

Anthropology 1120
Essay Assignment: A Comparative Book Review
Essay Option 1 of 2

Note: The digital version of this handout contains hyperlinks.

This outline covers three written assignments. They are:

- [Prospectus](#) – Worth 10%
- Introductory Paragraph(s) – Worth 10%
- Essay – Worth 20%

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.

To complete this assignment, 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 If you do not cite your sources sufficiently, your paper will be returned to you with a grade of zero.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.

Essay Submission and Late Penalties

The prospectus is due in class on February 20. I will deduct 1 point / week starting after class on Feb 20. Your introductory paragraphs are due in class on March 12. I will deduct 1 point / week starting after class on March 12. Essays are due in class on April 4. I will deduct 2 points / week if it is late starting after class on April 4. No assignments will be accepted after the final quiz on April 11.

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* peoples (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.
- c) Preparing a prospectus outlining your topic, the two sources, and a tentative thesis. (This is due on February 20.)
- d) Writing an introductory paragraph which tells me your 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 12.)
- 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

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.

Note: Please hand in two hard copies of your prospectus. I will return one copy with comments and keep the other.

Requirements for the Introductory Paragraph

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.

Evaluation of the Essays

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).
- My grading sheet is attached to this handout.

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 [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.

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)

Anthropology 1120
Review of Sources Essay: Style Sheet
Writing the Introduction and the Paper

Now that your prospectus is finished, you must turn your attention to critiquing your sources drafting your essay. I ask you to submit a one page (usually one paragraph) introduction to your essay. To complete this part of the assignment, you will have to have some idea of the direction for the entire paper. I recognize that writing the introduction before the rest of the paper is finished can be challenging. Certainly, I would not expect that the introduction of your final paper would be the same as the version you submit on March 10. That said, the introduction to a paper like this – and your organization of that introduction – says a lot about the likelihood of writing a good paper by the end of term.

A good introductory paragraph for an essay like this would include, at minimum:

- Statement of the topic that unites the two sources
- A short introduction to each source including the name of the source, the author(s) and the date of publication
- A direction (thesis?) for the paper pointing the reader towards your feelings, opinions and impressions of the sources

Models for a Review Essay

1. Introduction
2. Reviews and Critiques
 - a. Review 1
 - b. Critique 1
 - c. Review 2
 - d. Critique 2
3. Synthesis: Compare and Contrast
 - a. Discussion of Other Themes
4. Conclusion
 - a. Restate Direction or Conclusion

OR

1. Introduction
2. Reviews
 - a. Review 1
 - b. Review 2
3. Critiques
 - a. Critique 1
 - b. Critique 2
4. Conclusion
 - a. Compare and Contrast
 - b. Restate Direction

Comparative Review Essay Grading Form for Anthropology 1120 – BC First Nations (For Final Essay)

	Great	Good	OK	Oops!	Marks
<p>Essay Introduction</p> <p>Gives paper direction by introducing the two sources, topic, and your opinion.</p>	<p>Well written and well organized introduction which gives clear direction to the paper and your evaluation of the sources.</p>	<p>Introduction is well stated and sharply focused.</p>	<p>Introduction is vague, poorly stated, or is not appropriate. Your evaluation of the sources is not clear.</p>	<p>Introduction is missing some or elements. Paper is not introduced properly or effectively</p>	<p>/2</p>
<p>Article Summaries (2)</p>	<p>Summary is clear, concise and hits the main points. Summary sets up the evaluation. Summary is thoughtful.</p>	<p>Summary hits the main points of the article or book. Reader gains some insights.</p>	<p>Summary reviews the basics of the text but misses some of the points. Summary is basic or general. Reader gains few insights.</p>	<p>Summary is unclear and leaves reader with questions about what text is about.</p>	<p>/3</p> <p>/3</p>
<p>Critique: identify the value of the source material to your topic. (2)</p>	<p>Critique considers carefully the value, good and bad, of the sources in question. Reader knows value of the source to the larger topic.</p>	<p>Critique offers some consideration of value of the source. Some consideration of the author's ideas.</p>	<p>Critique is limited in its consideration of the value of the source. Critique focuses primarily on writing style and not ideas.</p>	<p>Critique is unclear, vague, or non-existent.</p>	<p>/3</p> <p>/3</p>

Applies course material or otherwise demonstrates relevance of both sources to Anthropology of BC	Link between summaries, critiques and anthropology of BC is clear, articulate, and insightful.	BC anthropology is evaluated with reference to sources, but the connections are limited.	Anthropology of BC is mentioned but only because the books are about BC.	No connection to the Anthropology of BC is made.	/2
Proper and effective use of quotations and citations	Excellent use of quotations to illustrate your points. Citations are clear and presented consistently.	Some quotations used. Citations are used properly.	Citations are not always given. Format of citations is inconsistent. Few, if any, quotations.	No citations or no quotations.	/2
Grammar, spelling, style	Few or no errors in spelling and grammar. Concluding paragraph is robust. Paper is well organized and easy to read.	Several spelling and/or grammatical errors that do not interfere with meaning. Concluding paragraph draws paper together adequately. Paper has decent organization.	Many spelling and/or grammatical errors that interfere with meaning. Poorly articulated conclusion or a conclusion that doesn't draw themes of paper together. The paper is hard to follow because of poor organization.	So many spelling and/or grammatical errors that the meaning is lost. No conclusion. Organization? What's that?	/2
Total Mark /20					/20
Additional Comments					