

**San José State University  
Department of Anthropology  
Anthropology 142, Fall 2017**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. John Marlovits
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	T/Th 3-4 pm
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	T/Th 1:30-2:45
<b>Classroom:</b>	WSQ 004

**Course Description and Goals**

This course addresses the intersection of culture and psychology, or culture and subjectivity. Course materials will introduce students to a range of anthropological approaches to how culture shapes interiority or psychological life. Course readings draw from a variety of approaches and topics within anthropology. Throughout the course students will come to understand what anthropologists mean when they use the clumsy term “subjectivity,” and the ways in which cultural, technical, infrastructural, and medical systems help to shape identity, emotions, desires, and even mental illnesses. Students will come to develop an appreciation and sensibility for the uses and significance of sociocultural approaches and applications to contemporary psychological and psychiatric problems.

Course topics range from the intersections of anthropology and psychoanalysis to the management of fear, secrecy, and paranoia in the making of American postwar nationalism. From the making of zones of abandonment for marginalized and colonized populations, to the relationship between the built environment and affect. Through this material students will come to understand how the things that we feel are most intimate, personal, and unique to us are not simply individually-bound, but rather, developed through interaction with cultural, technical, and material environments that differ across space and time.

The course satisfies requirements for the Human Behavior/D(1) Area in the General Education Core, as well as departmental and program requirements in anthropology and behavioral science.

**Student Learning Objectives**

Students who satisfactorily complete this course will be able to identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender

social cohesion and fragmentation, and

1. place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts;
2. identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them; and
3. evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues, and
4. recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals.

### **Departmental Learning Objectives and Skills:**

By

the completion of this course, students should have an increased:

1. Understanding the influence of culture on individual psychology.
2. Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity.
3. The role of social, political, and technical systems in the shaping of mental life.
4. An understanding of the distinction – and complementarities – between anthropological and psychological approaches to contemporary mental illnesses.
5. A grasp of theoretical traditions in the anthropological study of psychology.

### **Required Course Texts**

Adam Phillips, *On Kissing, Tickling, and Being Bored: Psychoanalytic Essays on the Unexamined Life*, Harvard University Press

Charles Montgomery, *Happy Cities*, Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux

Michael Taussig, *Beauty and the Beast*, University of Chicago Press

Additional readings will be added to my faculty page in electronic form.

### **Classroom Protocol/Student Responsibilities**

Please do not use your cell phones or MP3 players for any purpose during class. However, if you are expecting an important call you should notify me so we can make arrangements. Please do not use your computers to take notes during in-class films.

There will be various in-class assignments intended to help students grasp and apply concepts that are discussed in class. I highly recommend students attend class as often as possible. Some in-class assignments will be given at the beginning of class and others at the end of the class; thus, it is important to arrive on time and attend the entire class period. Students will not be able to make-up the in-class assignments. If you know in advance that you should be unable to attend an exam, it is your responsibility to contact me immediately by either e-mailing me, leaving a message for me at the main department office, or coming by during my office hours. Only students with a valid documented excuse will be able to take a make- up exam or hand in a late assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted otherwise. Students will not be able to make-up the in-class assignments.

I have a zero-tolerance on cheating and plagiarism; if you cheat or plagiarize you will fail the

course! Incidences of cheating and plagiarism will be turned into the academic integrity office. Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the academic integrity policy.

I will not answer questions about what occurred in class due to an absence. Please ask your fellow students for copies of their notes.

Students are responsible for understanding policies about adding, dropping, and incompletes.

Students are responsible for being aware of assignment due dates, midterm date, and the final exam schedule.

If you have any concerns about your class performance or comprehension, come by my office during office hours or schedule an appointment. I am always willing to help students and I care about whether students are grasping the material and enjoying the class.

### **Course Requirement and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Students will complete five essay assignments for this course.

The first paper (“Low Theory Lab or Critical Analysis Paper”) will develop “low theory” and description of an ordinary node of psychic life. It will help students develop their ethnographic listening skills and ability to defamiliarize and describe affects, feelings, and cultural ideologies circulating in everyday life. Students will also learn to attend to and deconstruct forms of power and difference implicit in individual (and public) feelings and affects. 3 pages. 100 points. Meets SLO 1, 2, 3

Second, students will be required to write an “Atmospheric Attunement/Spatial Unconscious Paper” that requires small-scale ethnographic research in, and description of, the organization of subjectivity and power in some cultural space. 3 pages. 100 points. Meets SLO 1, 2, 3, 4

Alternately, students may write a “Cultural Politics of Mental Illness and Postwar Psychology” paper. SLO 1, 2, 3, 4

Third, students will be required to develop a research prospectus concerning a life history interview and write-up that they plan to develop. 1/2 page. (department learning objective 4). 50 points. This assignment will be followed-up later in the semester with students required to hand in a transcript/thematization of an oral history interview they conduct. 3 pages. 100 points. SLO 1, 2, 3, 4

Fourth, students will complete an anthropological analysis of their life history interview for their final paper. 5 pages. 150 points. (department learning objective 2&3). SLO 1, 2, 3, 4

Fifth, students will be required to keep a reading journal throughout the semester that will be collected at random three times over the course of the semester. Students will be required to

1	8/24	Introduction
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make two short entries (at least one page) each week that cover central concepts in course readings. 200 points. SLO 3

### **Grading**

Low Theory Lab = 100 points

Atmospheric Attunments Paper = 100 points

Prospectus = 50 points + Interview thematization/Low Theory Lab = 100 points

Life History paper = 150 points

Reading Journal = 200 points

700 total points

Grades will be based on percentages: 90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C, 60-69% = D, below 60 = F

### **University Policies and Resources**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

### **Course Topics:**

**Cultural Anxiety and relational selfhood = week 1-2**

**Power and Domination: On (un)Consciousness = week 3-4**

**Psychic Topographies or Senses of Place = 5-7**

**Producing and Managing "Abnormality": Mental Illness = week 8-9**

**Uncanny Nationalism: Psychological Power/knowledge, Paranoia, Conspiracy Theory, and UFOs in Postwar American Culture = week 10-12**

**Ethnographic Writing: Affects and Actions = 13-16**

2	8/29  8/31	<p><b>Week 2: Reading Psychoanalytically</b>  Adam Phillips, <i>On Kissing, Tickling, and Being Bored: Psychoanalytic Essays on the Unexamined Life</i>, chapters intro, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9</p> <p>Optional: Georges Perec “The Scene of a Strategem” in <i>Species of Spaces and Other Pieces</i></p> <p>T: Viewing: Slavoj Zizek, <i>The Pervert’s Guide to Cinema</i> and interviews with Adam Phillips</p>
3	9/5 & 9/7	<p><b>Week 3: Psychoanalysis, History, and Power: Reading Life Histories</b>  T: Jacqueline Rose, “Feminism and its Discontents,” <i>Feminist Review</i> 80 (2005): 24-43</p> <p>Th: Carolyn Kay Steedman, “Histories” in <i>Landscape for a Good Woman</i> (pp. 125-139)</p> <p>Lauren Berlant, “The Broken Circuit: An Interview with Lauren Berlant,” <i>Cabinet</i> 31 (2008)</p>
4	9/12 & 9/14	<p><b>Week 4: Race, Class, and Consciousness</b>  Lauren Berlant, “Nearly Utopian, Nearly Normal: Post-Fordist Affect in <i>Rosetta</i> and <i>La Promessa</i>,” <i>Public Culture</i> 19:2 (2007): 273-301</p> <p>Viewing: <i>La Promessa</i></p> <p>RECOMMENDED: Gloria Anzaldua, “The Homeland, Aztlan: El Otro Mexico” in <i>Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza</i></p> <p><b>LIFE HISTORY TOPIC PROSPECTUS DUE 9/9</b></p> <p><b>CONCEPT LAB THOUGHT PIECE OR CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE</b></p>
5	9/19 & 9/21	<p><b>Week 5: Space and Subjectivity</b>  Charles Montgomery, <i>Happy Cities: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design</i>, chapters 1-4, 6, 7, &amp; 10</p>
6	9/26 & 3/28	<p><b>Week 6: Psychic Topographies</b>  Complete Montgomery</p> <p>T: Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, “The Maid Beneath the Stairs” in <i>The Politics and Poetics of Transgression</i>  Doreen Massey, “A Global Sense of Place” in <i>Situation: Documents of Contemporary Art</i></p> <p>Th: Judith Jack Halberstam, “Queer Temporalities and Postmodern Geographies” in <i>A Queer Time and Place</i></p>

		Sara Ahmed, "Disorientation and Queer Objects" in <i>Queer Phenomenology</i>
7	10/3 & 10/5	<p><b>Week 7: Living Spaces</b></p> <p>T: Ash Amin, "Animated Space," <i>Public Culture</i> 27:2 (2015): 239-258</p> <p>Th: Georges Perec, "Spaces" in <i>Species of Spaces and Other Pieces</i> (pp. 81-92)</p> <p>Robert Walser, "Friedrichstrasse" and "In the Electric Tram" in <i>Berlin Stories</i> (pp. 9-12 &amp; pp. 23-26)</p> <p>Kathleen Stewart, "Precarity's Forms," <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> 27:3 (2012): 518-525</p> <p>Recommended: Yael Navaro-Yashin "Abjected Spaces, Debris of War" in <i>The Make-Believe Space</i></p>
8	10/10 & 10/12	<p><b>Week 8: Mental Health: Managing "Abnormality"</b></p> <p>T: Vincent Lyon-Callo, "Ariel's Story" in <i>Poverty, Inequality, and Neoliberal Governance</i></p> <p>Th: Joao Biehl, "A Life: Between Psychiatric Drugs and Social Abandonment"</p> <p>Christine Ross, Introduction to <i>The Aesthetics of Disengagement</i></p> <p>Viewing: Documentary about Michel Foucault</p> <p><b>Due: ATMOSPHERIC ATTUNEMENT/SPATIAL UNCONSCIOUS ASSIGNMENT</b></p>
9	10/17 & 10/19	<p><b>Week 9: Mental Illness, Disability, and Social Institutions</b></p> <p>T: Arthur Kleinman, "Medical Anthropology and Mental Health" and Rayna Rapp and Faye Ginsburg, "Anthropology and the Study of Disability Worlds" in <i>Medical Anthropology at the Intersections</i></p> <p>Th: Mark Cresswell and Helen Spandler, "Psychopolitics: Peter Sedgwick's Legacy for Mental Health Movements," <i>Social Theory and Health</i> 7:2 (2009): 129-147</p> <p>Nikolas Rose, "Becoming Neurochemical Selves"</p> <p>Viewing: <i>Elling</i></p>
10	10/24 & 10/26	<p><b>Week 10: National Affects: Psychological Power/Knowledge, the Military, and Postwar US Culture</b></p> <p>T: Ellen Herman, chapter 5 &amp; 6 in <i>The Romance of American Psychology:</i></p>

		<p><i>Political Culture in an Age of Experts</i> (available online through Martin Luther King Jr. Library website)</p> <p>Th: Joseph Masco, "The 'New' Normal," in <i>The Theater of Operations</i></p> <p>Joseph Masco, "A Notebook on Desert Modernism: From the Nevada Test Site to Liberace's Two-Hundred-Pound Suit," in <i>Histories of the Future</i>, Harding and Rosenberg, eds.</p> <p>Recommended:  Timothy Melley, Introduction to <i>Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America</i>  Mark Fenster, "Theorizing Conspiracy Politics" in <i>Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture</i></p>
11	10/31 & 11/2	<p><b>Week 11: Paranoia, Conspiracy Theory, and the National Security State</b>  Masco, continued</p> <p>Catherine Lutz, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Containment" <i>Public Culture</i> 9 (1997): 135-159</p> <p>Viewing: <i>The Manchurian Candidate</i></p> <p><b>CULTURAL POLITICS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AND PSYCHOLOGY IN AMERICA</b>  <b>paper due</b></p>
12	11/7 & 11/9	<p><b>Week 12: Aliens, Cults, UFOs in America</b>  T: Susan Harding, "Living Prophecy at Heaven's Gate" in <i>Histories of the Future</i>, Harding and Rosenberg, eds.</p> <p>Th: Christopher Roth, "Ufology as Anthropology: Race, Extraterrestrials, and the Occult" in <i>E.T. Culture: Anthropology in Outerspaces</i>, Deborah Battaglia, ed.</p>
13	11/14 & 11/16	<p><b>Week 13: Affect: Ethnographic Writing Beyond Subject and Object</b>  Michael Taussig, <i>Beauty and the Beast</i></p> <p>Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth, "An Inventory of Shimmers" in <i>The Affect Theory Reader</i></p> <p>Th: Workshopping Life History Papers</p>
14	11/21 & 11/23 No class 11/23	<p><b>Week 14: Writing Culture</b>  Taussig, <i>Beauty and the Beast</i></p> <p>Workshopping Life History papers</p>
15	11/28 & 11/30	<p><b>Week 15:</b>  Taussig</p>

16	12/5 & 12/7	<b>Week 16: Review</b>  Workshopping papers
Final Exam And last day	12/13	<b>Exam schedule:</b> <a href="http://info.sjsu.edu/static/policies/final-exam-schedule-fall.html">http://info.sjsu.edu/static/policies/final-exam-schedule-fall.html</a>  <b>Tuesday Dec. 19, 12:15-2:30</b>  <b>Life History Paper due</b>