

ANTH 1010-100 • University of Virginia • Spring 2017

# Introduction to Anthropology

EXAM 2 – POSTMORTEM – APRIL 19, 2017

## OVERVIEW

Like the last of its kind, this memo is meant to answer questions you might have about the second exam and give you an overall sense of how you all did across the board. I was once again very pleased with the general outcome. This exam was harder than the last, yet the grade distribution ended up the same or even, by some standards, slightly better.

I have once more included some graphs at the end showing aggregate data for each essay question, each exam, and each student's projected course grade as of today. (The projected scores used to plot this data rely on your midterm participation grade report, and they forecast of your weighted average on exams and quizzes.) Again, we do not grade on a curve. But as you can see our distributions are still fairly normal for a course of this size and level. As always, let us know if you still have questions about the exam after reading this memo!

## SHORT ANSWERS – SAMPLE ANSWERS BELOW IN ITALICS

2. Briefly explain why the Western Apache say “whiteman” jokes are especially dangerous.

*These jokes place the butt in a position of subordination to the joker by parodying the obnoxious and arrogant “whiteman.” The danger is that the butt may not feel sufficiently close to the joker to welcome such teasing, or take the suggestion that he’s subordinate (and dirty, or stupid, or promiscuous, etc.) too seriously. Compared with other Apache joking styles, this one is especially risky because it indexes a serious, traumatic history of Anglo-American violence and oppression.*

<b>Q2 Rubric</b>	Showed some effort, knowledge?	1 point
	Understood the JOKING style?	+2 points (1 if close or muddled)
	Got the sociocultural DANGER?	+2 points (1 if close or muddled)

4. Briefly explain why marrying a father’s brother’s child (i.e., a paternal parallel cousin) is considered an ideal union for Awlad 'Ali Bedouins.

*Crucially, descent and residence are reckoned through the father’s line, so a woman’s offspring belong to her husband’s family, not her own. Paternal parallel cousin marriage strengthens patrilineal bonds and furthers local ideas of blood purity and honor. In practical terms, this kind of cousin marriage keeps children in their mother’s family, and helps ensure the standing of a wife in relation to her husband (even though, in principle, it also means she remains doubly subordinate to her father’s honor).*

<b>Q4 Rubric</b>	Showed some effort, knowledge?	1 point
	Got the PATRILINEAL context?	+2 points (1 if close or muddled)
	Got the sociocultural EFFICACY?	+2 points (1 if close or muddled)

6. Using bullet points, identify and gloss THREE empirical observations supporting the argument that race is a biological myth.

*Some good options:*

- *Non-concordance of traits, meaning traits assigned racial significance pattern independently and in complex ways, not as a complete bundle.*
- *We find greater genetic variation on average within putative racial groups than we do between them (and overall human variation is, biologically speaking, infinitesimal).*
- *The cultural paradigms for racial categories are variable in different times and places.*
- *Even in a single system of racial classification the categories are never rigid and fixed.*
- *Racial categorization has at its heart a spurious notion of “white purity,” as seen in the “one-drop rule,” or even the way we say President Obama is black, but not white.*

[Many of you noted that the human family is closely related. While true and relevant, this is not on its own sufficient evidence for race as a biological myth. Remember, we are also *very* closely related to chimpanzees and gorillas, but these are entirely different species. In some cases, you fell into the problem of reproducing the myth of racial biology while trying to marshal the counterevidence. Finally, it was not enough to say that race is a “social construction” — while an important *conclusion* to be drawn from this evidence, on its own it amounts to hardly more (and maybe less) than a restatement of the thesis, not evidence for it.]

<b>Q6 Rubric</b>	Showed some effort, knowledge?	1 point
	Listed THREE observations?	+1 point per valid datum
	GLOSSED the data adequately?	+1 point for coherent glosses

8. Briefly explain the difference between sex and gender. Identify ONE empirical observation showing how gender is culturally relative.

*Sex refers to one’s apparently male or female anatomy, and/or genetic makeup, and is relatively binary (though there are substantial numbers of people who are anatomically intersex or genetically ambiguous with regard to sex). Gender refers to the much more expansive notion of sexual identity, the values and standards of which are culturally given and highly variable plays on the nature of real sexual (biological) difference. Plus, you needed one clear example showing this distinction — like how Arapesh men are seen as inherently nurturing.*

[There were many possible examples, but you had to use a valid, meaningful one. Also, some of you slipped into talking about “identity” when talking about *sex*, or saying gender was simply something “you can choose,” both of which aren’t quite right, for inverse reasons. Identity is already a matter of cultural significance, but it is not idiosyncratic — that is, the force of social norms is real, even if (and especially when!) one wants to challenge them.]

<b>Q8 Rubric</b>	Showed some effort, knowledge?	1 point
	Got sex / gender CONTRAST?	+2 points (1 if close or muddled)
	Gave a valid EXAMPLE?	+2 points (1 if close or muddled)

9. Using bullet points, identify and gloss THREE ways in which **archaeology** has contributed to the wider intellectual project of anthropology.

*Some options:*

- *It provides much deeper time depth to our understanding of cultural patterns.*
- *It tries to account for change over time (through diachronic analysis).*
- *It offers a window onto the past that complements, and complicates, written records.*
- *Much of its data relates to ordinary life, getting beyond great-man or major-event history.*
- *It forces scholars to theorize social landscapes and human spaces as they relate to cultural worldviews and practices.*
- *It gives us fresh perspectives on contemporary debates, as with the way race and slavery at the University of Virginia are inscribed in the Foster site;*
- *It turns our attention to material culture, showing how human lives are entangled with human things, and with the ecosystems we inhabit.*
- *Cultural relativism is sustained and enriched through archaeological methods — different times, different spaces, different norms and ideas.*

[In general, the bullet points could be shorter than that. However, not so short that they fail to show a clear understanding of how archaeology contributes to the discipline’s wider project. For example, simple one- or two-word answers, like “material culture,” while not incorrect, were not enough for full credit unless they were fleshed out or further glossed.]

<b>Q9 Rubric</b>	Showed some effort, knowledge?	1 point
	Listed THREE characteristics?	+1 point per valid reason
	Showed the wider CONTRIBUTION?	+1 point, based on a holistic appraisal

**ESSAYS – SAMPLE ANSWERS IN APPENDIX, PHOTOCOPIED**

The response rates show you split evenly on the two options in Part I, but gravitated toward “cultural relativism” in Part II. The grade distribution for question 7 (about race) was generally lower as compared with the rest. I have some ideas about why, but overall this is not especially significant.

As with Exam 1, I’ve asked several of your classmates for permission to circulate their A-range answers as sample essays. There are two samples for each question. An appendix to this memo with the sample essays can be found in a separate document on Collab. For more on the standards we have in mind as we evaluate your essays, see the letter-grade rubric in the course policies document.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS**

Finally, on the next page of this memo, I’ve provided those charts with aggregate data. I’ll offer individual late-semester grade reports soon.

*Just a couple more weeks left, everyone! –RIA*

