This graduate seminar engages various theoretical frameworks and concepts -- Beck’s *risk society*, Foucault’s *biopolitics*, Wittgenstein’s *form of life*, Benjamin’s *mimetic faculty*, Lacan’s *imaginary-symbolic-real*, Deleuze’s *assemblage* and *becoming*, for example -- that inform the ways a growing number of anthropologists think and write about social formations and human experience today. We will inquire into how anthropologists use these various theories to approach people and institutions entangled in novel political, economic, and technological developments. How do these frameworks and concepts affect anthropological observation and critique? What happens to them in the process? How theoretically generative is ethnography? Overall, the seminar is concerned with the ways in which knowledge of singularity and the generality of immediate history may expand social thought and inform ethics.

Requirements:

The success of the seminar depends on your commitment to complete all required readings for each session and to participate actively in the discussions.

Grading will be based on:

1. Attendance, participation in discussions, and class presentations (25%)
2. Six reading reports (25%)
3. A final research paper (10-12 pages is due on May 10 at 5 pm -- 50%)
The following books will be available for purchase at the U-Store and will also be on reserve at Firestone Library.


Additional articles and book chapters can be downloaded from Firestone Library’s electronic reserve.
February 2
Introduction:
The World in Pieces and the Work of Anthropology


February 9
Emergent Forms of Life


Reading response is due

February 16
Subject and Power


Reading response is due
February 23

Biopolitics and Beyond


Suggested:

Reading response is due

March 2

Anthropology in the Margins of the State


Class presentation

Guest Speaker: Anne-Maria Makhulu (Princeton University)

March 9

Circuits Within Capitalism


Class presentation

* SPRING BREAK *

March 23
Imaginary, Symbolic, Real


Reading response is due

March 30
Language and Body


Reading response is due
April 6

The Anthropology of Subjectivity


April 13

Becoming


Reading response is due
April 20 and 27

Ethnographically-Generated Figures of Thought


Guest Speaker, 4/20: Hugh Raffles (UC Santa Cruz)

Class presentations