

**Materials contributed by Amy Stambach
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These materials are from Anthropology 104: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology and Human Diversity, taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Anthropology 104 is an undergraduate course for non-anthropology majors that fulfills a general education requirement and enrolls about 750 students per semester. Students come from a diversity of backgrounds including from the United States, Europe, Latin America, and East Asia. For many students, this is the only anthropology class they will take. The course rotates among three or four faculty. When I teach the course, I use objects to illustrate several lectures.

Materials come from my personal collection of objects from the Kilimanjaro Region of Tanzania and from the UW-Madison department's ethnography collection. The Kilimanjaro materials are not accessioned. They were made for me in the early 1990s. I use the Kilimanjaro materials to demonstrate anthropological topics related to fieldwork methods, health, language, and gender. I invite student volunteers to come up to the stage to handle and investigate the objects. I find that students really enjoy these hands-on demonstrations and are eager to see what their friends and acquaintances will make of the objects.

For the departmental materials, I ask students to observe a digital image of the object or story on the screen. Then I ask them to take a minute or two to talk with the person next to them about what they think the object or story is (where it comes from, how it might be used, how it might have ended up in the anthropology collections). I then ask students to jot down their thoughts on a piece of paper then to pass that paper to another student, read the comments, then pass the paper again, and repeat. Colleagues and I call this the "Anthropology 104 Shuffle." This exercise allows students to quickly see what others in the class have made of the item, before I present the "great reveal" of what the object is labeled, how it was accessioned, and how it relates to the day's lecture.

In addition to requiring students to write one book review and take weekly quizzes, I use multiple-choice exams to test students' recall of the names and uses of the objects, and I ask students to identify another similar object to the one discussed in class, so that they might think about comparative, cross-cultural similarities. I find that students remember these points that come from the object lessons more than they remember abstract concepts presented without concrete examples. My goal is to make the course memorable for students, and to leave students with an appreciation for the diversity of human experience, past and present.

MATERIALS POSTED

Syllabus with topics and readings (**highlighted** lectures involve the use of objects)

Lecture materials

- Exercise 1 - Ngata and participant observation
- Exercise 2 - Mregho, gender, and the body
- Exercise 3 - Mukluks and an 'offensive odor'
- Exercise 4 - How Embera materials at UW-Madison were acquired

Useful references provided to students

UW-Madison Anthropology: Ethnographic collection

UW-Madison Anthropology: Help/Writing



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON

Anthropology 104
Cultural Anthropology & Human Diversity

Course description

Introduction to cultural anthropology for non-majors; comparative cross-cultural consideration of social organization, economics, politics, language, religion, ecology, gender & cultural change Level: Elementary. Breadth: Social Science. L&S Credit Type: C. Ethnic Studies: Yes. Honors: Yes. General Education: Yes. Open to first-year students. Not for those who have taken Anthropology 204.

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Fieldwork Journal

To give you a sense of what it is like to be a cultural anthropologist, you will have the opportunity to complete a number of short fieldwork assignments. The prompts for each assignment can be found in the Fieldwork Journal that comes with your textbook.

Textbook

Guest, Kenneth J. 2016. *Cultural Anthropology: A Toolkit for a Global Age*. New York: W. W. Norton. Second edition.

Week 1: What is anthropology?

9/6 Thursday: Course introduction

After class: read Guest, Chapter 1.

Week 2: What is culture?

9/11 Tuesday: What is Anthropology?

Read Guest, Chapter 2.

9/13 Thursday: What is "culture"?

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 1: Using the idea of "making the strange familiar, and the familiar strange" start to think about the people and places that go

into the making of your food. Choose a food or beverage item -- perhaps a can of coke or another item, your call. What's in it? Where did the ingredients come from? Who made it? What is life like for those who made it? What is the impact of the item on the local community where it is produced? Where it is consumed? What is the environmental impact of the item, considering what it takes to grow and process it? Where and how far did this item travel? By exploring the "social life" of this item, you are applying a set of analytical tools that may help you analyze culture. Answer (in writing) each of these questions before you attend your first discussion section. This assignment is modeled on Guest's FW journal, pp. 1-4.

Week 3: Methods

***9/18 Tuesday: Fieldwork (Ngata and participant observation)**

Read Guest, Chapter 3

9/20 Thursday: Analysis and Ethnography

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 2: Observation exercise. Pair with another student from your discussion section and choose a public site where you will conduct a one-hour observation. Both of you must visit the same place at the same time. During this time, individually record what you observe. Who is there? How are they dressed? How do they behave? Before comparing your notes with your partner, write a very brief essay about what was most significant in the interactions you observed.

Week 4: Language

9/25 Tuesday: Language

Read Guest, Chapter 4

9/27 Thursday: Language and Power

Review Guest, Chapter 4

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 3: Language and gender in the classroom, Guest FW journal pages 13-16.

Week 5: Health and illness

10/2 Tuesday: Health and Illness

Read Guest, Chapter 16

10/4 Thursday: Health and Illness (cont.)

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 4: What do you do when you get sick?, p. 67-71.

Week 6: Structures of power (1): Gender

***10/9 Tuesday: Gender (Mregho, gender, and the body)**

Read Guest, Chapter 8

10/11 Thursday: Gender (cont.)

Review Guest, Chapter 8

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 5: Commercials and the Construction of Gender. Guest FW journal, pages 31-34.

Week 7: Structures of power (2): Sexuality

10/16 Tuesday: Sexuality

Read Guest, Chapter 9

10/18 Thursday: Race and Racism - Race and Biology

Read Guest, Chapter 6

Week 8: Structures of power (3)

10/23 Tuesday: Race and Racism - The Legacy of Colonialism

Review Guest, Chapter 6

10/25 Thursday: Race and Racism - Racial Formations in the United States

Week 9: Structures of power (4): Ethnicity

***10/30 Tuesday: Ethnicity and nationalism (Mukluks and an 'offensive odor')**

Read Guest, Chapter 7

11/1 Thursday: Ethnicity and nationalism (cont.)

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 6: Guest Fieldwork Journal, pages 26-27, on ethnicity.

Week 10: Structures of power (5): Nationalism

11/6 Tuesday: Class and Inequality

Read Guest, Chapter 11

11/8 Thursday: Class and Inequality (cont.)

Week 11: Migration

11/13 Tuesday: Migration

Read Guest, Chapter 13

11/15 Thursday: Migration and Cultural Citizenship

Discussion sections Fieldwork Journal Assignment 7: An immigrant interview, pages 53-56.

Week 12: Global economy (1)

***11/20 Tuesday: The Origins of the Contemporary Economic System (How Embera materials at UW-Madison were acquired)**

Read Guest, Chapter 12

11/22 Thursday: THANKSGIVING, no class

Week 13: Global economy (2)

11/27 Tuesday: The Global Economy: Capitalism

11/29 Thursday: The Global Economy: Globalization and Neoliberalism

Discussion sections Consider your laptop or your smartphone. What gives it value? Is it the cost of the raw materials and labor involved in producing it? Is it the use that you make of it? What makes your laptop or cellphone more or less valuable than another one? Is it because of its technological specifications, or are there other factors? How does brand name factor in the value of an object?

Week 14: Politics and power

12/4 Tuesday: The State

Read Guest, Chapter 14

12/6 Thursday: Violence and Resistance

Comparison of the use of violence and framing discourse during the Civil Rights movement and Black Lives Matter.

WEEK 15: Conclusion

12/11 Tuesday: Course wrap-up

Selected Ethnographies (choose one for your book review)

Besteman, Catherine. 2016. *Making Refuge: Somali Bantu Refugees and Lewiston, Maine*. Durham: Duke University.

DeLeon, Jason. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gozdziak, Elzbieta M. 2016. *Trafficked Children and Youth in the United States: Re-imagining Survivors*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Perez, Elizabeth. 2016. *Religion in the Kitchen: Cooking, Talking, and the Making of Black Atlantic Traditions*. New York: New York University.

LECTURE MATERIALS

Exercise 1 - Ngata and participant observation. Ngata are head rings woven of banana thatch and used by Chagga women to carry bundles on their heads. I put the ngata on the overhead document camera and ask students what they think it is, what is it made from, what it is used for, where it came from. They can only ask me "yes/no" questions until they are ready to identify the object. Once they have identified it and where it's come from and what it's made of (or, after about 10 minutes, if they have not), I invite a student to come up on stage to demonstrate how it is used. I bring in a bike helmet to use as the bundle. Often times students carry the bundle across the stage with no problem at all. Then I ask if they would like to carry a bucket of water on top of their head. Most decline. I ensure that at least two or three students have an opportunity to try out the ngata. I use this exercise to demonstrate anthropological methods of participant observation. I make that point that much of anthropological field work involves doing as well as looking and asking, and I emphasize that the use of objects is important for understanding how people variously make the material world and how, in turn, people are socially made through their learned use of material objects. I explain that a friend of mine made the ngata and that she and I used it to carry goods from the bi-weekly market in north Machame-Kilimanjaro.

Exercise 2 - Mregho, gender, and the body. Mregho are initiation sticks once used on Mount Kilimanjaro that inscribe lessons associated with adulthood. The stick is made of special wood and is about 2 inches in diameter, four feet long, with a metal spike/nail (*ngoso*) hammered at the tip. The outer bark of the wood is sliced and peeled into what one person in the early 1990s call "chapters" or sections/segments of each about 3 inches in length. Each segment is etched or sliced with a particular design that corresponds to a particular lesson (hence, a chapter). These lessons--and the sticks--differ for girls and boys. Girls' sticks told lessons about how to live with mothers in law and how to cook and survive in husbands' compounds. Boys' sticks included information not only about how to 'take care' of a wife and ensure children but also how and when to mobilize as an army. For the lecture, I first put the stick on the documentary camera (the stick is not 'real' but was made for me as a model in 1990; it was never used in ritual) and ask students to tell me what they think it is. By now, they know it has likely come from Kilimanjaro and is connected with my research. They also know that it connects in some way with the lesson on gender. After a few minutes, I invite students to the stage in case they would like to get a closer look at the object. I then give a fuller explanation of the object, and I use the object to connect a number of topics in the course, namely, language, health and illness, gender, and fieldwork. I refer students to Donna Kerner's work on "chaptering the narrative," to Sally Falk Moore's on *ngoso*, and to my book "Lessons from Kilimanjaro" if they would like to read more, outside of the course, on the subject of mregho.

Exercise 3 - Mukluks and an 'offensive odor' The UW Department of Anthropology houses an ethnography collection of several hundred items. The current Curator is Elizabeth Leith. One way I introduce ethnicity in the course is by putting up an image on the screen (drawn from the Digital Collection of UW Anthropology-Ethnography items) and ask students what they see. For this, I first put up a picture of the item itself and ask students what they think it is. I ask them to jot their ideas on paper and then pass the paper to another person (this routine is, again, "the Anthro 104 Shuffle"). I then put up, on the screen, the entire museum-collection entry, not only the

picture of the object. The Mukluk entry is interesting for what it says and does not say. I draw attention not to the image of the mukluku itself but to the "offensive odor" comment. I note that it was created by a previous curator, not Liz Leith. I use the idea of smell and taste to talk about attributions of quality by those who see themselves as others' others, and I use the collection digital platform to discuss an appreciation for the material record and point out some aspects that would be good to know more about. The lesson is useful for piquing students' interests in ethnography collections.

Exercise 4 - How Embera materials at UW-Madison were acquired In 2017, the UW-Madison Department of Anthropology acquired a rich collection of Embera materials from a retired public school teacher, who had been involved with rainforest conservation issues in Panama. He took students to the Canal Zone where he became familiar with community members, and he ended up acquiring the materials of Rachel Crandall, a missionary and conservationist who also collected oral Embera stories and recorded and translated them in English and Spanish. For the classroom lecture, I put a copy of one of the Embera stories on the screen (it's in Spanish) and ask students to identify what it is and where it might have come from. I then put up the English translation and we discuss the story for a few minutes before I ask them, why do you think I introduced this item in the context of today's lecture on the origin of the global economy? I then use the story of how this Embera story came to be located in the UW-Madison Anthropology collection to discuss the way discovery and culture emerged as traded commodities, and how current collections such as this one on Embera also reflect legacies of an older history of trade and exchange. I end the lecture by noting that a previous cohort of Anthro 104 students assisted in cataloguing these Embera materials, and I use the lecture to encourage Anthro 104 students to take future anthropology courses in field methods and history. One student recently offered to bring her father's Dutch colonial films to the department, and another Peace Corps volunteer is working with our Liz Leith to place her field materials in the Anthro collection.

Useful references provided to students

Ethnographic Collection of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Anthropology

<https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/anthroethno/>

<https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AI5HNWBIQ2QYN68P> (mukluks)

UW-Madison Anthropology : Help/Writing

<https://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/c.php?g=177952&p=1167407>