

## **Anthropology 1001, Introduction to Anthropology**

**Early Summer (May and June), 2012**

**Instructor: Daniel Tubb**

### **ESSAY GUIDE**

30% of the Final Grade

There will be one 2500 - 3000 word Essay due at the beginning of Class 12, June 14, Week 6. Hand in the essay simply stapled (no folders please), with a title page that includes the course name and number, your name, student number, the instructor's name, and the date you handed it in on. You are expected to keep a copy of your Essay in case the one you submit gets lost. The submission of an Essay is mandatory. If you do not submit an essay, you cannot pass this course.

### **TOPIC**

The Essay will be a Critical Analysis and Book Review, on Annette Weiner's ethnography, *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*.

Weiner begins her ethnography with a discussion of the ethnographic observations of Bronisław Malinowski on the importance of yams for the people of the Trobriand Islands and in particular Malinowski's analysis of matrilineal family relations. Weiner comes to different conclusions than Malinowski, and she highlights the importance of women's wealth, kinship, and matrilineal relation and the central role of women's exchange during mortuary rituals.

Your task is to take up her observations, explain them, analyze her ethnography, and critically evaluate it. Drawing on your own close reading of the text, as well as the core anthropological concepts we will discuss in class, and other course material, you are to explain and evaluate in some detail her key ethnographic observations and how they support her interpretations.

This is a standard essay with a central argument and supporting evidence. You are encouraged to use course materials, and films, and if you wish supplementary readings. However, your Essay must focus on your analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of her text.

### **CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND BOOK REVIEW**

Keep in mind that a Critical Analysis and Book Review is not a book report. The point is not to reiterate **all** of her arguments, nor is it simply a response to the book. Your task is to summarize and critically analyze her most important anthropological observations and interpretations. You are to explore how the key anthropological concepts we discuss in class are used to produce an ethnographic whole. Your essay should explore how Weiner approaches the Trobriand Islanders, her findings, and your own critical evaluation of her interpretation. Keep in mind, critical does not mean positive, but your analysis should be supported. Your essay should draw on the course text.

One part of the assignment is to **summarize** the key elements you will be analyzing, reflecting on the most important arguments in the ethnography. Answer the question "What is this book

about?" and how does the author achieve this goal. The most important part of the assignment is your **critical analysis**. Questions might include the following, or other questions: How well does Weiner support her arguments? What questions are raised for you? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the text? What does an anthropological perspective allow Weiner to see, that an other observer might not? What does her ethnography tell you about your own culture?

### ***Due Date***

the Essays will be worth 30 marks, and late Essays will receive a penalty of 1 mark per day (including weekends), unless you have a good reason for being late and an extension has been granted. Please speak to instructor as soon as circumstances arise that will necessitate an extension. Late assignments should be left in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology dropbox outside of the Sociology and Anthropology Office, B750, Loeb building, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the instructor. If necessary, please come see me in regular office hours to request an extension. Only paper copies of the Essay are accepted, no electronic copies, unless special permission is received.

### ***Essay Length***

The essay is to be a maximum of 2500 to 3000 words. This is approximately 8 to 10 pages double-spaced (not counting cover page, headings, footnotes/endnotes, and bibliography), with regular margins (1 inch on each side and 1 inch at the top and bottom) and 12 Times New Roman font, or similar. Courier or any other monospaced font that uses more space per word than Times New Roman is not acceptable. Please don't add an extra space between paragraphs (this means that you will have to indicate paragraphs by indenting the first line), but please do number the essay's pages. 3 marks will be deducted for each page (300 words) (pro-rated) that the paper falls below the minimum required. I have a scanner, and any paper that does not follow these formatting requirements will be scanned, and the word count checked.

## EVALUATION

Grading criteria for the Essay will be based on clarity of argument, comprehension and integration of Annette's Weiner's text with your analysis, along with organization, spelling, grammar, and correct citation style. Specifically, your paper will be evaluated in regards to **content, organization and style**.

### **Content**

This includes description (identification and clear presentation of the main points) and analysis (indicating key concepts and crucial arguments, evaluating contending arguments, making your own argument, and providing supporting evidence and reasons for your argument). Please note that you must examine contending positions, and address those arguments that would challenge your own position.

### **Organization**

Does your paper include a clear introduction with a clear statement of purpose (the element of the Weiner text that you are addressing) that includes a thesis statement or a particular question to be debated, the body of the essay with a logical progression of points, and a conclusion synthesizing the arguments made throughout the paper. Your paper will also be evaluated for proper footnotes/endnotes and bibliography. Various citation styles are acceptable, but be sure to use the same style throughout your paper. If you are citing other sources, you should consult style guides pertaining to this, including those which can be found online at the Carleton University Library homepage.

### **Style**

Is your paper writing is clear, fluid and concise, and do you use proper spelling, word choice, paragraph structure, and grammar? Feel free to write in the first person singular.

Write your essay as though the person reading it is intelligent but without a specialized knowledge of the topic. Don't assume I have read the Annette Weiner text. The purpose of the essay, is to discern what you've learned about the subject, your ability to convey that knowledge in a coherent and cogent manner, and your skill at developing a sound argument.

Two common problems in essays are a **lack of elaboration** (failing to provide sufficient details) and **ambiguity** (not expressing ideas clearly or precisely), so please pay close attention to these pitfalls while writing and editing your work. Also, make sure you have a **thesis** and an **argument**.

## QUOTATIONS AND PARAPHRASING:

- Short quotations (three lines or fewer) are to be incorporated in your text, enclosed within quotation marks, along with the proper citations to indicate their sources. Longer quotations are separated from the text, single-spaced, indented on the left and right margins, and presented **without** quotation marks.
- All quotations must correspond exactly with the original. If you omit any words from the original, use three spaced periods (...) to indicate an omission within a sentence,

or four spaced periods at the end (to include the period that was originally in the sentence).

- Use single quotation marks for a quotation within a quotation. For example: Galeano states, "The technocrats claim the privilege of irresponsibility: 'We're neutral,' they say."
- Introduce the quotation with your own words and integrate it grammatically into the sentence.
- Avoid quoting out of context.
- Paraphrasing is often preferable to the use of numerous quotations. Use quotations sparingly and in cases where the author's text is particularly compelling or when paraphrasing would change the effectiveness or meaning of the author's words. Excessive quoting is a common writing error, and in doing so writers often abdicate responsibility to be selective and to interpret (paraphrase) for the reader. Beware of using quotations to fill up space.

You must reference the use of someone else's ideas when they are paraphrased as well as when they are directly quoted.