

Department of Anthropology
Princeton University

THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY ANTHROPOLOGY

ANT 570
W 9:00-11:50 AM
Friend Center, Room 304
Spring 2005

Prof. João Biehl
58 Prospect Avenue, # 202
Office Hours: Mo 12:30-2:00 pm
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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.

Agamben, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Das, Veena and Deborah Poole. 2004. *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Deleuze, Gilles. 1997. *Essays: Critical and Clinical*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Fischer, Michael M.J. 2003. *Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice*. Durham: Duke University Press.

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

Lacan, Jacques. 1978. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. New York: W.W. Norton.

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

Geertz, Clifford. 2000. "The World in Pieces: Culture and Politics at the End of the Century." *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.218-263.

Rabinow, Paul. 1997. "Polemics, Politics, Problematizations: An Interview with Michel Foucault." Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* (edited by Paul Rabinow). New York: New Press, pp.111-20.

Rabinow, Paul. 2003. "Midst Anthropology's Problems." *Anthropos Today: Reflections on Modern Equipment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.13-30.

February 9

Emergent Forms of Life

Fischer, Michael M.J. 2003. *Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 1-58, 370-92.

Fischer, Michael M.J. 2005. "Changing Ecologies: Narratives of Water, Land, Conflict, and Political Economy, Then and Now, and Life to Come." Manuscript.

Beck, Ulrich. 1992. "On the Logic of Wealth Distribution and Risk Distribution." *Risk Society*. London: Sage Publication, pp. 19-50.

Derrida, Jacques. 1994. "Wears and Tears." *Specters of Marx*. New York: Routledge, 1994, pp.77-94.

Reading response is due

February 16

Subject and Power

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

Foucault, Michel. 2000. "The Subject and Power." *Power*, edited by James Faubion. New York: The New Press, pp.326-48.

Deleuze, Gilles. 1995. "A Portrait of Foucault." *Negotiations*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.102-18.

Foucault, Michel. 1991. "Governmentality." *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, edited by G. Burchell et al. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 87-104.

Reading response is due

February 23
Biopolitics and Beyond

Agamben, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Mbembe, Achille. 2003. "Necropolitics." *Public Culture* 15(1):11-40.

Biehl, João. 2005. "Vita." *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Suggested:

Lacan, Jacques. 1992. "The Essence of Tragedy: A Commentary on Sophocles' Antigone." *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, Book VII, 1959-1960*. New York: W.W.Norton, pp. 241-325.

Reading response is due

March 2
Anthropology in the Margins of the State

Das, Veena and Deborah Poole. 2004. *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Petryna, Adriana. 2002. "Life Politics after Chernobyl." *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.1-33.

Fassin, Didier. 2001. "The Biopolitics of Otherness: Undocumented Foreigners and Racial Discrimination in French Public Debate." *Anthropology Today* 17(1):3-7.

Class presentation

Guest Speaker: Anne-Maria Makhulu (Princeton University)

March 9
Circuits Within Capitalism

Deleuze, Gilles. 1995. "Control and Becoming." "Postscript on Control Societies." *Negotiations*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.169-76; 177-82.

Zelizer, Viviana A. 2005. "Circuits within Capitalism." *The Economic Sociology of Capitalism*, edited by Victor Nee and Richard Swedberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff. 2003. "Ethnography on an Awkward Scale: Postcolonial Anthropology and the Violence of Abstraction." *Ethnography* 4 (2):147-179.

Appadurai, Arjun. 2002. "Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon of Politics." *Public Culture* 14(1):21-47.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2004. "Parts unknown: Undercover Ethnography of the Organ-Trafficking Underworld." *Ethnography* 5 (1):29-73.

Roitman, Janet. 2004. "The Garrison-Entrepôt: A Mode of Governing in the Chad Basin." *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, edited by Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier. London: Blackwell Publishing, pp.417-36.

Class presentation

*** SPRING BREAK ***

March 23

Imaginary, Symbolic, Real

Lyotard, Jean-François. 1991. "Rewriting Modernity." *The Inhuman*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.24-35.

Lacan, Jacques. 1978. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. New York: W.W. Norton, pp.1-64.

Lacan, Jacques. 1979. "The Neurotic's Individual Myth." *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 48 (3): 386-425.

Lacan, Jacques. 1980. "A Lacanian Psychosis: Interview by Jacques Lacan." *Returning to Freud: Clinical Psychoanalysis in the School of Lacan*, edited by Stuart Schneiderman. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp.19-41.

Reading response is due

March 30

Language and Body

Das, Veena. 1997. "Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain." *Social Suffering* edited by Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, pp.67-91.

Cavell, Stanley. 1997. "Comments on Veena Das's Essay 'Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain'." *Social Suffering*, edited by Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp.93-98.

Das, Veena. 1998. "Wittgenstein and Anthropology." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 27: 171-195.

Cavell, Stanley. 1994. "The Uncanniness of the Ordinary." *Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp.153-78.

Reading response is due

April 6
The Anthropology of Subjectivity

Povinelli, Elizabeth. 2002. "The Vulva Thieves (*Atna Nylkna*): Modal Ethics and the Colonial Archive." *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterity and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp.71-109.

Boon, James. 1999. "Encores and Envoi." *Verging on Extra-vagance: Anthropology, History, Religion, Literature, Arts ... Showbiz*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 263-78.

Ortner, Sherry B. 2004. "Geertz, Subjectivity, and Postmodern Consciousness." Manuscript.

Rabinow, Paul. 2004. "Anthropological Observation and Self-Formation." Manuscript.

Biehl, João, Byron Good, and Arthur Kleinman. 2004. "Introduction: Rethinking Subjectivity." Manuscript.

Good, Byron, Subandi, and Mary-Jo Delvecchio Good. 2004. "The Subject of Mental Illness: Psychosis, Mad Violence and Subjectivity in Contemporary Indonesia." Manuscript.

April 13
Becoming

Deleuze, Gilles. 1997. *Essays: Critical and Clinical*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. lv-lvi, 1-6, 56-60, 61-67, 126-135.

Deleuze, Gilles. 2001. "Immanence: A Life." *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*. New York: Zone Books, pp.25-33.

Rabinow, Paul. 2004. "Anthropological Observation and Self-Formation." Manuscript.

Greenhouse, Carol. 2002. "Citizenship, Agency, and the Dream of Time." *Looking Back at Law's Century*, edited by A Sarat et al. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp.184-209.

Reading response is due

April 20 and 27

Ethnographically-Generated Figures of Thought

Benjamin, Walter. 1979. "One-Way Street." *One-Way Street, and Other Writings*. London: New Left Books, pp.45-106.

Benjamin, Walter. 1986. "On the Mimetic Faculty." *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*. New York: Schocken.

Raffles, Hugh. 2002. "Intimate Knowledge." *International Social Science Journal*, 173:325-35.

Pandolfo, Stefania. 2000. "The Thin Line of Modernity: Some Moroccan Debates on Subjectivity." *Questions of Modernity*, edited by Timothy Mitchell. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.115-147.

Corin, Ellen. 2004. "The Other of Culture in Psychosis: The Ex-centricity of the Subject." Manuscript.

Borneman, John. 2001. "Caring and Being Cared For: Displacing Marriage, Kinship, Gender, and Sexuality." *The Ethics of Kinship: Ethnographic Inquiries*, edited by James Faubion. New York: Roman and Littlefield, pp.29-45.

Lovell, Anne M. 2005. "Addiction Markets: The Case of High-Dose Buprenorphine in France." *Global Pharmaceuticals: Practices, Markets, Ethics*, edited by Adriana Petryna, Andrew Lakoff, and Arthur Kleinman. Durham: Duke University Press.

Biehl, João. 2004. "Life of the Mind: The Interface of Psychopharmaceuticals, Domestic Economies, and Social Abandonment." *American Ethnologist* 31 (4): 475-496.

Le Marcis, Frédéric. 2005. "The Suffering Body of the City." *Public Culture* 16(3).

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

Class presentations