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Welcome to Anthropology 4616 Culture and Personality (Psychological Anthropology)

Available on-line in your

Moodle

folder at [<moodle.umn.edu/>](http://moodle.umn.edu/)

I hope you are having a great holiday season.

I am sending this note out early to make it more convenient for you to order your textbook on-line (if that is an attractive option for you), and/or to let you get started reading for the class (if you are the kind of person who likes to do that sort of thing). If neither of these options apply to you, and you feel like a little end-of-the-holiday season procrastination, just relax and enjoy the wonderful winter weather, and, the rest of your break (but be sure to have some lentils on New Years' Day).

Culture and Personality will be a great course, and a great experience. You will see. . . .

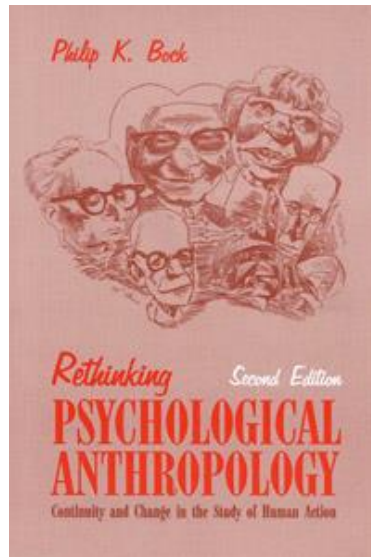
Interest in personality and cross-cultural psychology and its relation to culture and to biology has never been higher. You can see that in the newspapers and other media. Lots of things are happening in personality research . . . virtually every week. **One of the best sources for up-to-date news is [BBC News Europe](#).** I also like [The Telegraph](#) and, to balance things out, [The Guardian](#) (UK Edition), [The New York Times](#), and the [StarTribune](#). For news specific to Anthropology, [Anthropology World News](#) from [Texas A&M Anthropology](#) is the best.

I am looking forward to meeting you in class on the 13th. In the meantime, you might want to peruse the information in your **Moodle** folder at [<moodle.umn.edu/>](http://moodle.umn.edu/).

Right off the bat you might be interested in the **textbook** for the course . . .

Rethinking Psychological Anthropology: Continuity and Change in the Study of Human Action, Second Edition (1999), by Philip Bock,

is currently available online from about \$31.48 new / \$3.69 used [buy a used one]
(+ p/h, where applicable).
(24 December 2015)



NOTE: When you read this text, read it primarily for a sense of the historical development of Psychological Anthropology / Culture and Personality and for a sense of what the basic concepts are all about.

More information on the text for Culture and Personality can be found at

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cptext.html>.

Textbooks are available from the following vendors . . .

[UMD Bookstore](#) | [Amazon.com](#) | [Barnes and Noble](#)
[CampusBooks.com](#) | [Chegg](#) [rental] | [ecampus.com](#) | [half.com](#)
[booksprice.com](#) | [CheapestTextbooks.com](#) | [CourseSmart.com](#) | [TextbookMedia.com](#)
| [Direct Textbook](#) | |

Some excellent classic books in many fields are also often available online free. For example, the full text of Sigmund Freud's first major work, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (3rd Edition, 1911), Trans. by A.A. Brill, is available online at <http://www.psywww.com/books/interp/toc.htm>.

More textbook information in general can be found at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/tr/textbooks.html>.

The exams will be open-book essays constructed from a list of study questions that you help create, so it would be a good idea for you to have your own copy of the text.

For the exams you should normally just need to read the book carefully and be able to discuss the materials intelligently. That is, you should read it as if you had picked it up at an airport or neighborhood bookshop because you were interested in the subject and wanted to know more about it, like literally millions of people are doing in everyday life.

Midterm exam information is at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cpexams.html#midterm>, and the final exam information is at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cpexams.html#final>.

One thing that you should keep in mind when approaching these readings, which I will talk more about as the class progresses, is that as mentioned above the exams are open-book. And for that you should normally just need to read the text *carefully* and be able to discuss the materials therein *intelligently*—see note on open-book exams below. That is, you should read the text as if you had picked it up at an airport or neighborhood bookshop on the way to Austria or the South Seas *because you were interested in the subject and wanted to know more about it*.

PLEASE NOTE: *Some students are used to principally memorizing facts in classes. This class is not one where that is the focus. It is about investigating new topics, reading, listening, synthesizing ideas, thinking, exploring, and becoming familiar enough with the various subjects, peoples and places to carry on an intelligent conversation in modern-day society.* In short, this class aims to give you practice in critical thinking, and even creativity.

Critical thinking, involving **evaluation** and **synthesis**, has long been regarded as essential for success in the modern-day world. In recent years, actually for two decades, **creativity** has also become central to success, and "process skills" vital to creativity. Process skills involve "strategies to reframe challenges and extrapolate and transform information, and to accept and deal with ambiguity" (Pappano, "Learning to Think Outside the Box," *The New York Times EducationLife*, 9 February 2014, 8). Laura Pappano, writer in residence at Wellesley Center for Women at Wellesley College, points out that "In 2010 'creativity' was the factor most crucial for success found in an I.B.M. survey of 1,500 chief executives in 33 industries. These days 'creative' is the most used buzzword in LinkedIn profiles two years running" (2014, 8).

Please keep that in mind when thinking about, and getting ready for, the exams.

Here's a recent interesting article from [Minnesota Public Radio](#) . . .

[How to choose college classes: 6 tips](#)

--Tracy Mumford, [Minnesota Public Radio News](#) (10 September 2015)

With all of the class materials **you will be expected to share your ideas and comments with others** in the **Class *Forums* and wikis**.

Overall, this course consists of three main segments:

I Orientation and Background

- Introduction
- Basic Concepts
- History
- Theory
- Methods and Techniques

II Explorations

- Comparative / Cross-Cultural
- Holistic
- Ethnographic Case Studies from the Real World: Real People . . . Real Places from Around the World

III Student Presentations on Term Research Projects

For the first part of the course much of the material for the week will be presented in the form of on-line slide materials. **In the second section** of the semester, once you have mastered the basic information relating to Culture and Personality, we will look (generally comparatively, *cf.*, Main Characteristics of Anthropology in Week 01) at a series of video materials about **Real People . . . Real Places . . .** and about **research** from around the world. **The final section will focus on your research projects.**

One of the four main characteristics of American Anthropology is **fieldwork**, "a primary research technique, involving "participant observation," which usually means living among the people one is interested in learning from and about. It would be wonderful if for anthropology classes we could just rent a bus or charter a plane and fly off for a year or more to learn first-hand from the people themselves. Money, time, and practicality prohibit that, so the next best things—when it comes to studying anthropology—is going to places and viewing subjects by video, and we will do a lot of that this semester. More information on **Visual Anthropology** is available on-line at http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth1604/visual_anthropology.html.

With all of these materials **you will be expected to share your ideas and comments with others** in the Class *Forum* and wikis. I'm looking forward to that.

You will find that there is "an awful lot" of materials on-line—maybe even too many!

But don't worry. You will find **the *required* materials center stage in your Moodle folder**. Most of the rest of the materials are optional, but you may find that material useful in working on your class project.

Where to start?

Probably the best place is by having a quick look at the "**First Day Handout**," on-line at http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth4616/cphandout_first-day.html.

Then have a look at your Moodle Gradebook folder, which gives a nice listing of the actual requirements and due dates for the course. (You'll find the link for that in the upper-left-hand corner of the top of Block 1.)

Then have a look at the "**Course Overview**" in **Block 1** (the top of page one) of your **Moodle folder** <https://moodle.umn.edu/>.

A word of caution. **Moodle** recommends that you use the Firefox browser (available free at <http://firefox.com>). The Windows Internet Explorer (IE) occasionally will not display items on your screen. These items will simply not be there on IE when they are fine on Moodle or even on Chrome. Microsoft Word should likewise not be used to cut and paste things to Moodle; bad things can happen to your file if you do—randomly. Almost every time you are asked to enter text in Moodle, you will see the message, "Please do not copy/paste text directly from Microsoft Word. See explanation [here](http://www1.umn.edu/moodle/issues.html#10) <http://www1.umn.edu/moodle/issues.html#10>." Please pay attention to that request.

So once again, welcome to Anth 4616 Culture and Personality. This *will be* a great course, and a great experience. You will see. . . .

Thanks for signing on for Culture and Personality. I'm looking forward to the 13th.

Best of the Holiday Wishes to you . . .

I hope you had a great Boxing Day, and are having a good Christmas-Hanukkah-Kwanza season. Best wishes for a great New Year.

My **office hours** and contact information (and other regular schedule information) can be found at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth1602/pcoffice.html#title>.

Laptops are welcome in the classroom; in fact, we encourage you to bring your laptop.

Your **Moodle** site is now on-line. Have a look at it at moodle.umn.edu.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to post them on **Moodle** or e-mail troufs@d.umn.edu.

See you on the 13th.

Best Wishes,

Tim Roufs
Duluth, MN
26 December 2015

P.S. If you are new to the world of "technology" don't worry too much about that. Things may not "work" for you at first, but hang in there and we'll help you along. If you have not used **Moodle** course management system before, you might find it helpful to view **the orientation tutorial**.