

**Anthropology 107.03**  
**General Anthropology**  
**Fall 2003 Syllabus**  
**Meets Daily, 11:00 – 11:50**  
**Randall Hall Rm 115**

**Instructor: Aksel Casson**  
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**Office: Farrell Hall 320A**  
**Office hours: M-F 9:00-10:00**  
**and by appointment**

### Course Description

We live in a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected. As innovations in technology, communication, and transportation develop, people from disparate backgrounds and geography come into greater contact. This contact serves to illustrate two main themes of the course: a significant amount of cultural convergence is taking place, especially in consumer behavior, technology and other elements of lifestyle, but at the same time groups of people remain unique in how they organize their lives and how they view their world. Both trends build on foundations that have existed as long as our species. The discipline of anthropology is directly concerned with these two facets of human life: the differences that separate cultures, and the things which people around the world have in common.

Anthropology has been characterized as the most scientific of the humanities and the most humanistic of the sciences. Its subject is all that defines humanity as human. It is an inherently multi-disciplinary field, intended to explore human social and cultural behavior (our emphasis will be on evolutionary, or adaptive, explanation), past and present, in all of its complex and, occasionally, mystifying diversity.

We will explore the differences and similarities that make up the human career in three main units. First, we will explore human origins. This unit will focus on human physical and biological evolution as well as on various oral traditions that characterize how certain cultures view their origins. The second unit will develop various topics that have traditionally been used to define the uniqueness of our species, including culture, language, and technological development. We will shift our concentration in the third portion of this course to the individual, looking at various categories of identity, including race, religion, and gender.

### Texts and Other Readings

There are three required texts for this course:

- The Third Chimpanzee*, Jared Diamond (1993)
- Genie: A Scientific Tragedy*, Russ Rymer (1994)
- Skull Wars*, D.H. Thomas (2000)

There will also be weekly readings, mostly short articles, that will be made available either in class or in the Anthropology Department's Reading Room (FH 309). If possible, these same readings will be placed on reserve at the CWU library, or perhaps made into a coursepack. I'm open for negotiation on this point. The readings were chosen because they complement and augment lecture topics and should be completed during the assigned week. Should it become apparent that students are not reading assigned material I will require weekly abstracts of articles and chapters. This represents additional grading that I do not want to do, so please do the readings on time.

### Schedule and Assignments

	<b>Lecture and Discussion Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<b>Week 1:</b> <b>Sept 24-26</b>	Introduction Origin Stories	<b>Diamond</b> , Prologue Genesis I-II (handout)
<b>Week 2:</b> <b>Sept 29-Oct 3</b>	Origin Stories Human Evolution	<b>Diamond</b> , Part I Gould, <i>Darwinism Defined</i>
<b>Week 3:</b> <b>Oct 6-10</b>	Archaeology of Origins Neanderthal question	<b>Diamond</b> , Part II: intro, chp. 3 Thorne & Wilpoff, <i>Multiregional Evolution</i> Wilson & Cann, <i>Recent African Genesis</i>
	<b>Due Oct 10<sup>th</sup>: Neanderthal Assignment</b>	

<b>Week 4:</b> <b>Oct 13-17</b> <b>No class 10/17</b>	Biological Anthropology and Evolutionary Explanation <b>Exam I: October 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Diamond</b> , Part II: chp 5-7 Konner, <i>The Nursing Knot, Why the Reckless Survive</i>
<b>Week 5:</b> <b>Oct 20-24</b>	Humanity Explored I -Culture Concept -Art -Technology	<b>Diamond</b> , Part III: intro, chp 8, 10, 11 Hauser, <i>Games Primates Play</i> Konner, <i>Art of Darkness</i>
<b>Week 6:</b> <b>Oct 27-31</b>	Humanity Explored II -Language and Linguistics -Agriculture/Diet -Deviant Behavior <b>Due October 31<sup>st</sup>: Short Essay Topic</b>	<b>Rymer</b> , Parts I and II Konner, <i>False Idylls, The Stone Age Diet</i>
<b>Week 7:</b> <b>Nov 3-7</b>	Fieldwork and Ethnography Identity I: -Religion and Ritual <b>Exam II: November 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Rymer</b> , Parts III-V Konner, <i>Transcendental Medication</i> Miner, <i>Body Ritual among the Nacirema</i>
<b>Week 8:</b> <b>Nov 10-14</b> <b>No class 11/11</b>	Identity II: -Race, ethnicity, and diversity -Gender	<b>Thomas</b> , Foreword, Prologue, Part I Rodgers, <i>Flirting Fascination</i> Lindholm & Lindholm, <i>Life Behind the Veil</i>
<b>Week 9:</b> <b>Nov 17-21</b>	Identity III: -Family and Kinship -Class <b>Due November 21<sup>st</sup>: Consumption Log and Kinship Diagram</b>	<b>Thomas</b> , Part II Fussell, <i>An Anatomy of the Classes</i>
<b>Week 10:</b> <b>Nov 24-28</b>	Identity IV: -Nationality Cultural Relativism	<b>Thomas</b> , Part III & IV
<b>Week 11:</b> <b>Dec 1-5</b>	New World Colonization Anthropology in the Modern World	<b>Thomas</b> , Part V & Epilogue Hafner, <i>Coming of Age in Palo Alto</i>
<b>Week 12:</b> <b>Finals</b>	<b>Wednesday December 10</b> <b>Noon – 2:00</b>	

### Student Evaluation and Grading

#### *Exams (75%)*

There are three exams in the course, none of which are cumulative. They are scheduled to correspond with the three units of the course and will test your grasp of material presented in lectures, films, and readings. **No make-ups will be given after the scheduled exams except in the cases of illness, accident, or emergency.**

#### *Short Assignments/Essays (15%)*

There are three short assignments in the course, one for each unit. These are not meant to be term papers, rather they are short assignments that are designed to allow you to explore in greater detail issues of controversy (i.e. the 'Neanderthal question') and to examine your own cultural background through the lenses provided in this course.

#### *Discussion Questions and Participation (10%)*

Participation is not limited to discussion during class times, though this does represent an excellent forum to present your opinions and/or to voice questions about course content. Participation also includes, for this course, the submission of discussion questions, via email, to the instructor.

#### *Total Points: 400*

3 Exams, 300 points (75%)  
3 Short Assignments, 60 points total (15%)  
Participation, 40 points (10%)

#### *Grade Scale(%)*

A = 93-100	B-=80-82	D+=67-69
A-=90-92	C+=77-79	D = 63-66
B+=87-89	C = 73-76	D-= 60-62
B = 83-86	C-=70-72	F = 0-59