

## NYU Anthropology Graduate Courses | Spring 2019

*\*Open to advanced undergraduate students with permission of instructor*

MONDAY		
10:00am-1:00pm	11:00am-1:45pm	2:00pm-4:45pm
Decolonizing and Reassembling the Museum: A New Anthropology of Museums ANTH-GA 3330 Prof. Jane Anderson Museum Studies Seminar Room	Interpreting the Human Skeleton* ANTH-GA 1520 Prof. Scott Williams Room 706	Materiality ANTH-GA 1234 Prof. Fred Myers Room 102
2:00pm-4:45pm	5:00pm-7:45pm	
Primate Behavior, Ecology, & Conservation* ANTH-GA 1507 Prof. James Higham Room 612		
TUESDAY		
12:30pm-3:15pm	5:00pm-7:45pm	
Video Production II ANTH-GA 1219 Prof. Pegi Vail Room 612	Culture & Media II ANTH-GA 1216 Prof. Teja Ganti Room 102	
WEDNESDAY		
10:00am-12:45pm	2:00pm-4:45pm	5:00pm-7:45pm
Social Theory & Practice ANTH-GA 1011 Prof. Sally Merry Room 102	Constructing North America: Epistemologies, Methods, Collaborations ANTH-GA 1330 Prof. Faye Ginsburg Room 102	European Prehistory II* ANTH-GA 1213 Prof. Pam Crabtree Room 706
Video Production II (LAB) ANTH-GA 1219 Prof. Pegi Vail Room 502		Topical Seminar: Work ANTH-GA 3390 Prof. Amy Zhang Room 612
THURSDAY		
10:00am-12:00pm	11:00am-1:45pm	12:00pm-1:45pm
Video Production II (LAB) ANTH-GA 1219 Prof. Pegi Vail Room 502		Professionalization Seminar ANTH-GA 3211 Prof. Rayna Rapp Room 102
2:00pm-4:45pm	2:00pm-4:45pm	
History of Biological Anthropology* ANTH-GA 1505 Prof. Terry Harrison Room 706	Linguistic Anthropology ANTH-GA 1040 Prof. Bambi Schieffelin Room 612	

## **Course Descriptions**

### ***ANTH-GA 1040 Linguistic Anthropology*** ***Professor Bambi B Schieffelin***

This class is open to grad students in the Anthropology Department. For others outside of the department, permission is required.

In this course we take up key foundational themes, research paradigms, and contemporary theoretical contributions and developments in linguistic anthropology. Readings are drawn from scholarship carried out in diverse communities, and themes include talk in interaction, language ideology, language contact and multilingualism, language and old/new media, and translation as a challenge to linguistic and cultural theories and practices.

### ***ANTH-GA 1011 Social Theory and Practice II*** ***Professor Sally Merry***

Following Social Theory and Practice I, this course will focus on a group of central anthropological concepts, examining their genealogies and limits. We look at the relation of theoretical and ethnographic practices as they developed in post-World War II and post-colonial contexts, as anthropologists grappled with rapid social change. Analyzing our own disciplinary and national locations has become an increasingly important aspect of the sociocultural fields within which we develop our research and writing. As a result, there is growing attention to multilayered power relations, social movements, practical consciousness, practice theory, invented traditions, and the production of culture as well as transnational and international flows of people, ideas, and goods. This course explores these transformations. The first half of the course examines the conceptual developments that followed from these historical changes. The second half uses this analysis to interpret contemporary ethnographies with particular attention to their methodological and conceptual tools.

### ***ANTH-GA 1213 European Prehistory I*** ***Professor Pam Crabtree***

This course will examine the archaeological record for prehistoric and migration period Europe from the end of the Ice Age (ca 9600 BCE) through the migration period (the so-called “Dark Ages,” ca. 400-850 CE).

### ***ANTH-GA 1216 Culture and Media II*** ***Professor Teja Ganti***

Since the millennium, a new field – the ethnography of media – has emerged as an exciting new area of research. While claims about media in people’s lives are made on a daily basis, surprisingly little research has actually attempted to look at how media is part of the naturally occurring lived realities of people’s lives. This course examines the social and political life of media and how it makes a difference in the daily lives of people as a practice – in production, reception, or circulation. It examines cross-culturally how the mass media have become the primary means for the circulation of symbolic forms across time and space and crucial to the constitution of subjectivities, collectivities, and histories in the contemporary world. Topics include the role of media in constituting and contesting national identities, in forging alternative political visions, in transforming religious practice, and in creating subcultures. The types of media forms we will examine range from commercially driven film making to news production, from photographs to Wikipedia, and from indigenous filmmaking to social media posts. We will read about media practices in diverse parts of the world, from India to Israel; Mexico to Hong Kong; South Korea to

Nigeria.

***ANTH-GA 1219 Video Production II***  
***Professor Pegi Vail***

This is the second part of a year-long course in ethnographic video production. Students will continue to learn advanced production techniques and examine narrative structure, storytelling strategies, and poetic representational techniques. Relating theory to practice, students will explore the dilemmas and possibilities video production holds for representing social experience. The course culminates in a public screening of students' independent video projects. Seminar meetings will be run as Production Meetings. Students will complete in-class exercises to help them focus their projects, develop a cohesive narrative, learn script writing, brainstorm scene ideas, overcome narrative challenges, and discover their unique aesthetic. Each week students will present new footage and scenes and explain their work in terms their goals for the final project. During lab time, students will review production and post-production techniques. We will also screen student footage along with model films. Individual meetings will be held during seminar and lab time to offer individualized attention to each student.

***ANTH-GA 1234 Materiality: Critical Perspectives on the Anthropology of Persons and Things***  
***Professor Fred Myers***

This course will investigate the ways in which ideas about the material have intersected with key moments of anthropological practice and theory, resulting in the reformation of a sub-discipline of 'material culture studies'. We will trace the ways in which ideas about objectification, phenomenology, material culture, materiality, and commoditization have been drawn upon within ethnographic investigations that seek to understand both the relationships between persons and things, subjects and objects, and to unpack the ways in which these categories are constituted. We will juxtapose more theoretical readings with a series of ethnographic texts which explore the boundaries of the material world.

***ANTH-GA 1330 Constructing North America: Epistemologies, Methods, Collaborations***  
***Professor Faye Ginsburg***

TO COME.....

***ANTH-GA 1505 History and Philosophy of Biological Anthropology***  
***Professor Terry Harrison***

Provides an introduction to the history of biological anthropology from its origins to today. Begins with the foundation of anthropology as a field before focusing in on the emergence of physical/biological anthropology in the 18th century and subsequent incorporation of evolutionary theory in the 19th and 20th centuries. This includes the history of the study of human variation, paleoanthropology, and the development of field primatology. The shifting intellectual paradigms of the discipline will be discussed, including how biological anthropology integrated ideas and techniques from geology, paleontology, evolutionary biology, psychology, and zoology, to become a multidisciplinary field of diverse intellectual and methodological approaches.

***ANTH-GA 1507 Primate Behavior, Ecology, & Conservation***  
***Professor James Higham***

This course serves as a broad introduction to the ecology, behavior, and conservation of nonhuman primates.

***ANTH-GA 1520 Human Skeleton: Morphological and Statistical Methods***  
***Professor Scott Williams***

Admissions Requirements: This course may not be taken without successful completion of ANTH-GA 1516 or explicit permission; Required of all MA and recommended for PhD students.

(4 points) This course provides intensive coverage of the methods and techniques used to interpret the human skeleton. A strong knowledge of fragmentary human skeletal anatomy is required as a foundation for this course. We will focus on the techniques and applications of skeletal biology, including forensic anthropology, bio-archaeology, paleoanthropology, and quantitative methods. In the process, we will address bone biology, developmental processes, soft tissue anatomy, and methods for morphological quantification and statistical analysis. You will learn: 1) fundamentals of aging, sexing and individuating human skeletal remains; 2) how to estimate stature, body mass, and to the extent possible, geographic ancestry; 3) how to utilize and interpret univariate and multivariate statistical methods commonly employed in skeletal analysis; and 4) how to apply these techniques to the hominin fossil record. This course includes three hours of class time and approximately 9 hours of independent student laboratory time per week.

***ANTH-GA 2519 Problems and Perspectives in Human Evolution***  
***Professor Shara Bailey***

Our understanding of what it means to be human has changed according to fossil discoveries as well as political and social climate. In order to fully understand theories about human evolution, it is important to examine the contexts in which they emerge. This course will focus on the ‘hallmarks of humanity’- bipedality, brain expansion, culture and language - as well as how to define our own genus, *Homo*. We will examine the questions posed by new fossil discoveries, as well as how different biases and perspectives shape our understanding of these. The seminar format will include a combination of lecture, practical exercises with fossil casts and discussion of primary literature. Our goal is to provide students with the critical thinking skills with which they can assess human evolutionary hypotheses and the hominin fossil record.

***ANTH-GA 3211 Professionalization Seminar***  
***Professor Rayna Rapp***

Addresses the central skills and resources needed for a professional career in anthropology including: how to submit a research proposal to the human subjects review board; how to write grant applications; how to join/participate in professional associations; and how to be a successful teaching assistant. Students also present recent fieldwork experiences and rehearse forthcoming AAA papers. Three sessions provide training toward certification in the “Responsible Conduct of Research” (RCR), now required by some federal granting agencies; students also enroll in the two RCR sessions offered each semester by NYU, fulfilling all five required sessions.

***ANTH-GA 3330 Decolonizing and Reassembling the Museum: A New Anthropology of Museums***  
***Professor Jane Anderson crosslist with MSMS-GA 3330***

Ethnographic and universal museums are increasingly in crisis. Critical questions about how such museums came to hold their collections, and the colonial conditions of their accumulation are being asked alongside other concerns for appropriate display, collection management and community engagement. Through a lens where decolonization is understood as a call for ethical and equitable transformation of the museum, its objects and its ‘subjects’, this course explores “the museum” as a site of ethnographic inquiry itself, examining it as a social institution embedded in a broader field of cultural heritage that is perpetually under negotiation. We reflect on how museum principles of classification, practices of

collection and exhibition, uptake of media, technology, and archiving have influenced the ways in which knowledge has been formed, presented, and represented; and interrogate the role of museums as significant social actors in broad anthropological debates on power, materiality, value, representation, culture, nationalism, circulation, aesthetics, science, history, and “new” technologies. The movement to decolonize the museum is only increasing and in this course we will explore what this means at a theoretical and practical level with a focus on how the museum can respond and indeed transform for the future.

*ANTH-GA 3390 Work*  
*Professor Amy Zhang*

Studies of work have been central to anthropological approaches to political economy from classic social theory to contemporary ethnography. In this course we'll trace the ways that production, labor, and work have been conceptualized by scholars attempting to theorize production in particular historical and cultural configurations; across, for example, socialist, post-socialist, Fordist, post-industrial, and late-capitalist contexts. We'll explore these themes through ethnographies of labor and work. Key topics in this course include: how nature works, creativity and innovation, flexible production, debt and financing, gender and work, and urbanization and value production.

*ANTH-GA 3391 Topical Seminar: The City and the Country; Infrastructures of Bio/Geo/Socio/Techno-logical Being in the Postcolonial World*

Anthropologists have taken note of the urbanization of the world's population, and in globalization, of the generalized (if uneven) extension of technologies and ideas across the planet that have deservedly demolished some of the discipline's former idylls (isolated cultures, "primitive" peoples, etc.). But in their turn to modern life and urban worlds, anthropologists have not taken sufficient account of the degree to which social theory and urban life itself actively conceal the urbanites' utter dependence on the rural. In the characteristic mode of the anthropocene, the 'country' is a repository of nature, of "raw ingredients" (energy, resources, building materials, water, crops, food animals, and cheap rural-to-urban migrant labor) of proper modern human life. This course strives to undo the urbanocentrism of social theory (and of the unexamined parameters of kinds of habitus or semiotic ideology embedded in our urban lives) by (1) undertaking a genealogy of regimes of knowledge pertinent to notions of civilization, citizenship, and life in and of the *res pública*, the "public thing" and the modes of being that it shapes; (2) tracking the historical extension through colonialism, and then through neoliberal governmentality, of these European ideas and practices, understood as the material, epistemological, ontological, and ideological infrastructures supporting the domination and exploitation of some persons (natives, people of color, laborers, women) by others (white European men); (3) investigating, via a turn to theories of materiality, the material infrastructures by which the rural/urban dichotomy is sustained while provisioning cities from, and excreting their wastes to, the once inexhaustible, now imperiled, countryside; (4) examining how the city's plans, built forms, and social as well as biological hygienic regimes aim to shelter persons from the "elements of nature", while also channeling, storing, and using them, and seeing how they divide human from non-human life, aiming to exclude vermin and microbes (and human undesirables) while delivering, storing, and consuming the products of plants, animals, microbes, and human undesirables; (5) analyzing the ways the urban/rural distinction, and within the city, the private/public one, participate in the classification and construction of persons according to distinctions of race, class, and gender; (6) attending to how those distinctions (and that between indigenous "natives" and settler Europeans or their post-colonial heirs) were and are constituted through property regimes (generally granting the common kind to native peoples, the private kind to Euro-settlers), differently enabling or blocking the transmission of lineage privilege via inheritance; (7) investigating how the urban/rural distinction, the property forms of colonial capitalism, and the effacement of the city's dependency on the countryside, entrenched presumed ontological distinctions between Europeans and natives, or whites and peoples of color, or bourgeoisie and

laborers, or men and women; (8) studying, with an eye to Goffman and also performativity theory, and both in every life and in commemorative or festive events, the ways that the city's built form, and the ways it perspectively arranges the rural as "landscape", serves as a performative stage for enacted commentary upon the emplotted interactions of the cast of characters it houses. Finally, (9), the course attends to the ways these urbanocentric ideas and practices, viewed from the vantage of the city's most privileged (urban elites, Europeans, whites, males) have become (along with the extension of credit) central to capitalist/corporate strategies for achieving global governance, whether through their private ownership of life itself, or through conditionality agreements which undermine the sovereignty of the nation state, which apart from indigenous reservations, are the last repository of collective property left standing in the wake of decolonization. All in all, the course aims to build an anthropology of cities, not just in them, while keeping the city's dependence on the rural (and of all that classed as "nature") keenly in mind.