NUTR 0330: Anthropology of Food and Nutrition. Spring 2018

Class Meetings: Thurs. 9am-12pm
Classroom: Jaharis 155
Instructor: Ellen Messer, Ph.D. Ellen Messer, Ph.D. Ellen.Messer@Tufts.edu
Instructor Office Hours: Wed. 1:30-3:30 or by appt.

Semester Hour Units: 3 SHU

Prerequisites: Some social science background

Course Description:
This course provides an advanced introduction to anthropological theory and methods designed for food and nutrition science and policy graduate students. Section 1 covers anthropology's four-field modes of inquiry, cross-cutting theoretical approaches and thematic interest groups, their respective institutions and intellectual concerns. Section 2 demonstrates applications of these concepts and methods to cutting-edge food and nutrition issues. Assignments and activities incorporate background readings, related discussions, and short writing assignments, plus an anthropological literature review on a focused food and nutrition project relevant to their particular interests. The course overall encourages critical thinking and scientific assessment of anthropology's evidence base, analytical tools, logic, and meaning-making, in the context of contributions to multi-disciplinary research and policy teams.

Weekly 3-hour sessions feature an introductory overview lecture, student-facilitated discussion of readings, and professor-moderated debate or exercise illustrating that week's themes. Throughout the term, participants keep a written reading log (critical response diary), to be handed in week 3 and 6. In lieu of a mid-term exam, there are two 2-page graded written essay assignments, due weeks 4 and 8. The term-long food-and nutrition proposal-writing project will explore anthropological literature on a focused food and nutrition question, with an outline due week 9, and a short literature review and annotated bibliography due week 12. A final discussion will explore the value-added of anthropology to food and nutrition studies, with reference to historical literature reviews and earlier synthesizing volumes in nutritional anthropology.

The professor, Ellen Messer, is an anthropologist trained in human ecology and anthropological approaches to religion, who emphasizes biocultural approaches to human foodways and rights-based approaches to food security and development.

Course Objectives:
1. Appreciate anthropology as a discipline: its holistic questions, multiple sub-disciplinary and thematic modes of inquiry, approaches, and evidence base; quantitative and qualitative research tools and ethical concerns; and how anthropology differs from and complements other disciplinary modes of inquiry.

2. Recognize the significance of archaeological, primate and human evolution, historic, ethnographic, and linguistic evidence for contemporary biocultural perspectives on human evolution and food and nutrition studies

3. Master the basic terms of anthropological analysis and discourse, and be able to reference them effectively in professional work.
4. Know how to access (bibliographies, data bases) and navigate (key words) the anthropological literature in general, and especially relevant to food and nutrition research and policy questions.

5. Identify anthropology's U.S. and international institutional structures, and where to access anthropology's professional networks working on common concerns.

6. Understand qualitative and quantitative methods used by anthropologists, their standards of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and ethical concerns, as these relate to theory, policy, and practice.

7. Be able to incorporate anthropology literature into a research proposal or write-up on a focused food and nutrition question.

Summary of Assignments and Grading:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
<th>Grading Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Weekly reading logs (graded pass/fail), with critical responses to</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>required and outside readings, plus responsibility for leading class</td>
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<td>discussions of readings on a rotating basis</td>
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<td>(2) Weeks 4 and 8: graded two-page critical responses to questions</td>
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<td>summarizing major ideas from readings</td>
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<td>(3) Weeks 5, 9, and 12: topic and 100 word summary, outline, then</td>
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<tr>
<td>final version of a concise anthropological literature review, including</td>
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<td>annotated bibliography, on a focused food and nutrition project</td>
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<td>proposal question</td>
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<td>(4) Final 3 pp discussion (Wk13) explores anthropology’s value-added</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Penalties for late or incomplete assignments:
Grade reductions for assignments more than three days late (half grade), and unexcused absences.

Course Texts and Materials
Each week incorporates key texts for critical discussion defining key terms, illuminating focal concepts, demonstrating methods and applications.
Required texts are:
A simple, optional background reading on biocultural approaches is:

All reserve readings are available on Hirsch Library reserves, and most are available on CANVAS, which is where students will submit weekly assignments.
Academic Conduct: Each student is responsible for upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, as specified in the Friedman School’s Policies and Procedures Handbook and Tufts University policies (http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy). It is the responsibility of each student to understand and comply with these standards, as violations will be sanctioned by penalties ranging from failure on an assignment and the course to dismissal from the school.

Assessment and Grading: A passing grade in the course is B- or better. Course grades will be based on the below (subject to revision during the course):

A > 94%
A- 90 - <94%
B+ 87 - <90% B 84 - <87% B- 80 - <84%

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<td>20%</td>
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<td>(2) Weeks 4 and 8: graded two-page critical responses to questions summarizing major ideas from readings</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Weeks 5, 9, and 12: topic and 100 word summary, outline, then final version of a concise anthropological literature review, including annotated bibliography, on a focused food and nutrition project-proposal question</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Final 3 pp discussion (Wk13) interpreting anthropology’s value-added</td>
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Instructions for Submission of Assignments and Exams: Assignments will be submitted on CANVAS by 9 PM the evening prior to the class session when particular assignment is due. Students who are unable to complete an assignment on time for any reason should notify the instructor by email with a brief explanation for why the extension is needed.

Penalties for late or incomplete assignments: Grade reductions of one half grade for (graded) assignments more than three days late and for three unexcused absences.

Accommodation of Disabilities: Tufts University is committed to providing equal access and support to all students through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may access their curricula and achieve their personal and academic potential. If you have a disability that requires
reasonable accommodations please contact the Friedman School Assistant Dean of Student Affairs at 617-636-6719 to make arrangements for determination of appropriate accommodations. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

**Diversity Statement**: We believe that the diversity of student experiences and perspectives is essential to the deepening of knowledge in this course. We consider it part of our responsibility as instructors to address the learning needs of all of the students in this course. We will present materials that are respectful of diversity: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, citizenship, language, or national origin among other personal characteristics.

**Course Topics and Assignment Schedule at a Glance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to anthropology, its subfields, and methods. Class exercises: Introductions; anthropology data bases</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td><strong>Biological and Physical Anthropology and Biocultural Evolution</strong></td>
<td>Readings (logs) Class exercises: Debate 1: Is meat-eating essential to human evolution and well-being? What is the evidence? Debate 2: Resolved: race should be abolished as an analytical concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td><strong>Archaeology and prehistory; Human sociocultural origins and evolution</strong></td>
<td>Readings (logs) Class exercise: Local mapping and calendar round Discussions: Why agriculture? Why forage?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td><strong>Social and cultural ethnographic studies: tools and concepts</strong></td>
<td>2-page critical response due Class exercises: Ethnography: Mapping kinship, resources, time allocation. Ethical discussion: the challenges of working in colonial or post-colonial contexts.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td><strong>Economics, politics, and political-economics</strong></td>
<td>Lit Review topic &amp; brief summary due Readings (logs) Class exercise: Ethnography: Characterizing and integrating</td>
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<td>#</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 28</td>
<td><strong>Ecologies: cultural, human, political, spiritual</strong></td>
<td>Readings (logs)</td>
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<td><strong>Class exercise: Ethnography: Mapping cognitive and operational food</strong></td>
<td>and nutrition environments (tomatoes, potatoes)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td><strong>Linguistics: cognitive, semiotic, and interpretative approaches; language and cultural identity</strong></td>
<td>Readings (logs)</td>
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<td><strong>Class exercises: Ethnography: ethnic cuisines and culinary language, identity, Food &amp; ritual.</strong></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar. 14</td>
<td><strong>Anthropology of food and nutrition: historical overview through current practice</strong></td>
<td>2-page critical response due</td>
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<td><strong>Class exercise: Working with key words, bibliographies, and data bases</strong></td>
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<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td><strong>Famine, Food Systems, and Food Crises</strong></td>
<td>Lit. Review outline, with subtopics, key words, and preliminary references due</td>
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<td><strong>Child survival, demography, and gender</strong></td>
<td>Class discussion: literature reviews</td>
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<td>Ethical discussion: critical anthropology</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td><strong>Food classification, Biocultural Analyses of Anti-Nutritional Factors in Foods, and Foods as Medicines</strong></td>
<td>Readings (logs)</td>
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<td>Class exercise: Food classification: genetic-engineering, branding, labeling</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr. 11</td>
<td><strong>Dietary structure, nutritional content, and socioeconomic and cultural change</strong></td>
<td>Readings (logs)</td>
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<td>Biological and Cultural Food traceability (exercise)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr. 18</td>
<td><strong>Child survival, demography, and gender</strong></td>
<td>Lit. Review Due</td>
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<td>Sharing results of lit. review projects</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr. 25</td>
<td><strong>Summary and Conclusions: anthropology’s added value</strong></td>
<td>Class discussion</td>
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<td>Take home final exam</td>
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*This schedule is subject to modification at the instructor’s discretion.*

Detailed Description of Course Topics, Assignment Schedule, and the Learning Objectives for Each Class Session: Class 1: Introduction
Learning Objectives:
• Describe anthropology as a holistic discipline, and situate anthropology of food and nutrition within it
  • Four subfields
    • Theoretical, Applied, Policy-Engaged, Advocacy, and Public Anthropology
    • Cross-cutting thematic interest groups (agriculture, health, environment, food and nutrition, human rights, religion, practice)
  • Anthropology of food and nutrition
• Quantitative and qualitative methods, ethics
• Ethnography, biocultural anthropology, and human classification
• Professional associations, literatures, and data bases

Discussion questions:
(1) By what criteria is anthropology a science or/and humanities? What kinds of frameworks, terms of analysis, standards of evidence and interpretation are used to construct respective problems and solutions?
(2) In what senses are anthropological studies theoretical or applied, and how do the two relate to policy, advocacy, and “public” anthropology studies? Consider, e.g., “Development” as an anthropological professional field and intellectual problem.
(3) How does anthropological research manage advocacy and ethics? In studies of the environment, human rights, reproduction, infant feeding -- what should be the limits on activism or inaction? If the researcher is part of the action, can she be objective?
(4) How do these questions relate to human classification, behaviors, language, biocultural evolution?

Exercise: working with key words, bibliographies, and data bases

Required Readings:

Bernard, H. Russell (2011) Research Methods in Anthropology. 5th ed. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, pp.1-22 (“Anthropology and the Social Sciences”) and, as you have time, pp. 82-112, (“Research Design: Experiments and Experimental Thinking”)

Nutritional Anthropology (NA), Part I. “A Taste of Nutritional Anthropology”, pp.1-26

Optional Readings:

Class 2: Biological and Physical Anthropology and Biocultural Evolution

Learning Objectives:
• Assess: Biocultural evolution of humans in relation to diet: Foraging time, energy, nutrient contents and budgets, palatability and digestibility.
• Growth and adaptation: Andean, Guatemalan, Asian examples; seasonal and periodic stressors; biocultural perspectives on the "small but healthy hypothesis"
• Gender dimorphism: adaptation or adjustment to circumstances?
• Disease, diet, and evolution of human populations in ecosystems
• Undernutrition and overnutrition, obesity and malnutrition
**Discussion questions:**

(1) Evolution of human diet: What background do primate and physical anthropology studies provide for our understandings of evolution of human diet?

(2) Growth, size, adaptation, and function: Distinguish between adaptation and adjustment to nutritional stress, and qualify growth and size as indicators of human well-being.

(3) What biological, cultural, and political factors influence the "small but healthy" hypothesis, in what context (s), and what evidence supports it? How has this idea been used for policy purposes?

(4) What are some ethical dilemmas that physical and biological anthropologists confront in studying human ecology in politically, economically, and environmentally stressed environments, and how have they responded?

**Debate 1:** Is meat-eating essential to human evolution and well-being?

**Debate 2:** Resolved: race is a socially constructed, not biological concept.

**Required Readings:**


**Class 3: Archaeology & Prehistory: Human agricultural origins and social/cultural evolution**

**Learning Objectives:**

- Characterize relationships of people to land (resources)
- Track catchment areas and trade routes
- Assess plant, animal, mineral, microbial, and water resources
- Describe social stratification based on differential access to resources and outcomes

**Key concepts & terms of analysis:**

- Foraging
- Seasonality and scheduling
- Optimal foraging (theory): time, energy, and specific nutrient budgets
- Systems theory and the origins of agriculture
- Social stratification relative to population growth
- Hydraulic agriculture, hydraulic theory of state formation
- Ethnographic analogy
Feasting
Activity areas

Discussion Questions:
(1) Questions and evidence regarding evolution of human diet:
   Were “man the hunter” and “woman the gatherer”, as Marshall Sahlins opines, “The Original Affluent Society”? What do current studies of modern hunter-gatherers or foraging alongside agriculture and other occupations, have to teach us about human origins, and use of the environment? How do tools of archaeological analysis provide relevant insights into analysis of modern land-use systems and diets? Paleolithic diet? Were diets healthy? Predominantly plant or animal? Medicinal foods? What is the evidence on seasonality and scheduling, and how does it provide reference point for evolution of human diet and food systems (including preferences for sweet, salty, or fat)?

(2) Agricultural and dietary transformations, their causes and consequences: What motivates agricultural transitions? Do agricultural transitions deliver nutritional benefits; if so for whom? What is the evidence or what evidence is required?

(3) Evolution of civilization: what do settlement patterns indicate about population growth, stratification, and distribution, plant and animal domestication, and water management in the ancient world? (see Jacobsen and Adams

(4) What are the uses and logical limits of ethnographic analogy?

Debate 1: Transitions from foraging to agricultural (farming and herding) modes of subsistence are advantageous: from whose perspectives? What is the evidence?

Ethnographic exercise: Local mapping and calendar-round

Required Readings:

Lee, R. Lee, R. What Hunters Do for a Living, or, How to Make out on Scarce Resources (NA 37-46)
“Agriculture: The Great Revolution” (?) NA 60-62
Cohen, Mark N. “Origins of Agriculture” NA 63-67

Goodman, A.H. and G.J. Armelagos “Disease and Death at Dr. Dickson’s Mounds” NA 68-71

Katz, S.H. and M.M. Voigt, “Bread and Beer: The Early Use of Cereals in the Human Diet” NA 72-81

OR

Middleton, Guy D. (2018) Bang or Whimper? The evidence for collapse of human civilizations at the start of the recently defined Meghalayan Age is equivocal. Science 361, 6408:12-4-1205
Codding, B. and K. Kramer, eds. (2016) Why Forage? Hunters and Gatherers in the 21st Century. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. Read the Introduction (pp.1-14) and one or more of the ethnographic case studies (chapter 3 by Richard Lee, and ch. 4 by R. Hitchcock and M. Sapignoli, update perspectives on the San, which is a case study in your textbook.)

Optional Readings: Non-required readings in NA Unit I and II.

Class 4: Social and cultural ethnographic studies: concepts & tools

Learning Objectives: Review main categories of ethnographic research
• Historic background studies
• Classic ethnographies with community focus
• British social anthropology
• French cultural studies
• US: Native Americans, South Pacific, Latin American, Asian, and African community ethnographies
• Multi-level ethnographies, communities in state and global contexts
• Studying "up": ethnographies of institutions, bureaucracies, businesses

Key concepts & terms of analysis:
Ethnocentrism
Universals vs. cultural particulars ("cultural relativism")
Cosmology, world view, ethos, behaviors
Communities: closed, corporate, open to state and global influences

Discussion Questions:
(1) Consider value of key terms of ethnographic analysis and human classification and their significance for multi-disciplinary nutritional studies:
   a. kinship (consanguineal, affinal), genealogy (lineages), marriage rules; age, gender
   b. class, race, and ethnicities; political-geographic-ethnic-religious (PGER) identities (special case: Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict (Frances Stewart)
   c. “closed corporate communities” with peasantries (special case: Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century (Eric Wolf 1969);
   d. evolution of the state and locational analysis (on food, see Gonzalez 2014)

(2) Audrey Richards (1939): review her terms of analysis in its colonial context. Which aspects are relevant to historical and cross-cultural comparison? What are some limitations? How valid is Moore & Vaughn’s Cutting Down Trees critique, that Richards was a tool of colonial powers, inattentive to the changing cultural-political context, and intentionally or unintentionally misleading in her emphasis on “absent males” and shifting cultivation as related causes of underproduction and hunger?

(3) If ethnographic results are community-specific, and often use opportunistic samples, what are values and limits on generalizability of ethnographic findings?

(4) Although anthropologists often do long-term studies, they contribute rapid ethnographic methods, especially useful for nutritional studies. What are they, how rapid, and in what contexts are they advantageous?

Kinship and Time Mapping Exercises
Ethical discussion: Anthropologists and related disciplines practice in colonial and post-colonial political contexts. What are the ethical challenges, and how are they relevant to nutrition science and policy?

Required Readings:
Review “food” ethnographic discussions by Monaghan and Just (from Week 1)

Richards, Audrey (1939) Land, Labour, and Diet in Northern Rhodesia: An Economic Study of the Bemba Tribe. London: G. Routledge (This is the classic food ethnography. Read final chapter, pp.381-405 (on-line) and as much of the rest as you have time and interest. We will discuss framework, the conclusions, and more recent critiques.

First critical review and reading logs due.

Class 5: Economics, politics, and political-economics

Learning Objectives:

- Distinguish substantivist (Polanyi) vs. formalist (Firth, others) economics (debates), and the cultural relativist critique of both (Gudeman).
- Compare particular vs. universal notions of scarcity, well-being, and abundance, influencing cross-cultural comparative notions of economic “rationality” (Sahlins, Harris), material accumulation, and exchange (“gift” and redistributive economic systems) (Mauss, Douglas, Sahlins)
- Calculate relative well-being and sustainability in terms of material resources, time, money, and access to information and non-material resources, risk (risk-taking or aversion). The notion of “limited good” versus “limited goods”. (For week 6, see also Barbara Rose Johnston, *Who Pays the Price?*, especially Rappaport article on notions of impact.)
- Compare commodity-based global transformations of food production (Geertz) and agricultural trade (Mintz)
- Assess locational analysis within political states (C. Smith) as a way to integrate information at local, national, global scales

Discussion Questions:

1. How and in what contexts do anthropologists use formal versus substantivist or other approaches as tools of analysis?
2. Distinguish between agricultural intensification and agricultural involution, and the motivating circumstances for each (Geertz). How important are good ideas vs. complete supporting evidence?
3. What concepts and methods does Mintz use to connect the history of sugar, dietary transformations, industrial revolution, and world trade? Think of other cases that might adopt his approach and possible limitation.
4. Political anthropologists like Carol Smith demonstrate that it is impossible for ethnographers to interpret the internal workings of communities without reference to larger scale political-economic structures. In this context, what are evolving roles and contributions of anthropologists?

Class Exercise: characterize and integrate substantivist, formalist, and other economic rationales into analysis of a nutrition problem.

Ethical Discussion: Practicing humanitarian and nutritional anthropology in Darfur, Sudan: what are some dilemmas and how do researchers offset them?

Required Readings:


Geertz, Clifford (1963) *Agricultural Involution: The Processes of Ecological Change in Indonesia*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press (we will discuss, critically, a short excerpt, define the term “involution” in class, and consider Geertz’s insights on recognizable patterns and problematic evidence)

Bray, Francesca (2016) Feeding Farmers and Feeding the Nation in Modern Malaysia: The Political Economy of Food and Taste. IN *Handbook of Food and Anthropology*. 
Finnis, “Now It Is an Easy Life …” NA pp. 107-111

Stryker, Rachael and Roberto J. Gonzalez, eds. (2014) *Up, down, and sideways: anthropologists trace the pathways of power* NY: Berghahn (Chapters by Gonzalez, Grandia)

**Optional Readings:**

**Class 6: Ecologies: cultural, human, political, spiritual**

**Learning Objectives:**
- Reconcile cultural materialism (review M. Harris, Wk. 5 reading) vs. ideational approaches (including “the new ethnography” which privileges linguistics, see Wk 7 readings), and their intersections with history (Geertz, this week and wk 7, C. Smith, Wk 5)
- Distinguish *Cultural ecology* (Julian Steward): cultural core and periphery and their intersections from *Human ecology: systems theory* and methods as an approach to evolution of human populations in ecosystems, drawing on the ethnographic work of Gregory Bateson, systems modeling of van Bertalanffy and Jay Forrester, and archaeological interpretations of Kent V. Flannery (Review Archaeology, wk.3)
  - *Cognitive vs. operational environments* (Rappaport)
  - Cybernetics (general systems theory), as applied to ecosystems and cultural systems
  - Adaptation, trophic levels, and levels of meaning (Rappaport)
  - *Maladaptation and the Anthropology of Trouble* (Rappaport adds global and policy perspectives to human ecology)
- Distinguish environmental anthropology, political ecology, spiritual ecology: whereas Human ecology emphasized self-organizing systems, environmental anthropology and political ecology add power, politics, and discourse analysis, and move the ecological anthropology discussion terms of analysis from self-organizing to power dominated systems.

**Discussion Questions:**
(1) What are the key similarities and differences between cultural ecology and human ecology? (consider local populations and human populations in ecosystems as units and levels of analysis)
Class Exercise: Mapping Cognitive and Operational Environments

Required Readings:

Dufour, D. “Insects as Food: A Case Study from the Northwest Amazon” NA pp.157-167

Nieschmann, “When the Turtle Collapses, the World Ends” NA pp.362-366
Dufour and Bender, “Nutrition Transitions” NA pp.372-382
Leatherman & Goodman, “Coca-cola-ization”, NA pp.383-395

Supplementary Readings:

Class 7: Linguistics: cognitive, semiotic, and interpretative approaches, language and cultural identity

Learning Objectives:
- Reconcile ethnoscience (“the new ethnography”) and cultural materialism
- Navigate ethnographically grounded symbolic analysis and thick descriptions (examples from Clifford Geertz, Interpretation of Culture; and Stephen Lansing, "The Goddess and the Computer" and Bray’s study of Malaysian food systems)
- Demonstrate symbolic and ritual uses of food (Mary Douglas, Victor Turner)
- Negotiate communications and reflexivity
  - Discourse analysis as cognitive and semiotic science
  - Policy and advocacy framing and rhetoric
  - Post-modern and reflexive, social and cultural studies of science and technology, globalization
  - Perspectives vs. analysis of the whole (see brief essay by Sahlins)

Discussion Questions
(1) Anthropologists distinguish between social-systems and semiotics as modes of analysis. What are their differences, and how are they combined in practice?
(2) Anthropologists argue over the discipline's identity as "science" or "humanities". What are the differences in standards of evidence and analysis, and in what contexts are these important? How do anthropologists negotiate local, national, and transnational scales of analysis in these engagements? (Geertz, Appadurai)
(3) What are some differences distinguishing ethnotaxonomy, ethnoecology, and various types of symbolic or ritual descriptions of biological and ecological domains, and in what circumstances are they usefully applied?
(4) Geertz, Douglas, Turner, and Rappaport all focus on ritual as a context to understand cultural categories and relationships. What are significant differences in their approaches, and how do they relate to anthropological science and interpretation?

Class exercise: Ethnoclassification of fruits and vegetables
Class exercise: Ethnographic observation and analysis of ritual use of foods
Discussion: Ohio Food auctions (from multiple anthropological perspectives)

Required Readings:
(Review Monaghan and Just’s introduction to anthropology)
Weismantel, “The Children Cry for Bread … “ NA 172-180
Allison, Japanese mothers and obentos” NA pp.180-190
Heller, C. “Techne vs. Technoscience …” NA pp.191-206
Paxson, Heather (2016) 12. Rethinking Food and Its Eaters: Opening the Black Boxes of Safety and Nutrition IN Handbook of Food and Anthropology, Supplementary Readings:
Geertz, Clifford (1973/1977) The Interpretation of Cultures. NY: Basic Books (excerpts, with emphasis on Geertz’s concepts and methods of “thick description,” and juxtaposition of semiotic and systems modes of analysis for understanding culture change)
Douglas, Mary (1966) Purity and Danger. (excerpts, with emphasis on her structural analysis of food classification in relation to social and cosmological classification, natural symbols, and implicit meanings)

Class 8: Anthropology of food and nutrition: historical overview through current practice

Learning Objectives:
• Compare nutritional anthropology's biocultural roots in the US and UK with reference to the following terms:
• Biocultural evolution of human populations and food systems
• Food habits and changing food habits:
• Applied and engaged studies of agriculture, food, and environment systems undergoing change
• Multi-level analysis and activist responses to famines and food crises (“resilience”)

Discussion Questions
(1) What major streams of anthropology coalesced in nutritional anthropology of the mid-1970s, and how did these change over the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010s?
(2) What are some major distinctions distinguishing US anthropology of food and nutrition from UK or other schools?
(3) In what situations do nutritionists and agricultural scientists call on anthropologists for assistance or leadership?

(4) Describe and contextualize anthropological framings and methods for nutritionists (distinguish basic, applied, adaptive research and policy contexts).

Exercise: Historical time line of anthropology, food and nutrition, and anthropologists in multi-disciplinary nutrition contexts. Map and discuss changes that occur over 1970s through 2010s.

Required Readings:


Counihan, C. and V. Siniscalchi, eds. (2014). Food Activism. Agency, Democracy, and Economy. NY: Bloomsbury. Skim the table of contents to appreciate the conceptual and political-geographic scope. Then read Ch. 2 (Gross, Joan E." Food Activism in Western Oregon", pp.15-30) and Ch.15(Sinisscalchi, V. "Slow Food Activism between Politics and Economy. pp.225-241)


Supplementary Readings


Optional Readings (see also readings for Wk 9):
ICAF (Berghahn Press) Anthropology of Food and Nutrition series, ed. by Helen Macbeth and colleagues

Class 9: Famine, Food Systems, and Food Crises; Demography of hunger

Learning Objectives:
• Distinguish different theories of famine causation, who uses them, and how they are applied at multiple social levels.

Discussion Questions:
(1) How do anthropological conceptualizations of household and community food strategies compare and contrast with Amartya Sen's frameworks analyzing entitlements and famines?
(2) The hallmark of anthropology is ethnography; how do anthropologists working at more inclusive or non-local levels of analysis incorporate anthropological concepts and methods? How do these efforts make their studies "holistic"?

(3) What different institutional bases do anthropologists use in the US, UK, or other places?

(4) How do studies in this week's readings bridge gaps separating theoretical, applied, advocacy, and policy-engaged studies? What are value added of multi-level anthropological studies?

Exercise: Working with bibliographies and data bases

Required Readings:

Colson, Elizabeth (1979) In Good Years and Bad: Food Strategies in Self-Reliant Societies. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 35:18-29 (classic study of hierarchy of resort to responses in food crises)


Optional Readings:


Class 10: Biocultural Analyses of Anti-Nutritional Factors in Foods and Foods as Medicines
Learning Objectives:

• Distinguish cultural food preferences relative to biological factors in food habits (e.g., dairy, legumes)

• Describe the cultural dimensions of a food and medicine continuum, as conceptualized in various non-Western health systems, and also how patients and practitioners negotiate and combine different ideas of health, healing, and the body in or out of balance.

• Evaluate both sides and the middle in arguments over safety and nutritional value of genetically engineered crops and foods.

Discussion Questions:

(1) Compare the methods used in Young et al.’s and Dufour’s very different studies. How do they compare and contrast with methods used in other research covered so far in this course, and expand the range of interdisciplinary methods with which you are familiar?

(2) How did milk acquire nutritional pride of place in the US diet? How does the researcher’s analysis of human biological variation and cultural-political narratives advance strategies for re-thinking the role of milk for healthy diets?

(3) “Ethno-pharmacology is a well-respected subfield of ethnobiology and economic botany. With reference to earlier readings and discussions, how might you add additional questions and layers of interpretation to Etkin’s presentation of issues and materials?

(4) Stone, in his 2002 article, rails against the hyperbole on both sides of the GMO argument. How have GMO terms and evidence changed?

Class Exercise: GMO policies: classifications, labeling, and branding

Required Readings:

Young, Sera et al. “Why on Earth? Evaluating the hypotheses about the physiological functions of human geophagy” NA pp.139-156 (Note: this is an excellent guide to lit review)

Dufour, D. “A Closer Look at the Nutritional Implications of Bitter Cassava Use” NA pp.207-214

Wiley, A.S. “Drink Milk for Fitness” ... NA pp.218-230

Etkin, N. “Spices: the Pharmacology of the Exotic” NA pp.259-273

Grivetti, “Chocolate”, NA pp.287-292


http://www.academia.edu/2776022/The_Trials_of_Genetically_Modified_Food_Bt_Eggplant_and_A yurvedic_Medicine_in_India


Supplementary Readings
Stone, Glenn Davis (selected readings). Stone, based at Washington University, St. Louis (close by Monsanto), provides critical readings on advocacy for and against GMO adoptions.

Class 11: Dietary Structure, nutritional content, and change

Learning Objectives:
• Elicit cross cultural notions of "good" or "satisfying" foods, food security, satiety versus dearth, healthy eating, body size, nutrition-related illness and its management
• Map sociocultural and material-physical traceability of foods
• Construct cross-cultural classifications of and preferences for organic and natural foods

Discussion Questions:
(1) What do anthropological methods contribute to studies of food preferences, dietary construction, and food traceability?
(2) How do Watson's conceptualization of fast foods and circulation of GM soy in world food systems support or downplay globalization as assault on food sovereignty, or right to food? (first define these terms)
(3) A recent issue of Food and Foodways (see Laudan 2011) argues that social scientists should be studying cultural dimensions of food traceability. How can such studies meet criteria of scientific rigor and policy relevance?
(4) Describe sociocultural parameters of local vs. organic foods. Whose uses them, for what purposes? Where do farm-to-fork alternative distribution channels fit into this picture?

Class exercise: Biological and Cultural Dimensions of Food Traceability: Campus sustainable food projects

Required Readings:

Pelto and Pelto, “Diet and Delocalization…” NA pp.353-361


Supplementary Readings:


Bertran, M. ed. (2006) *Antropologia y Nutricion*. Mexico City, Mexico: UAM (Several of these chapters on changing time, space, and person dimensions of food will be summarized for class discussion, for those who do not read Spanish.)


Smith, Chery F. (selection of readings on diets of poverty in urban Minneapolis communities. Demonstrates anthropologist's use of qualitative methods)


**Class 12: Child survival, demography, and gender**

*Learning Objectives:*
- Compare local ("cognitive") versus scientific ("operational") perceptions of adequate, under- or over-nutrition, child growth and mortality
- Support anthropologist's critique of official population statistics and child-survival programs
- Construct place- and culture-specific studies of gender discrimination
- Distinguish research (science) vs. advocacy studies and interpretations

*Discussion Questions:*
1. What are the talking points of Scheper-Hughes' argument regarding "demography without numbers" and what is their significance for research and policy?
2. Both Das Gupta and Miller (also Harris-White, if you want to read further) find regional and economic differences surrounding gender discrimination in Indian households. How do their findings relate to other readings you have done on South Asian nutrition and nutrition programs?
3. Van Esterik, a lifelong advocate for breastfeeding over bottle-feeding, argues that one cannot simultaneously embrace full scientific evidence-based positions and be an effective advocate. What does she mean, and how do you respond professionally (ethically) to her preference for advocacy?

*Class exercise/discussion: Sharing results of literature review projects.*

*Required Readings:*
Chavez et al. “The effect of malnutrition on human development …” NA pp.306-

Brewis, A. “Big Fat Myths” NA pp.463-468
Gladwell, M. “The Pima Paradox” NA pp.469-478
Connell, C.L. et al. “Children’s Experiences of Food Insecurity Can Assist in Understanding its effect on their well-being.” NA pp. 442-451

Supplementary Readings


Class 13: Summary and Conclusions : Value added of anthropology

Learning Objectives:
- Review food and nutrition science and policy studies within anthropology
- Summarize biocultural perspectives on human evolution, ecology, and foodways.
- From nutritional anthropology to anthropology of food and nutrition: describe what has changed since 1974 in Anthropology of Food and Nutrition? What four topics would you include in a review article, updating which perspectives from prior overview volumes and review articles?

Required Readings:
“Looking for solutions” Final Section. NA pp.489-516