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Department of Anthropology

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Ethics in Context: Uses and Abuses of Deception and Disclosure

This course concerns the uses and abuses of deception and disclosure in daily life and more specialized contexts. The term “deception” has negative connotations; nevertheless, scientists, performance magicians (“illusionists”), and the rest of us use fictions routinely in service of truth, justice, and entertainment. For an illusionist’s effects to induce doubt and delight an audience’s attention must be misdirected; likewise, biomedicine and other fields use deception (e.g., the placebo) as a research tool. Similarly, “disclosure” and truth-telling have positive connotations; nevertheless, we can all think of contexts in which “too much information” can violate social role expectations, ordinary kindness, and privacy. With the ethics of knowledge control as a unifying theme, this seminar explores: social fictions in everyday life; the entwined histories and alliances of science and performance magic; legitimate and illegitimate deceptions in the sciences; and generally, the social uses, ethics, and politics of practices that rely for their effectiveness and value on insider/outsider distinctions sustained by deliberate disconnections between front stage appearances and backstage realities.

BOOKS (available for purchase at Labyrinth):

- Graham Jones (2011) *Trade of the Tricks*
- All other course readings are on Blackboard (Bb), accessible by clicking the “Weekly Reading” button on the left side of the ANT 360 webpage



ASSIGNMENTS (see Appendix 1, p. 9 below, for full details!):

- 1. Informed, mutually respectful participation:** Everyone is expected to complete the readings on time and come to class ready to help identify key themes and interconnections. Confusions, criticisms, and enthusiasms are equally valuable and welcome. Sadly, past experience suggests that tech (laptops, cell phones, etc.) impedes rather than complements participatory learning ...so... please turn yours off during class.
- 2. Class presentations:** Students make brief presentations related to the readings and read from journals -- please see **Appendix 1** for details.
- 3. Papers and other writing assignments:** (a) **Oral presentation write-up:** 3 pp double spaced (600-750 words) due as a post on Bb on the day after your presentation (see **Appendix 1** for details). (b) **Journal:** 300-500 word entry due during each class. Please see **Appendix 1** for details and **Appendix 2** (pp. 12-15 below) for ideas. (c) **Paper proposal and peer commentary:** proposal (about 500 words) **due on or before Weds 4/12 —no extensions.** After you get my comments and go-ahead, but **no later than Weds 4/26**, post a revised version of your proposal on Bb. Everyone is expected to offer **constructive commentary** no later than **Weds 5/3**. Once again, see **Appendix 1** for details. (d) **Final paper** 2600-2800 words (10-11 pp dbl spaced, *excluding* references) due on Dean’s Date. See **Appendix 1** for advice and ideas.

Discussion Topics and Reading Assignments

Text reading is **bolded**; all other readings are on Bb. Readings marked "optional" are...optional ☺

Week 1 (2/8) Introductory Meeting. Overview of course themes and assignments, including the multidisciplinary character of our readings and the challenges that poses. Discussion of key terms – like “truth”, “lies”, “reality”, “appearance”, “fiction”, “illusion”, “secrecy”, “privacy” and their practical ambiguities (e.g., personal “truthiness”? social politesse?). Treat the film (below) as a reading for today’s discussion: it will introduce performance magic, which we’ll treat as springboard for thinking creatively about the ethics of deception, disclosure, and the rest. (Optional readings, like Mitchell’s – which offers other examples – are truly optional!)

Reading discussion:

Wikipedia (nd) “Truthiness” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Truthiness>)

Movie: “The Science of Magic” (on ANT 360 Bb Video reserves)

[OPTIONAL] Richard G. Mitchell (1993) Introduction: Defining secrecy (in *Secrecy and Fieldwork*, pp. 1-11. See also Stephen Colbert’s original Comedy Central show segment: <http://www.cc.com/video-clips/63ite2/the-colbert-report-the-word---truthiness>)

Journal entry #1 discussion: For the basics, see **Appendix 1** (pp. 9 below); **examples are on Bb** (click the “Syllabus and more” button). For ideas, see **Appendix 2** (pp. 12-15 below) but you’re always welcome to make your own connections between reading themes and your experiences! Please **turn in this first entry for comments**; from then on, there’s no need to turn in your entries until the mid-term assessment.

Week 2 (2/15) Everyday Ethics: Protecting Self and Protecting Others. All of today’s readings illustrate anthropologists’ attention to everyday life around the world; they also enable us to discuss the value of cross-cultural comparison and of reflecting critically on the challenges of translation. While Blum and Brown describe Chinese and indigenous Mexican examples of normalized “lying”, Silverman takes us to Ireland and a backstage glimpse of anthropological fieldwork: a style of research involving long-term, colloquial involvement with people in their own familiar settings, social relational conventions, and norms for revealing and withholding information. What ethical challenges does that research style entail?

Reading discussion:

Susan Blum (2007) Tricks and traps: deception and protective cleverness. (in Blum, *Lies That Bind*, pp. 25-46)

Penelope Brown (2001) Everyone has to lie in Tzeltal (in Shoshana Flum Kulka, ed. *Talking to Adults*, pp. 241-275)

Marilyn Silverman (2003) “Everyday Ethics: A Personal Journey in Rural Ireland, 1980-2001” (in *The Ethics of Anthropology: Debates and Dilemmas*. Pat Caplan, ed. Pp. 115-132)

[OPTIONAL] Susan Blum (2007) Truth, lying, and deception: Blum’s maxims for China (in Blum, *Lies That Bind*, pp. 11-24)

Journal entry #2 discussion: for ideas on this and all journal entries, see **Appendix 2** but please treat them as suggestions only: you’re encouraged to make your own connections!

Week 3 (2/22) Everyday Ethics, Everyday Sociality. While the word “deception” has negative connotations, deceptive words and deeds are pervasive and normal in everyday life cross-culturally. We survey this terrain broadly, continuing last week’s discussion of familiar and unfamiliar cultural landscapes, and developing awareness of ethical and contextual ambiguities (e.g., when is a fiction a “lie”, a “kindness”, or “literature”?). Sociologist Erving Goffman asks us to consider how everyday self-presentation might be a kind of “performance” (a series of “roles” or “masks”). Echoing the film we discussed a few days ago, and explicitly drawing on Goffman, psychologist Peter Nardi proposes stage magic as a model for ordinary social life. (In the optional reading, anthropologist/folklorist Richard Bauman describes the conventionalized contexts for tall tale exaggeration; and Michael Lambek situates anthropological attention to ordinary or everyday ethics in selective relation to philosophical approaches to ethics.)

Reading discussion:

Erving Goffman (1959) “Performances” (in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, especially pp. 17-34 but read the whole chapter if you can)

Peter Nardi (1984) Toward a social psychology of entertainment magic. *Symbolic Interaction* 7(1): 25-42

[OPTIONAL] Richard Bauman (1986) “Any man who keeps more’n one hound’ll lie to you”: A contextual study of expressive lying (in R. Bauman, *Story, Performance and Event: Contextual Studies of Oral Narrative*, pp. 11-32); Michael Lambek (2010) “Toward an ethics of the act” (in Lambek, ed. *Ordinary Ethics*, pp. 39-63).

Journal entry #3 discussion: for ideas on this and all journal entries, see [Appendix 2](#) but you’re always encouraged to make your own connections.

Week 4 (3/1) Deception in/as entertainment and education. In performance magic and related cultural forms (from “Prince of Humbug” P T Barnum’s 19th century traveling curiosity shows to 20th century’s “Candid Camera” and recent reality TV), deceptions and their disclosure constitute enduringly popular – and lucrative – kinds of entertainment. They have also been employed deliberately as means for public education. In the case of Candid Camera, we note one rather direct link with social psychology’s research style that we revisit during the second half of the semester. How and why do these things work; and what is the relationship between these two uses? These historical readings raise interesting questions about realist and aesthetic modes of *evaluation*, not to mention questions about ethical practice.

Reading discussion:

James W. Cook (2001) Introduction: thinking with tricks (in *The Arts of Deception*, pp. 1-29)

James W. Cook (2001) Epilogue: Barnum’s ghosts (in *The Arts of Deception*, pp. 256-268)

J. A. Secord Quick and magical shaper of science. *Science* 297: 1648-9.

Anna McCarthy (2004) Stanley Milgram, Alan Funt and Me (in Laurie Ouellette and Susan Murray, eds. *Reality TV: Remaking Television Culture* pp. 19-39).

Philip Zimbardo (1985) Laugh where we must, be candid where we can (*Psych Today* 6/18: 43-7)

Candid Camera episodes #1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 12 (on **Bb Video reserves**)

[OPTIONAL] Peter Funt (2014) Curses, fooled again! *New York Times* Op Ed, 9/27

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/27/opinion/curses-fooled-again.html>); Paul

Solomon (1980) Perception, illusion and magic. *Teaching of Psychology* 7:3-8. For more on Milgram/Funt, see e.g., http://www.villagevoice.com/arts/0407_tv_51104_27.html;

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Journal entry #4 discussion.

Week 5 (3/8) Deception in/as Entertainment and Education: Performance Magic. As we've seen, performance magic is a case in point of deception as entertainment and as a provocative medium for public education: it is our focus this week. Binet offers a psychological take on close-up magic: read it to develop your understanding of the psychology/illusionism connection that we've already pursued in different ways with Nardi, Zimbardo, and McCarthy. Jones's unique anthropological field study of French *magicos* also helps develop several of our themes, among which: it illustrates how anthropological fieldwork can be used to make sense of a secretive cultural practice. Jones also invites us to think about how secrecy and disclosure are used to establish and reinforce distinctions between outsiders (e.g., audiences) and insiders (expert practitioners) *not just* in the apprenticeship process but in other contexts too. (See Bb readings for other links to follow, if you like.)

Reading discussion:

Alfred Binet (1896) Psychology of prestidigitation. *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution*, Washington, DC, pp. 555-571.

Graham Jones (2011) *Trades of the Trick* (especially Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Epilogue: pp. 1-117, 237-243)



[OPTIONAL] Simon During (2002) Spiritualism and the birth of optical technologies (in During, *Modern Enchantments*, pp. 259-288); Dariel Fitzkee (1987[1945]) *Magic by Misdirection*, Chapters 7, 22, and 23 (pp. 78-85, 211-227); also see links on Bb to various articles that explore connections between performance magic and science education or science research. (These connections are also developed during Week 4 and below.)

Journal entry #5 discussion.

Week 6 (3/15) Truth, trust, and performance in the history of science. We continue to develop a historical appreciation for the performative dimensions of science, two ways. Consider how Steve Shapin's account (that is, the author's perspective and his substantive materials) relates to those offered in previous weeks. Then compare that with a canonical contemporary statement—from the native's point of view—of what "science" is, thinking about your own experience in science courses.

Reading discussion:

Steven Shapin (1994) A social history of truth-telling (in *A Social History of Truth*, pp. 65-125)

National Academy of Sciences (2009) *On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research* (accessible at <http://bob.nap.edu/readingroom/books/obas/>)

[OPTIONAL] Simon Schaffer (1983) "Natural philosophy and public spectacle in the eighteenth century," *History of Science* 21: 1-43 – and **recall** Secord (Week 4)

Journal entry #6 discussion.

The first half of your journal is due today!

Add a self-assessment commenting on what challenged or surprised you about this assignment, on cross-cutting themes that have emerged so far in your journal, and/or on what you plan to work on during the second half of the semester.

MIDTERM BREAK March 18 – March 26

Week 7 (3/29) Deceptions exposed? Drawing on the foregoing readings – concerning American popular culture, experts and lay people, and trust, truth, and performance – consider the history of lie detection in the US (and note that Alder’s title is a take-off on Shapin’s, last week), including surprising connections with the early histories of feminism and of comics (Lepore). This distinctively American technological fix raises questions about popular and scientific ideas about truth – e.g., about its contextual and perspectival dimensions – that we will elaborate during the second half of the semester. Meanwhile, Shea’s journalistic article concerns psychologist Paul Ekman’s system for reading faces (for exposing the liar’s “tell” and getting under the mask, so to speak – recall Goffman, Week 3). Complementing Alder’s message, Shea pays special attention to recent *criticism* of the uses to which Ekman’s lie-detection methods have been put in expert and lay contexts.

Reading discussion:

Ken Alder (2002) A social history of untruth: lie detection and trust in twentieth century America. *Representations* 80: 1-33.

Jill Lepore (2014) The surprising origin story of Wonder Woman (Smithsonian Magazine (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/22/last-amazon>))

Christopher Shea (2014) The liar’s ‘tell’ (Chronicle of Higher Education 10/10/14)

Journal entry #7 discussion.

Week 8 (4/5) Deceptions exposed! Comparing questionable fiction (is it a “lie” or is it “literature”?) and questionable science (how do we distinguish the visionaries from the cranks?) enables us to think about *assessment*. Distinctions between facts and fictions of various sorts are negotiated in acts of evaluation; decisions and arguments over whether something is good or bad depend on agreements over “what” is being assessed. How are the ambiguities sorted out? How do literary ethics compare with science ethics: what’s at stake in each case? Recall Colbert’s “truthiness” (Week 1) when reading about James Frey; recall Week 6’s National Academy of Sciences ethics booklet when reading about “cold fusion”.

Reading discussion:

The Smoking Gun (2006) “The man who conned Oprah”. Accessible at

<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/archive/0104061jamesfrey1.html>

"Author is kicked out". Accessible at

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/27/books/27oprah.html?ex=1296018000&en=ddd9b3b2c1f92c9a&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>

"Oprah strikes a blow for truthiness" see:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11044071/>

Thomas Gieryn (1999) Chapter 4: The (cold) fusion of science, mass media, and politics (in Gieryn, *Cultural Boundaries of Science*, 183-232)

[OPTIONAL] Lots of hoax and fraud cases exist for you to discover online, bearing in mind the ethical ambiguities we have been exploring: both recent instances (see e.g., “How this guy lied his way...” on Bb) and classic cases (e.g., Orson Wells’ documentary, *F for Fake* – a brilliant meditation on originality, authenticity, expertise, trust and related matters.)

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Journal entry #8 discussion.

REMINDER: Project proposal (about 500 words) due on or before Weds 4/12 – no extensions!

Week 9 (4/12) The ethics/politics of identities. We consider some of the ways in which the politics of identity – sensitive to historically salient relations of inequality and power – are implicated in our ongoing consideration of the ethics of privacy, secrecy, performance, masks, and the tensions among personal and social realities (recall Weeks 1 and 2). The first three readings discuss contrastive racial self-representations (Sunderland, Fikes); the fourth reading concerns self-protection and disclosure in intimate relationships (Cole). (Complementing the assigned Cole reading, that author’s more academic, and totally optional, 2001 article is inadvertently ironic evidence of some assumptions on which questionnaire-based research depends.) I encourage you to think about other kinds of self-enhancements and alterations (e.g., sexual, athletic, intellectual), bearing in mind the potential ethical/political difference it makes when the identities in question are marked by racial, gendered, and other power/value hierarchies.

Reading discussion:

Patricia Sunderland (1997) You may not know it but I’m black. *Ethnos* 62: 32-58.

Patricia Sunderland (2015) Interview: Race and Rachel Dolezal. AAA Blog:

<http://blog.aaanet.org/2015/06/18/race-and-rachel-dolezal-a-conversation-with-patricia-sunderland/>

Robert Fikes (2015) The passing of passing: a peculiarly American racial tradition approaches irrelevance. *The Black Past, Remembered and Reclaimed*:

<http://www.blackpast.org/perspectives/passingpassingpeculiarlyamericanracialtraditionapproachesirrelevance> (4 pp)

Tim Cole (2006) Intimacy, deception, truth and lies: the paradox of being close. *Entelechy* 7:

<http://www.entelechyjournal.com/timcole.htm> (8 pp)

[OPTIONAL] Tim Cole (2001) Lying to the one you love: the use of deception in romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 18(1): 107-129.

Journal entry #9 discussion.**Week 10 (4/19) Deception/disclosure in biomedical treatment and research.**

Deception is used as a method in biomedical research. In fact, deception is central to the “gold standard” of scientific clinical medicine: randomized controlled trials comparing the outcomes of treatment and control groups using a “double-blind” approach. Toward that end, we evaluate several (short!) discussions concerning the ethics of the placebo in medical research. But first, we consider a foundational statement concerning indirection in the *therapeutic* relationship (Henderson) and a more recent discussion (Palmieri and Stern); and we assess a key argument about ethical slippages in moves *between* therapy and research (Levine).

Reading discussion:

Lawrence Henderson (1935) Physician and patient as a social system. *New England Journal of Medicine* 212 (18): 819-823.

John Palmieri and Theodore Stern (2009) Lies in the doctor-patient relationship. *Primary Care Companion, Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* 11(4): 163-168.

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- Robert J Levine (1992) Clinical trials and physicians as double agents. *The Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* 65: 65-74.
- H. J. McQuay and R. A. Moore (2005) Placebo. *Postgraduate Medical Journal* 81: 155-160. (see PMJOnline <http://pmj.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/81/953/155>)
- Franklin G. Miller et al.(2005) “Deception in research on the placebo effect.” *PLoS Medicine* 2(9): 853-859. Accessible at <http://medicine.plosjournals.org/perlserv/?request=get-document&doi=10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.0020262>
- [Skim for main point] Tor Wager et al. (2004) Placebo induced changes in fMRI in the anticipation and experience of pain. *Science* 303(5661): 1162-1167. Accessible at <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/303/5661/1162>
- Franklin Miller and Tor Wager (2004) Painful deception (letter and response). *Science* 304(5674): 1109-1111. Accessible at <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/304/5674/1109c>

Journal entry #10 discussion.

REMINDER: After you get my comments and go-ahead, but no later than Weds 4/26, post a revised version of your proposal on Bb. Everyone is expected to offer constructive commentary no later than Weds 5/3.

Week 11 (4/26) Deception/disclosure in behavioral science research. The first three articles this week concern the role of deception in the creation of a scientific (that is, experimental) social psychology. Pay special attention to the ethical rationales of laboratory experiments, making connections both to today’s other readings and to earlier psychology examples (e.g., McCarthy). Then read Riach and Rich on the ethics of field experiments in economics and two (short) New York Times articles about a recent psychological field experiment involving Facebook (the academic source material is an optional reading fyi). Using these readings, compare the ethics of and responses to *lab* deceptions and *field* deceptions.

Reading discussion:

- Kurt Danziger (1988) A question of identity: who participated in psychological experiments? (In *The Rise of Experimentation in American Psychology*, ed. Jill Morawski, *The Rise of Experimentation in American Psychology*, ed. Jill Morawski, pp. 35-52)
- Jill Morawski (1988) Impossible experiments and practical constructions: the social bases of psychologists’ work. (In *Rise of Experimentalism in Social Psychology*, pp. 72-93)
- Benjamin Harris (1988) Key words: Debriefing in social psychology (In *Rise of Experimentalism in Social Psychology*, ed. J Morawski, pp. 189-22)
- Peter A Riach and Judith Rich (2004) Deceptive field experiments of discrimination: are they ethical? *Kyklos* 57(3): 457-470
- Vindu Goel (2014) Facebook Tinkers With Users’ Emotions in News Feed Experiment, Stirring Outcry. *The New York Times* (June 29), B1.
- Farhad Manjoo (2014) A bright side to Facebook’s experiments on its users. *NYT* (July 3), B1
- OPTIONAL** background related to Facebook stories: Adam Kramer et al. (2014) Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks. *PNAS* 111(9): 8788-8790 (with preface, “Editorial expression of concern and correction”)

Journal entry #11 discussion.

**Revised paper proposals are due on Bb no later than midnight tonight!
Comments on other students’ proposals are due on Bb no later than 5/3.**

Week 12 (5/3) Deception/disclosure in ethnographic fieldwork. Last week we compared lab and field experiments. This week concerns ethnographic fieldwork in which *participants* control the conditions within which research takes place (whereas researchers expect to control experimental conditions). On one hand, it is culturally appropriate – even mandatory – and therefore (presumably) ethical for field researchers to try to “fit in”; on the other hand, the better they fit in, the more inconspicuous they become, rendering their hosts potentially unwary of their continued researcher/observer activities even when they are thoroughly honest about their interests and goals.

Sociology and anthropology have tended to handle this challenge differently. The Von Hoffman/Horowitz debate and Erving Goffman’s famous (surreptitiously recorded against his wishes!!) lecture convey early sociological attitudes toward undercover research; Goode’s article updates the still-controversial sociological defense of “disguised observation”. In contrast, anthropologists’ history of doing fieldwork in colonized communities primed them to eschew methodological deception and -- especially in recent years -- to share their work with their interlocutors: Dona Davis is our example. (Singal’s short optional reading describes a flap over the fieldwork of Princeton sociology PhD Alice Goffman, Erving Goffman’s daughter. While not involving disguised observation, this work raises questions – relevant to some sociological and many anthropological fieldworkers – concerning their potentially conflicting responsibilities to ones hosts/informants vs ones professional colleagues. Relatedly, another optional reading (Lederman) compares professional anthropology’s and sociology’s research ethics codes.

Reading discussion:

Nicholas Von Hoffman et al. (1970) Sociological snoopers and journalistic moralizers. *Trans-Action* (May): 4-8.

Erving Goffman (1989) On fieldwork. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 18(2): 123-132

Erich Goode (1996) The ethics of deception in social research: a case study. *Qualitative Sociology* 19(1): 11-33

Dona Davis (1993) Unintended consequences: the myth of ‘the return’ in anthropological fieldwork. In Carolyn Brettell, ed., *When They Read What We Write*, pp. 27-35.

Complementing Davis, recall especially Marilyn Silverman and Graham Jones for other accounts of anthropological fieldwork ethics.

[OPTIONAL] Jesse Singal (2015) The internet accused Alice Goffman of faking details in her study of a black neighborhood. I went to Philadelphia to check. *New York Magazine*

(<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2015/06/i-fact-checked-alice-goffman-with-her-subjects.html>); Rena Lederman (2009) Comparing Ethics Codes and Conventions.

Anthropology News 51.

Journal entry #12 discussion.

Final journal entry plus the entire second half of your journal is due!
As before, include a self-assessment (see advice, p. 4). Please also include the first half of your journal (with my comments) again. Finish providing comments on other students’ paper proposals on Bb by midnight tonight.

Appendix 1: Assignments and Grading

1. Participation is worth 30% of your grade. Minimally acceptable “participation” means attendance: missing more than one week’s worth of meetings will significantly impact your participation so get in touch with me if an absence is unavoidable. Strong participation means cooperative, informed, substantive discussion in class and Blackboard. Engaging fellow students, not simply the professor, is one key to success. There are two formal participatory assignments:



A. Readings presentation: During the first part of each week’s meeting, students initiate discussions of the readings (see 2a below). Presentations ought to be 4-5 minutes long (you can read your write-up, or just talk from it) and ought to balance what you can think of as “selfless” and “selfish” engagement with the week’s reading assignment. That is, your presentation needs to **(1) provide a SUCCINCT review** of the main themes, arguments, and evidence offered by the readings’ authors (a “selfless” reading). In making sense of the authors’ key themes, you could contextualize them by looking for connections among the current and/or past week’s readings. Your presentation also needs to **(2) set up a question or issue** that grabbed you (a “selfish” reading that might not necessarily echo the authors’ main points) for the class to discuss together. “Set up” means provide the class with enough specific background to understand your focus; then articulate an enthusiasm, confusion, or critique, explore an implication, take a stand, etc. You are welcome to develop handouts, use the chalkboard, and so on. You are also welcome to come see me beforehand to discuss the material and your presentation strategy.



B. Journal presentations: During the second half of each week’s meeting, we will sample seminar participants’ journal writing. While we may not hear from everyone every week, each of you should come to class ready to read from that week’s journal entry. See below for journal-writing advice.

2. Written assignments are worth 70% of the grade. Written assignments can be brought to class or placed in the ANT 360 box in the Anthropology Department office (116 Aaron Burr).

Email attachments will not be accepted: please plan for that!

A. Journal (15% of grade first half; 20% second half): During the semester you will keep an ethnographic journal, **due as hard copies on the midterm week meeting and on the last day of class**. You will get comments on your first 6-week set to act on in improving your second 6-week set: please keep the comments you receive to turn in again with your second set. Aim for about 300-500 words (1 ½ - 2 double spaced pages). **Examples of past ANT 360 student journal entries** are posted on Bb: click the “Syllabus” tab on the left side of the ANT 360 homepage. For suggestions concerning the content of your entries, see **Appendix 2** below.

The ANT 360 ethnographic journal isn’t simply a reading-response record; nor is it simply a diary-like record of personal experiences and impressions. Instead, it is a hybrid of those two journaling styles: your weekly entries should **connect** your course readings and everyday experiences (past and present, academic and nonacademic).

Generally, sociocultural anthropology takes daily life experience seriously as an “**ethnographic**” object: that is, as worthy of **description, sociocultural interpretation, comparative analysis, and critical reflection**. Ethnographic attentiveness doesn’t come naturally to many of us; instead, it may be difficult at first and usually takes practice. Your journal is the place to apply what you’re learning from the readings and classroom discussion to your wider experience and, conversely, to bring “real life” experience to bear on more conventionally academic sources.

The challenge is to make ones more or less unarticulated responses explicit and, in that way, available for critical analysis. Memories, conversations, observations, media encounters, even classroom activities and other schoolwork – viewed from the unfamiliar angle of our readings—are all potentially grist for ethnographic journal writing. Each weekly seminar meeting will include a discussion of seminar members’ journal entries for that week. **See Appendix 2 for ideas but please don’t be limited by them.** Especially if you don’t get a chance to share yours during class, I encourage you to post your entries on Bb with informative titles.

B. Presentation write-up (5% of your grade): A 3 pp double-spaced write-up (600-750 words) related to your class presentation is **due no later than midnight on the day after your presentation day** (posted on Blackboard: see below). As a guide, devote about one-third of your presentation to a succinct overview of the main points of the readings (your “**selfless**” reading: focus on the authors’ arguments) and about two-thirds of your presentation to a discussion of one or two themes of special interest to you (your “**selfish**” reading).

Selfless reading: provide *specific background* on the aspects of the readings to which your discussion relates: classmates may not have noticed what you noticed! **Selfish reading:** this discussion might take the form of a critical reflection and/or a limited number of questions or confusions about particular arguments. You could focus on connections among the readings and/or on their application to some non-ANT 360 experience (but keep your presentation distinct from your journal entry for the week).

Post your presentation write-up as a new discussion thread on Blackboard (give it an informative name). Posting by the evening after class is fine – you are welcome to revise a bit to take account of the discussion. (If you anticipate trouble meeting this deadline, then get in touch with me beforehand.) You may also use subsequent journal entries as media for incorporating what you learned from the general discussion that day: clarifying, modifying, or elaborating the issues and questions you raised in class. No outside research is necessary or expected for your presentation.

C. Project proposal (ungraded): A 2 double-spaced page proposal (about 500 words) for your final paper is **due in class on (or before) our Week 9 class**. **You are more than welcome to consult me in advance to discuss your ideas or lack thereof!** Your proposal should include a one to one-and-a-half (double spaced) page rationale/description of your proposed topic together with a half page or so of sources (syllabus readings, library, internet, and other) and/or rationale for developing them. **If you anticipate that your sources will include interviewing or fieldwork, please see me before you begin!**

After I approve your project – but **no later than our Week 11 class** – post a revised version of it on Blackboard: there will be a Discussion board “forum” set up specifically for this purpose. To get the most out of this assignment, please consider highlighting a few of the issues about which you’d especially like to elicit criticism and advice – and – please also bear in mind that the earlier you post your revised proposal, the more likely you will be to receive lots of

comments from your colleagues. **This write-up may be incorporated, in whole or in part, in your final paper.**

D. Proposal peer commentary (5% of your grade): Read other students' paper proposals as they are posted on Blackboard and offer constructive advice and critique **no later than our Week 12 class** (5/3). "Yay!" and "boo!" comments (however verbose) won't earn you points. Point-worthy comments may be quite succinct but they must be substantive and reasonably specific: the "point" is to give the type of helpful feedback that you yourself would appreciate receiving. Therefore, please post comments on all those proposals about which you actually have something to say; no need to force a comment if no thoughts come to mind.

E. Final paper (25%): The final paper for this course is **due Dean's Date BEFORE 5pm**. It ought to be 2600-2800 words – that is, 10-11 pages, double-spaced, standard font size – not counting References Cited and any images. For citation format, check pp. 7-14 of the American Anthropological Association style guide (http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf) available on the ANT 360 Blackboard site, or follow the format used in your text, *Trades of the Trick*. Please remember to turn in a **hard copy only (no email attachments)**.

All final papers MUST engage a sampling of the semester's themes and readings explicitly: please treat class meetings as a series of working-group discussions that will support your individual research. Also, you are very welcome but not required to incorporate examples and insights from your ethnographic journal. Your paper—in **any of the following formats (or another of your own design)**—may be oriented around or incorporate interviewing and fieldwork (beyond the ethnographic attentiveness recorded in your ANT 360 journal writing): if you plan to use these interactive research strategies, please consult me beforehand. It may also be oriented around the analysis of media sources—including print media and theater, television, and film—some of which you may have begun exploring through your journal. Finally, your paper may extend course readings, videos, films, and presentations with additional library or archival sources. But no matter what additional sources you use and format you adopt, **your final paper must make use of the syllabus readings in a substantive manner**. Please consult me in developing your ideas and your sources!

Final Paper Format Suggestions:

1. Synthesize and critically reflect on an important course theme: use or adapt syllabus topics and weekly headnotes as springboards for your essay. Determine which course readings are relevant to your theme, remembering that most topics are elaborated outside of the units in which they were introduced. Please consult me before the proposal deadline if you would like suggestions. **Variante: develop a key theme from your journal** by rereading your entries and developing both its reading engagements and experiential connections. (Feel free to explore the journal-writing advice in **Appendix 2** for other substantive ideas.)

2. Redesign some aspect of the ANT 360 syllabus: make a persuasive argument for the inclusion of a set of readings (or other media) not yet on the syllabus. This option challenges you to think about course design explicitly and in practical terms.

If you would like to write an essay redesigning the syllabus, you would need to come up with a topical unit with specific readings. Discuss the key themes of each reading, how those readings (through their themes and emphases) might work together—what issues do they pose

for discussion as a result of their contrasts and partial overlaps? —and the problems an instructor might face in helping students to make sense of them.

The essay should also address how the new unit fits into the course generally. For example: what would be removed from the existing syllabus to make space for the new additions and why? How would you arrange or sequence the new material and why? What difference would the new readings make for students' understanding of other key issues raised in the course? That is, make as explicit as you can the rationale behind your new emphases (your sense of what is important and how these things are connected) in relation to the course as a whole.

3. Write a review essay: Beginning with one interesting, provocative syllabus item, discuss it in the context of the course readings and themes; then move outwards by 1) exploring key works engaged by the author and by 2) investigating works that cite and discuss your initial source (using a citation index or online search tool). To uncover connections, ask yourself to what conversations is this work a response (and vice versa: how was this work responded to)? Insofar as the sources you discover belong to different disciplinary traditions—e.g., anthropology; science or performance studies; social psychology; history, etc.—think about how the styles of research that different authors employ shape their emphases and silences.

Final papers are due on “Dean’s Date” before 5 pm.

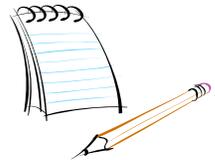
Place your paper in the ANT 360 box in the Anthro office (116 Aaron Burr)

I don't accept email attachments so please plan ahead!

Appendix 2: Journal writing ideas

(These ideas may also be useful for the final paper.)

Each week, one class meeting will be devoted to reading and discussing excerpts from students' journals. The point of the ANT 360 journal—in which you'll reflect on course readings/topics in light of everyday experience (and vice-versa)—is to cultivate “ethnographic” attentiveness. Your journal entries may begin the semester inclining toward reading responses or toward diary-like descriptions of contemporary or remembered experiences. However, ethnographic attentiveness means cultivating connections between “book” knowledge (in this case, our weekly reading themes) and your own “experiential” knowledge. You can use your journal also as a place to work out connections between the course readings/discussions and your emergent final paper ideas. **Sample journal entries have been posted on Blackboard to give you a sense for what I mean.**



Your experiences may include online searches (collecting and evaluating useful links and writing

a synopsis of what you discovered) or viewing and then writing about relevant performances, videos and other media: ideas can be found throughout the syllabus and on the Bb “Readings” page. Here are a few more ideas:

1. Pay attention to how the people you know use the words “know” and “believe” (and their equivalents): ‘I believe you’, ‘if what you say is true, then...’, ‘To tell the truth...’, etc. Collect several examples of each and be sure to note/describe their relevant (institutional/situational) contexts as best you can. Useful for Week 1, 2 and elsewhere.
2. Pay attention to everyday deceptions, misdirection, half-truths, and so on, developing an awareness of their contextual circumstances: write one up, discussing their social rationales, effects, and/or meanings and their ethics/politics. When you write these accounts up in your journal, work to situate your descriptions rather than taking them out of context (and, in that way, rendering them generic); at the same time, think about the sorts of information you need to leave out to protect the participants’ privacy and the difficulties you may have in achieving a balance between descriptive adequacy and ethical care. Useful for Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.
3. As a subset of #2, think concretely about your own “impression management” (a Goffman idea): the ways in which you alter your self-presentation in different social situations, not always deliberately, to make an impression on other people. Develop a working typology of these qualified truths/untruths and/or an argument (with examples) about why such a typology would be misleading. Useful for Weeks 1, 2, 3, 9, 10 and elsewhere
4. “Definition of the situation”: be alert to the ways in which the definitions of social situations are argued over or negotiated (in your own experience, or in stories your friends tell). Practice describing social “situations” in ways that highlight the extent to which (and how) they emerge *in interaction* (rather than being “givens” or facts already “out there” for people to encounter). Recognizing that some situations are more clearly negotiated while others are more clearly pre-structured, what patterns emerge in your investigation? In what ways are these negotiations ethically ordered (or, alternatively, in what ways are they political)? Useful throughout the semester
5. “Y’know what I just heard?”: collect “hearsay”, rumors, or gossip—or follow up on an item of common knowledge that you used to think was ‘true’ but have since learned was only a campus ‘legend’. Try to track down sources of the accounts; see if you can find out what is ‘true’ and what is ‘fiction’ (or in some sense not true) about it. Feel free to discuss with your informants in what ways they consider their accounts true or not true and, beyond that, what their criteria are for evaluating the stories they hear and tell aesthetically, ethically, and otherwise. Useful for Weeks 1, 2, 7, 8 and elsewhere
6. Chose a reality TV show (or the equivalent) to watch. Write a journal entry of about one page describing the kinds of deception employed; discuss their functions (and/or apparent aims) in making the show entertaining. Assess the “effectiveness” of deception in making the show entertaining; also discuss their politics and ethics. Follow this up by discussing “what’s entertaining (and why)?” about a relevant show that you and your friends have seen together. Useful for Week 4 and elsewhere

7. How common is performance magic as a hobby among Princeton students? What about faculty? What about family members? See if your friends, or friends of friends are magicians or have dabbled in magical illusionism. Develop brief oral histories of the folks you discover: how did they get interested? How and with whom did they develop their skills? See if you can explore other 360 course themes in these discussions. Useful for Week 5 and 1, 3, 4 and elsewhere

8. Watch recent movies with stage magic themes (e.g., *The Illusionist*, *The Prestige*, *Hugo*). Review them, comparing how they represent illusionists and the “culture” (values, beliefs, practices) of modern magic. To push this further, find older films about or by stage magicians and review them comparatively with similar questions in mind. Other films explore hoaxes and fraud in literary and artistic worlds: for example, *F for Fake*, *Hoax*, and more Useful for Week 5, and 1, 3, 4 and elsewhere

9. Using an online database or search engine, choose one major print media source like the *NYTimes* and a limited time period (e.g., one month), and search for interconnections among some/all of the following key words: 1) magic, magical, magician (and related); 2) science, scientific, scientist (and related); 3) deception, deceptive, deceit, misdirection, decoy (and related: e.g., appearance) and their opposites (reality, real, actual, evident, transparent, disclosure). Analyze your results, paying attention to meanings in context, and providing examples and citations. Useful throughout the semester

10. Explore the often blurry distinction between fraudulent (unethical) work vs. incompetent (poor quality) work in science and social science: how do professionals of different kinds tell the difference? Consider making an appointment with a professor with whom you are already familiar to discuss how the distinction is made in *their* field. (It makes sense to let the person know at the outset that you’re doing this as part of a course assignment.) In this context, consider watching films like *F for Fake*; *Hoax*; or *Capote*; and take a look at books like Janet Malcolm *The Journalist and the Murderer* and/or Anthony Grafton *Forgers and Their Critics*. Useful for Week 8 and following

11. Talk with a scientist or two (and/or science majors or graduate students) about their research, asking them to describe examples of what they consider “ethical” and “unethical” behavior. And/or: find ways of talking with them about “trust” in science. That is, like the rest of us, scientists rely on one another to do honest work. But arguably unlike in their own or anyone else’s “ordinary life”, scientists also pride themselves on a special kind of disciplined skepticism. So it makes sense to ask whether your scientist informants can describe examples of situations in which they have relied on other people’s work without checking and situations in which they have had to check. Are there certain *kinds* of situations in which one usually or always checks and other *kinds* in which one rarely checks? Useful for Week 6, 10, 11 and 12

12. Nose around online and elsewhere for sources illustrating how performance magic is used as a contemporary means of science advocacy, and/or as a means of unmasking fraudulent paranormal claims (e.g., children’s books like Freidhoffer, *Magic Tricks*, *Science Facts*; events and publications associated with *The Skeptic* and *Skeptical Inquirer*; shows available online and off, like *Magic: The Science of Illusion*). Develop journal entries reporting on and evaluating what you find: for example, how do contemporary skeptics handle the kinds of science/magic ambiguities discussed by our readings? Pushing deeper, investigate directly the sources being

unmasked. This is the tip of a very large iceberg: something like ‘the politics of public science literacy’ and ‘the sociocultural contexts of science in America’ to which several of our readings allude. Useful throughout the semester

13. Volunteer for a psychology experiment, which may or may not involve deception – or, recall an experiment you’ve already participated in (as a volunteer or for course credit) in psychology or another department (economics? politics?). Write about your experience afterwards paying special attention to how the experiment was explained to you beforehand and to the post-experiment explanation or “debriefing” (if any). Or, see if any of your friends are taking an introductory psych course or are majoring in psychology or some other field in which experiments are conducted with human subjects: if they are willing, ask them to describe their experimental experiences. If they cannot do that, respect that restriction while inquiring into its rationale. As our readings illustrate, psychology isn’t the only field that uses human subjects in experiments either in labs or “in the field”: have you or any of your friends participated? Or, alternatively, have any of you found yourselves to be in an experiment “in the field” that you didn’t explicitly sign up for (I’m thinking about the Facebook story and much more)? If so, describing these experiences would be interesting. Useful for Week 10, 11, 12 and elsewhere