

Anthropology 1120 Essay Assignment: A Review Essay

This outline covers all written assignments for the term. They are:

- Prospectus – Worth 15% Due in Class February 7 (Week 5)
- Introductory Paragraph(s) – Worth 10% Due in Class on March 13 (Week 10)
- Essay – Worth 25% Due in Class April 3 (Week 13)

Introduction

The purpose of the essay assignment is to allow you to explore a topic of specific interest related to the anthropology of British Columbia in greater detail than the course permits. I ask you to review two articles or book chapters, much like the review essays commonly written by anthropologists in academic journals. Papers of this sort require that you choose two sources (book chapters, academic articles) on a particular topic, summarize the source material, and offer some evaluation of their value to the topic at hand.

A second possibility is a variation on the review theme. You have the option of attending a talk in the Aboriginal Speakers' Series, taking place this spring at Douglas College. Then, instead of a review of two articles, you would review one article and one talk. Note: the talks are on the topic of 'reconciliation.' The book or article you review with the talk should also be about reconciliation in some way.¹

In both cases, I expect you to submit a prospectus outlining your topic, tentative thesis, and source material. Then, a few weeks later, I require you to submit your introductory paragraph or paragraphs. I see the preliminary work as critical to developing a sound essay and I will provide timely comments on both preliminary assignments.

I encourage you to spend a week or so considering a topic and then consult with me about your plans. I am happy to discuss topics and sources with you and, later in the term, the details of your analysis.

General Format for Final Essays

Your papers must be typewritten in sentences and paragraphs, double spaced, and have one inch margins. You should aim for an essay of about seven or eight pages, or, of about 2000 words. Please include a title page and an original title which gives the paper some direction. Your paper must be built around a thesis statement. Evidence supporting your thesis will be presented in the body of the paper. You must acknowledge all quotations and paraphrased material with proper citations and provide a list of references cited for each source used in the text at the end of the paper. If you do not cite your sources sufficiently, your paper will be returned to you with a grade of zero.

Please note: good writing counts. Sloppy prose or arguments that are hard to follow will result in a lower grade. I would encourage you to make time to prepare more than one draft of your essay and to have it proof-read by a friend.

¹ As of January 17, 2008, two talks have been scheduled. One is by the Lieutenant Governor of BC, Steven Point. That talk is on February 26. The other is by Jessie Sutherland, an expert in reconciliation. That talk is on March 18, 2008. Both talks are scheduled for the afternoon.

Essay Submission and Late Penalties

The prospectus is due in class on February 7. I will deduct 1 point / week starting February 15. Your introductory paragraphs are due in class on March 13. I will deduct 1 point / week starting March 15. Essays are due in class on April 3. I will deduct 2 points / week if it is late. No assignments will be accepted after the final exam. All assignments must be submitted in hardcopy.

Operational Details for a Review Essay

Several steps are required for producing an essay of high quality. They include:

- a) Choosing a topic of interest to you related to the themes and material of the course. The topic must be related to British Columbia and First Nations people (past or present). If you have doubts about your topic, please see me.
- b) Using library research, select two journal articles, books, or book chapters about your topic. No more than one article, report, or chapter from a single issue of a journal or book is allowed. The documents you choose must be anthropological in nature and taken from scholarly publications only. These publications might include: *BC Studies*, *American Anthropologist*, *American Antiquity*, *The Handbook of North American Indians* (Vols. 6, 7, 12). If you are unsure about a source, please ask me. Class readings are not acceptable, although other chapters in the books that our articles have come from are good choices for many topics.

OR

Using library research, select one journal article, book, or book chapter about reconciliation. By reconciliation, I am talking about reconciling the colonial past of British Columbia and its impact on native cultures. You might look for books or chapters about the impact of colonialism, missionaries, or residential schools on native people. Or, topics related to reconciliation would also include land claims and treaties. This book will be paired with one talk in the Speakers' Series. Again, the document you choose must be anthropological in nature and taken from scholarly publications only. If you are unsure about a source, please ask me. Class readings are not acceptable, although other chapters in the books that our articles have come from are good choices for many topics.

- c) Preparing a prospectus outlining your topic, the two sources, and a tentative thesis. (This is due on February 7, 2008.)
- d) Writing an introductory paragraph which tells me you topic, the sources you are reviewing, and your thesis. This thesis will include a statement about the direction of your critique. (This is due on March 13, 2008.)
- e) Writing an essay which discusses the topic and its coverage of your articles. You must:
 - a. Introduce the paper: Here, you should identify the theme of the essay and your thesis.
 - b. Summarize the articles: The summaries should emphasize the material within the sources that pertains to your topic.
 - c. Identify the value of the source material to your topic. You might ask whether or not the sources are actually useful for studying this topic. If you find that your source materials are weak or not overly useful, let me know in the paper.

- d. Apply what you have learned in the course lectures and readings: You should demonstrate the relevance of the sources to BC Anthropology. This is the context for your summaries.
- e. Draw a conclusion: This usually happens at the end of the paper and often includes a restatement of your thesis with a general review of the summarized material.

The goal is to demonstrate your insights into anthropological research about BC's First Nations people through the evaluation of the sources. There are components of both summarizing your articles and critiquing or commenting on them based on the materials in the course. And, while I expect to see each of the above components in your essay, the actual structure of your text might vary. Some of you might write summaries and then the critiques; others might integrate those two components.

Requirements for the Prospectus (Due on February 7, 2008)

You must submit a 350 word statement about your research plans. I expect that you will tell me what your topic is and provide me with the citations to the two articles, book chapters, reports, etc. you have chosen to use. If you are doing the reconciliation topic, I want to know what book you will pair with one of the speeches. I also expect a general or tentative thesis related to the topic and a brief discussion of the relationship of the articles to that thesis. Please also provide a working title for your essay. The prospectus must be typewritten and presented in sentences and paragraphs.

Requirements for the Introductory Paragraph (Due on March 13, 2008)

You must submit a paragraph or two which you expect to use to introduce your essay. (This should be the actual introductory paragraph you would submit with your final essay if the final essay was due today.) I expect anything from 1-2 paragraphs and one half to a full page of text. In the paragraph, you will introduce the topic covered by your two sources. You will also provide your thesis statement outlining the direction of your critique of the sources. A statement of introduction for each of the two sources would also be useful.

Note: if you are doing the reconciliation topic and have not attended your talk by March 13, you must still submit the introductory paragraph. The paragraph will be based on the article you are pairing with the talk.

Evaluation of the Essays (Due April 3, 2008)

Marks are based on:

- Writing succinct and effective summaries of each source;
- Evaluating the source material;
- Connecting the article topics to the themes of the course;
- Showing insight into the anthropology of BC First Nations;
- Writing in proper essay format, including paragraphs, sentences, and using proper bibliographic citations (see below).

Other Notes

- Think about writing the review essay for a friend who is going to conduct research on your topic next semester. Your goal is to tell your friend about the sources you read and to describe their value to his or her upcoming research project.

- I would recommend you talk with me about your topic. I can help you refine the specific details of your study and direct you towards appropriate sources.
- Examples of review essays (that is, reviews of multiple sources on general topics) are available in most scholarly journals. *BC Studies*, for example, publishes review essays in almost every issue. Check out the current issue (Summer/Autumn 2004) for an example of a review essay about environmental history in BC. It is on page 287.
- This paper is not simply a general research paper where you are permitted to cite only two sources. This is a specific kind of essay in which you summarize your source material and attend to the value of the sources to the topic at hand. You will do poorly if you try and write a general research paper for this assignment.
- You do not need to cite me or our lectures. Rather, if you use some general information about BC anthropology or history, cite the readings from the course. (Remember, these citations would be in addition to your two main sources.)
- If it makes it easier for you to organize your thoughts, you are welcome to break up your paper into subsections with section headings.
- Websites are not acceptable sources unless they are cleared with me in advance.
- Citing your source material, acknowledging quotations properly, and identifying paraphrased material is part of a proper and fair intellectual process. Please give credit where credit is due. You will receive a grade of zero if you are caught plagiarizing the work of others and you may be reported to the college dean. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, ask me or pick up the Douglas College guide to plagiarism. (Note: I have identified examples of plagiarized work several times in the past two years.)
- You may cite your material using the MLA, APA or anthropological citation systems. I have added a short guide to citing materials in anthropology and would encourage any of you planning to continue in anthropology to use this method. It is relatively straightforward and will be required for essays in anthropology at SFU or UBC.
- Your references cited page must have complete citations including both the name of the book or journal and the chapter title or article title.

A Short Guide to Citations and Bibliographies in Anthropology

Anthropologists use a system of ‘internal footnoting’ in their writing. The sources of all direct quotations must be cited in this way, as should any information paraphrased by you. Then, only the sources actually cited in the paper are listed on the ‘References Cited’ page at the end of your essay. The general style is illustrated with the following example from a research paper.

Note: I am happy to answer any questions about this style. Other examples are found throughout the *Handbook of North American Indians* series, available in the library.

Sample Text

First, Ellen and Harris note that the representation of traditional ecological knowledge results in its presentation *outside* of culture, despite a regular call to stop separating this knowledge from the people and situations in which it is generated, reproduced and transformed (Ellen and Harris 2000:25-26). In my mind, the sum of the data points on topographical maps is not equal to the entire social context despite the fact that the data is often used that way. Second, it is assumed that the value of TEK is derived from an origin in lived experience (Kuhn and Duerden 1996:74). Nadasdy comments:

... there are those who do not subscribe to this rigid distinction between humans and the environment [and] ... in the absence of a strict separation between humans and the environment, the very idea of separating ‘ecological’ from ‘non-ecological’ knowledge becomes nonsensical (Nadasdy 1999:4).

To use a Western definition of the physical environment denies native peoples the opportunity to teach me about their knowledge and conception of the world.

Explanations

Citations are offered after quoted and paraphrased material. Direct quotations shorter than three sentences are typed directly into the essay text and offset with quotation marks. Direct quotations longer than three lines are set off from the rest of the text using single spacing and indentations.

References Cited

Ellen, Roy F. and Holly Harris 2000 Introduction. In *Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and its Transformations: Critical Anthropological Perspectives*, Roy F. Ellen, Peter Parkes, and Alan Bisker, eds. Toronto: Harwood Academic Publishers, pp 1-35. (This is an example of a BOOK CHAPTER)

Kuhn, Richard G. and Frank Duerden 1996 A Review of Traditional Environmental Knowledge: An Interdisciplinary Canadian Perspective. *Culture* 16(1):71-84. (This is an example of a JOURNAL ARTICLE)

Maffi, Luisa 2001 *On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Language, Knowledge, and the Environment*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press. (This is an example of a BOOK)

Nadasdy, Paul. 1999. The Politics of TEK: Power and the ‘Integration’ of Knowledge. *Arctic Anthropology*. 36(1-2):1-18. (This is an example of a JOURNAL ARTICLE)