (Student presentation)

\*Scott, James. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Conditions Have Failed*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998. (Introduction, pp. 1-8; "The Creation of Surnames", pp. 64-71 from Ch. 2; "The State and Scientific Forestry: A Parable", pp. 11-22 from Ch. 1).

\*Ssorin-Chaikov, Nikolai. *The Social Life of the State in Subarctic Siberia*. Ch. 4 After Capitalism (esp. section "class origin as genealogy") Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003.

## 12 December

### Seminar 17 and 18 Gifts and commodities

Questions for discussion:

- What are some of the connections between theories of exchange and kinship?
- Is gift or commodity exchange moral in the NRT context?

Readings:

Gregory, Chris. *Gifts and Commodities*. Ch. I The competing theories and Ch. II A framework of analysis London: Academic Press, 1982. (Student presentation)

\*Berend, Zsuzsa. *The Online World of Surrogacy*. Berghahn Books, 2016 **Chapter 4. Money Chapter 5. Gift; Conclusion**

## 19 December

### Seminar 19 and 20 Choice and genealogy

Questions for discussion:

- How similar is the distinction of virtual and real to that of classificatory and descriptive?
- What are temporalities of kinship?

Readings:

Weston, Keth. [Forever is a long time: Romancing the real in gay kinship ideologies](#), pp. 87-112 in Yanagisako, Sylvia and Carol Delaney, eds. *Naturalizing Power: Essays in Feminist Cultural Analysis* New York and London: Routledge, 1995. (Student presentation)

\*Boellstorff, Tom. *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Ch. 5 Personhood and Ch. 6 Intimacy Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

\*Cannell, Fenella. "The Christianity of Anthropology." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11, no. 2 (2005): 335–56.

Berend, Zsuzsa. *The Online World of Surrogacy*. Berghahn Books, 2016

Morgan, Lewis Henry. *League of the Ho-De-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois*. New York: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.