

University of Utah
Anthropology 4962-2: Anthropology of Emotions
Spring 2013
Wednesdays, 2:00 – 5:00
Stewart 205

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Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 – 1:30; or by appointment

SYLLABUS

Description: One of the most integral aspects of human life, emotion has long been a hotly contested topic for various schools of anthropology and related fields. Are emotions universal experiences, the product of an evolutionary process and designed to fulfill certain functions, or are they culturally-particular domains, reflective of the unique experiences of different social worlds? Through discussion of scientific articles and ethnographic accounts, we will explore the range of ideas about emotions produced over the last 150 years, looking at both “basic” emotions thought to be universally experienced and culturally-specific emotions thought to be limited to particular locales. We will assess theories of how emotions evolved, and of how cultural forces impact the expression of emotions in different settings. And we will critically examine the question of what exactly is, and is not, an “emotion,” and how this concept fits into a larger understanding of how the human mind works.

Content Warning: Some of the behaviors and beliefs we will discuss during this course are of a sexual or violent nature. This will include issues of sexuality and sexual orientation, genital modification, sexual taboos, rape, and ritual sacrifice and mutilation. Students likely to be offended by a frank (but not prurient) discussion of sexual or violent attitudes and practices in another culture should bear this in mind.

Texts: Michael Lewis, Jeanette Haviland-Jones, & Lisa Barrett, eds., *Handbook of Emotions*, 3rd edition, The Guilford Press, 2010
Robert Levy, *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands*, University of Chicago Press, 1975
Catherine Lutz, *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll & Their Challenge to Western Theory*, University of Chicago Press, 1988
A.L. Epstein, *In the Midst of Life: Affect and Ideation in the World of the Tolai*, University of California Press, 1992
Robert Frank, *Passions Within Reason: The Strategic Role of the Emotions*, W.W. Norton & Co., 1988
Additional readings posted on the course website

You are expected to have completed the readings listed for each week *prior* to the Wednesday session. Please check the weekly reading assignment in the syllabus carefully, and be sure to allow plenty of time to complete them, as there are usually about 100 pages assigned each week.

The online readings are noted on the syllabus, and will be posted on the Canvas course website under “Files,” then “Readings.” Any changes to these will be announced in lecture.

Although new copies of all 5 books may be expensive, many of them have been in print for several years, so you should have no difficulty acquiring used copies, if you prefer. Some are also available as e-books, or for rent from online retailers or the campus bookstore. Copies of the books will also be on reserve at the Marriott library, for 3-hour check-out. You will need your student ID to check them out.

Lectures: This course will be driven primarily by the reading and discussion of ethnographic case studies and theoretical papers, and will have a seminar style. This means the professor will be responsible for providing contextual material to frame our discussion and explanations of key concepts, but class discussion is essential. It is important that students come to class prepared to participate, having read the texts and thought about them deeply beforehand.

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| Grading: | Reading Presentations: | 15% |
| | Response Essays: | 40% |
| | Culture-Specific Emotions Project: | 20% |
| | Critical Book Review Project: | 25% |

Reading Presentations: Several times throughout the semester, each student will be expected to provide a brief presentation (5-10 minutes) on one of the readings. The point of these presentations is not to recap the entire reading, but rather to highlight the key points the author is making, answer questions from other students, and present a broad discussion question to the class. These will be graded on a pass/fail basis. As the number of readings each student will be assigned will depend on enrollment, the exact details will be discussed in class. Student preferences will be weighed heavily in these assignments, but cannot always be guaranteed.

Response Essays: Five times throughout the semester, the professor will present a prompt for a brief essay assignment of 2-3 pages, due by the following Sunday at 5pm, and submitted on the course website. Each of these will be worth 10% of your course grade, and will be graded on a letter basis. The lowest-graded essay will be dropped from the calculation of your overall course grade.

Culture-Specific Emotions Project: Each student will prepare a research project on a “culture-specific emotion” (CSE); that is, an emotion commonly described as unique to a particular culture. This project will consist of describing the emotion and the cultural context in question, relating it both to so-called “basic” emotions and to more nuanced emotion concepts found in American culture, and analyzing it in terms of the general ideas about emotions discussed in the first half of the course. A list of potential CSEs will be presented in the first lecture, and students will be asked to email a list of ranked preferences, which will be used to assign CSEs as fairly as possible. CSEs not included on the list may also be considered.

The project will consist of both a paper (4-6 pages long) and an oral presentation during the final class meeting before Spring Break. The exact length and requirements of the presentation will depend in part on class enrollment, so the details will be discussed in class. Part of the presentation will include fielding questions from the class, and it is expected that this feedback will be incorporated into the paper, where appropriate. The paper will then be due at the end of Spring Break, Sunday March 17th at 5 pm (but you are encouraged to complete it earlier, and enjoy your time off).

The paper (worth 15% of the course grade) will be graded on a letter basis; the presentation (worth 5% of the course grade) will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

Critical Book Review Project: Each student will prepare a research project on a classic ethnographic work that focuses on emotion. This project will entail both reading the book itself and some subsequent work that critically engages with that book. A list of potential books and a tutorial of how to find critical responses via Google Scholar will be given in the first lecture, and again students will be asked to email a list of ranked preferences, to assign them as fairly as possible.

The book review should include a detailed summary of the cultural context of the ethnography and of the author's conclusions about emotional experience and the study of emotion in general. The critiques and expansions provided by subsequent authors should then be summarized, as well as your own analysis of the discussion and conclusions about the place of this ethnography and its critics in our understanding of emotion.

The project will consist of both a paper (6-8 pages long) and an oral presentation during Finals Week. Because this course meets once a week, the registrar has not assigned a specific date for the final, so we will need to coordinate that date ourselves. Again, the exact length and requirements of the presentation will depend in part on class enrollment, so the details will be discussed in class. The paper will then be due at the end of Finals Week, Thursday May 2nd at 5 pm.

The paper (worth 20% of the course grade) will be graded on a letter basis; the presentation (worth 5% of the course grade) will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

SCHEDULE

Subject to change

“Optional” readings are not required for course discussion, but are provided for students interested in gaining more information about a given topic.

Week 1: Introduction to the Anthropology of Emotions (1/9)

NO READINGS

I: EMOTIONS IN GENERAL

Week 2: Psychology and Emotions (1/16)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 1. Solomon, “The Philosophy of Emotions,” pp. 3-16;
5. Frijda, “The Psychologists’ Point of View,” pp. 68-87;
Tahitians, 1. The Setting, pp. 3-37;
Online, Ekman 1992, “An Argument for Basic Emotions”

Week 3: Affect and Cognition (1/23)

READINGS: *Tahitians*, 8. Thinking and 9. Feeling, pp. 240-325;
In the Midst of Life, 1. Exploring Affect: Some Preliminary Issues, pp. 1-28;
Online, Zajonc 1984, “On the primacy of affect”;
Lazarus 1984, “On the primacy of cognition”

RESPONSE ESSAY 1 due on 1/27 at 5 pm

Week 4: Anthropology and Emotions (1/30)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 25. Shweder, et al., “The Cultural Psychology of the Emotions: Ancient and Renewed,” pp. 409-427;
Tahitians, 3. Style, Integrations, and Surfaces, pp. 95-102;
Unnatural Emotions, 1. The Cultural Construction of Emotions, pp. 3-13;
In the Midst of Life, 2. The Tolai: Habitat, History, Society, pp. 29-52;
Online, Lutz & White 1986, “The Anthropology of Emotions”;

OPTIONAL: *Handbook*, 3. Stets & Turner, “The Sociology of Emotions,” pp. 32-46

Week 5: Culture and Emotion Concepts (2/6)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 13. Matsumoto, et al., “Facial Expressions of Emotion,” pp. 211-234;
36. Niedenthal, “Emotion Concepts,” pp. 587-600;
In the Midst of Life, 3. The Language of the Emotions, pp. 53-79;
Online, Wierzbicka 1986, “Human Emotions: Universal or Culture-Specific?”;
Milton 2005, “Meanings, Feelings, and Human Ecology”

RESPONSE ESSAY 2 due on 2/10 at 5 pm

Week 6: Sex and Gender (2/13)

- READINGS:** *Handbook*, 24. Brody & Hall, "Gender and Emotion in Context," pp. 395-408;
Tahitians, 4. Bodies, pp. 103-146;
Unnatural Emotions, 2. Paths to Ifaluk and 3. Emotion, Thought, and Estrangement:
Western Discourses on Feeling, pp. 14-80;
Online, Fischer, et al. 2004, "Gender and Culture Differences in Emotion";
- OPTIONAL:** *Tahitians*, 6. Aspects of Personal Relationships;
7. Self & Identity, pp. 189-239

Week 7: Development and Personality (2/20)

- READINGS:** *Handbook*, 18. Lewis, "The Emergence of Human Emotions," pp. 304-319;
30. Bates, et al., "Temperament and Emotion," pp. 485-496;
Unnatural Emotions, 4. The Ethnopsychological Contexts of Emotion: Ifaluk Beliefs
about the Person, pp. 81-116;
In the Midst of Life, 4. Work, Ambition, and Envy, pp. 80-115;
- OPTIONAL:** *Handbook*, 17. Camras & Fatani, "The Development of Facial Expressions: Current
Perspectives on Infant Emotions," pp. 291-303;
Tahitians, 13. Aspects of Growing Up, pp. 430-469

Week 8: Evolution and Economics (2/27)

- READINGS:** *Handbook*, 8. Tooby & Cosmides, "The Evolutionary Psychology of the Emotions
and their Relationship to Internal Regulatory Variables," pp. 114-137;
Passions Within Reason, 1. Beyond Self-Interest through 5. Signaling, pp. 1-113;
- OPTIONAL:** *Handbook*, 9. Rick & Loewenstein, "The Role of Emotion in Economic Behavior,"
pp. 138-156

RESPONSE ESSAY 3 due on 3/3 at 5 pm

Week 9: Culture-Specific Emotions (3/6)

NO READINGS: PRESENTATIONS OF CULTURE-SPECIFIC EMOTIONS PROJECTS

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS on 3/13

CULTURE-SPECIFIC EMOTIONS PAPER due on 3/17 at 5 pm

II: SPECIFIC EMOTIONS

Week 10: Anger and Outrage (3/20)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 45. Lemerise & Dodge, “The Development of Anger and Hostile Interactions,” pp. 730-741;
Unnatural Emotions, 6. Morality, Domination, and the Emotion of “Justifiable Anger,” pp. 155-182;
In the Midst of Life, 5. Of Kin, Love, and Anger, pp. 116-149;
Passions Within Reason, 6. Telltale Clues through 8. Becoming Moral, pp. 114-162

Week 11: Fear and Disgust (3/27)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 44. Öhman, “Fear and Anxiety: Overlaps and Dissociations,” pp. 709-729 and 47. Rozin, et al., “Disgust,” pp. 757-776;
Unnatural Emotions, 7. The Cultural Construction of Danger, pp. 183-208;
Online, Rozin, et al. 1986, “Operation of the laws of sympathetic magic in disgust and other domains”;
 Kurzban & Leary 2001, “Evolutionary origins of stigmatization: the functions of social exclusion”;
 Mineka & Öhman 2002, “Phobias and Preparedness: The Selective, Automatic, and Encapsulated Nature of Fear”;
OPTIONAL: *Tahitians*, 5. Souls, pp. 147-188;
 12. Adjustment and Readjustment, pp. 389-429;
Online, Öhman & Mineka 2001, “Fears, Phobias, and Preparedness: Toward an Evolved Module of Fear and Fear Learning”

Week 12: Love and Compassion (4/3)

READINGS: *Unnatural Emotions*, 5. Need, Nurturance, and the Precariousness of Life on a Coral Atoll: The Emotion of *Fago*, pp. 119-154;
Passions Within Reason, 9. Fairness and 10. Love, pp. 163-211;
Online, Jankowiak & Fischer 1992, “A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Romantic Love”;
 Fisher 1995, “The nature and evolution of romantic love”;
OPTIONAL: *Online*, Gonzaga, et al. 2006, “Romantic love and sexual desire in close relationships”

RESPONSE ESSAY 4 due on 4/7 at 5 pm

Week 13: Grief and Sadness (4/10)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 49. Bonanno, et al., "Sadness and Grief," pp. 797-810;
In the Midst of Life, 6. Tambu, Grief, and the Meaning of Death, pp. 150-197;
Online, Darwin 1872, "Low Spirits, Anxiety, Grief, Dejection, Despair";
Schieffelin 1976, "10. The Gisaro";
Whitehouse 2005, "Emotion, Memory, and Religious Rituals: An Assessment of Two Theories"

Week 14: Shame, Guilt, Pride, and Envy (4/17)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 46. Lewis, "Self-Conscious Emotions: Embarrassment, Pride, Shame, and Guilt," pp. 742-756;
Tahitians, 10. Moral Behavior, pp. 326-356;
In the Midst of Life, 7. Affect and the Self, pp. 198-247;
Online, Fessler 2001, "Emotions and cost/benefit assessment: The role of shame and self-esteem in risk taking";
OPTIONAL: *Handbook*, 26. Smith & Mackie, "Intergroup Emotions," pp. 428-439

Week 15: Humor, Hope, and the End (4/24)

READINGS: *Handbook*, 48. Fredrickson & Cohn, "Positive Emotions," pp. 777-796;
Unnatural Emotions, 8. Conclusion: Emotional Theories, pp. 209-225;
In the Midst of Life, 8. Epilogue: The Anthropologist as Onion-Peeler, pp. 248-280;
Passions Within Reason, 11. Human Decency, and 12. Reflections, pp. 212-259;
Online, Averill 1991, "Intellectual Emotions";
OPTIONAL: *Handbook*, 12. Bachorowski & Owren, "Vocal Expressions of Emotion," pp. 196-210;
27. Hoffman, "Empathy and Prosocial Behavior," pp. 440-455;
34. Isen, "Some Ways in Which Positive Affect Influences Decision Making and Problem Solving," pp. 548-573

RESPONSE ESSAY 5 due on 4/28 at 5 pm

CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS on TBD

CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW PAPER due on 5/2 at 5 pm