Economic Anthropology – Fall 2012 – ANTHRO 4003

Professor: Karthik Panchanathan   Email: panchanathank@missouri.edu
Class Location: 108 Geological Sciences  Class Time: Mon., Wed., and Fri. 2–2:50 pm
Office Location: 105 Swallow Hall   Office Hours: Wed. 3–4 pm, Fri. 1–2 pm, and by appointment

Course description. Anthropologists study human diversity. Economists study the production, consumption, and exchange of resources. Economic anthropologists study the diversity in production, consumption, and exchange across societies. In the first part of the course, we survey the social sciences, looking at how economists, psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists study behavior. In the second part, we survey the different ways in which people make a living, looking in depth at forager, pastoralist, farmer, and market-based economies and societies. And in the third part, we apply what we have learned to specific topics: Why do we exchange gifts? Why do we sometimes cooperate with one another and other times fall victim to the tragedy of the commons? Why do people in modern societies have so few children? What is the relationship between inheritance and inequality?

Readings. There are four books that you need to purchase: *naked economics* by Charles Wheelan, *Making a Market* by Jean Ensminger, *The Lobster Gangs of Maine* by James Acheson, and *Sweetness and Power* by Sidney Mintz. In addition, there are readings associated with each class discussion. These readings are posted to the Blackboard site.

Reactions papers. When we are not discussing a book or watching a film, we will be discussing specific topics. You will turn in a reaction paper for eleven of these discussions. Reaction papers should be one to two pages (500–1000 words) in which you both summarize the readings and react to them (e.g., how do they relate to something else you’ve read, seen, or experienced?). These assignments should be written on the computer and submitted on paper in class on Monday. *** NOTE: You have one free “pass”. You will be graded on the ten best reaction papers. ***

Book reviews. For the books by Ensminger, Acheson, and Mintz, write a 1,000-word review. These will be due on the day that we discuss the books (see schedule). These are meant to be book reviews, not book reports; summarize only as much as is needed. I will send you more specific instructions later in the semester. Make sure you discuss specifics from the books to illustrate your points. Be creative and have fun. There are three specific things I am looking for: correct grammar and spelling, a well-structured argument, and evidence of thinking.

Attendance matters. If you know you are going to miss class (e.g., an interview), let me know ahead of time. If you are sick, go to the health center and get an ‘encounter form’ so I can excuse your absence. If there is a widespread flu like H1N1 and you have been advised to stay home, don’t go to the health center. I will excuse your absence.

Quizzes. There will be twenty quizzes during the semester. These quizzes will be on days when we are not watching a film or discussing a book. The dates will be randomly-determined. Quizzes will be short and should be easy. If you’ve done the readings, you will do fine. Don’t do any special studying; just do the readings.

Grading

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Quizzes (20)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Reactions papers (10)</td>
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<td>Book review (3)</td>
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Grading is based on attendance, discussing the readings, and not social networking. Each quiz is worth 1% of your grade. Each reaction paper is worth 3% of your grade. Each book review is worth 10% of your grade.

Writing advice. If you need help writing, come talk to me or visit the Writing Center, located in the Student Success Center. Through the Writing Center, you can meet with a tutor or submit papers online. Appointments are available from 9-5 Monday-Friday and some evenings. For more information please visit the Writing center at [http://writery.missouri.edu](http://writery.missouri.edu). You can also read a guide book. You can also read a guide. I like The Uses of Argument by Toulmin for building an argument, *Economical Writing* by McCloskey for writing well, and *Clear and Simple As the Truth* by Thomas and Turner for writing in classic style.

Students with disabilities. If you have any kind of disability, please come talk to me or contact the Office of Disability Services ([http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu](http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu)). The University offers various support programs. It’s crucial that you seek out help early in the semester, so we can set up a plan.

Academic Integrity   Consult the policy and procedures at [http://osrr.missouri.edu/guidelines/procedure.html](http://osrr.missouri.edu/guidelines/procedure.html)
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08.20</td>
<td>What is economic anthropology?</td>
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<td>08.22</td>
<td>Film, “First Contact”</td>
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<td>08.24</td>
<td>What is human nature?</td>
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**Part 1  Behavior and the the social sciences**

**Week 2: Neoclassical Economics and its Discontents**

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<tr>
<td>08.27</td>
<td>What is economics?</td>
<td>Wheelan (Ch. 1–5)</td>
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<td>08.29</td>
<td>Thinking like an economist</td>
<td>Becker (1976), Levitt (2005)</td>
<td>REACTION PAPER</td>
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<td>08.31</td>
<td>The limits of rationality</td>
<td>Hodgson (2011), Sen (1977)</td>
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**Week 3: Judgment and Decision Making**

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<tr>
<td>09.10</td>
<td>Embeddedness and institutions</td>
<td>Granovetter (1985), North (1990)</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.12</td>
<td>Film, “The Trobrianders”</td>
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<td>09.14</td>
<td>Spheres of exchange</td>
<td>Bohanan (1955)</td>
<td>REACTION PAPER</td>
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**Week 4: Institutions, Embeddedness, and Spheres of Exchange**

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<tr>
<td>09.21</td>
<td>Culture evolves</td>
<td>McElreath (2004), Boyd (2011)</td>
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**Week 5: Culture Matters**

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<tr>
<td>09.17</td>
<td>Film, “Kingdom of Women”</td>
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<td>09.19</td>
<td>Culture shapes preferences</td>
<td>Salamon (1985), Sanders (1999)</td>
<td>REACTION PAPER</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.21</td>
<td>Culture evolves</td>
<td>McElreath (2004), Boyd (2011)</td>
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**Part 2  Different ways of making a living**

**Week 6: Foragers**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.26</td>
<td>Film, “N’ai, Story of a !Kung Woman”</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.28</td>
<td>The original affluent society</td>
<td>Sahlins (1972), Diamond (1987)</td>
<td>REACTION PAPER</td>
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**Week 7: Herders**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>Film, “The Nuer”</td>
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<td>10.03</td>
<td>Discuss Ensminger's “Making a Market”</td>
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<td>BOOK REVIEW</td>
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<td>10.05</td>
<td>Love and death</td>
<td>Scleza (2011), Mathew (2011)</td>
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**Week 8: Farmers**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>10.08</td>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td>Johnson (1989)</td>
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<td>10.10</td>
<td>Film, &quot;Warriors of the Amazon&quot;</td>
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**Week 9: Money and Markets**

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<tr>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>Money and markets</td>
<td>Wheelan (Ch 7–10), Surowiecki (2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.17</td>
<td>The limits of markets</td>
<td>Sandel (2012)</td>
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<td>10.19</td>
<td>Analyzing the economy</td>
<td>Krugman (2009), Cochrane (2009)</td>
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*Greyed out readings are optional.*
### Part 3 Special topics

#### Week 10: Gifts, Exchange, and Conspicuous Consumption
- **10.22** The Gift:  
  Mauss (1990), Graeber (2000)
- **10.24** Film, “Ongka’s Big Moka”
- **10.26** Conspicuous consumption:  
  Veblen (1899)

#### Week 11: Cooperation and the Tragedy of the Commons
- **10.29** Cooperation in the wild:  
  Hardin (1968), Dietz (2003)
- **10.31** Discuss Acheson’s “Lobster Gangs of Maine”
- **11.02** Cooperation in the lab:  
  Henrich (2010), Gurerk (2006)

#### Week 12: The Demographic Transition
- **11.05** Economics matters:  
  Borgerhoff Mulder (1998), Becker (1960)
- **11.07** Culture matters:  
  Richerson (2004)
- **11.09** Film, “The Devil’s Playground”

#### Week 13: Development
- **11.12** The wealth of nations:  
  Wheelan (Ch. 13), Sen (2004), Sachs (2005)
- **11.14** Film, “The Goddess and the Computer”
- **11.16** The miracle of micro-finance:  
  Yunus (2003), Karlan (2011)

#### Week 14: Globalization
- **11.26** The iEconomy:  
  Wheelan (Ch. 11–12), Duhigg (2012)
- **11.28** Film, “Is Walmart good for America?”
- **11.30** Discuss Mintz’s “Sweetness and Power”

#### Week 15: Inheritance and Inequality
- **12.03** Inheritance and inequality:  
  Wheelan (Ch. 6), Borgerhoff Mulder (2009)
- **12.05** The consequences of inequality:  

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Readings that are greyed out are optional.
References


Cochrane, John. 2009. How did Paul Krugman get is so Wrong?


Stiglitz, Joseph. 2012. The 1 Percent’s Problem. An interview in *Vanity Fair*.


Economic Anthropology or Political Economy? (II): Approaches to the Analysis of Pre-Capitalist Formations in the Maghreb by David Seddon.

Clammer's paper examines the sense in which the trends in economic anthropology represented in this book can claim to be 'new', examines the background of these trends in Anglo-Saxon and French anthropology; provides the outlines of a critique of both these national traditions; extracts and examines some of the main conceptual issues arising from the debates within.


PART III CIRCULATION. If this were all there is, of course, the discipline would fall apart, dissolving into groups focused on different parts of the world. This is prevented, in part, by the second orientation I want to mention. That is the intellectual models and arguments that become fashionable generally within the discipline.

Consumption Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld.

Economic anthropology is a scholarly field that attempts to explain human economic behavior using the tools of both economics and anthropology. It is practiced by anthropologists and has a complex relationship with economics. There are three major paradigms within the field of economic anthropology: formalism, substantivism and culturalism.

Formalism. The formalist model is the one most closely linked to neoclassical economics, defining economics as the study of utility maximisation under conditions of scarcity. As an attempt to use neoclassical theory to analyze subjects outside of its tradition, Economic Anthropology is a scholarly field that attempts to explain human economic behavior using the tools of both economics and anthropology. It is practiced by anthropologists and has a complex relationship with economics. There are three major paradigms within the field of economic anthropology: formalism, substantivism and culturalism.

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