Anthropology 89: Culture and Society: Honors Section
(draft syllabus subject to change)

Through intensive reading and discussions, this honors seminar aims to help students better understand the major theories and research methods in social and cultural anthropology; topics of discussion include subsistence patterns, differentiation and stratification, social organizations, power and politics, and religious symbolism. Moreover, the seminar will pay special attention to the theory of social exchange and examine the past and present state in the anthropological study of gift economy.

Students will read Marcel Mauss’s classic on gift exchange and a number of supplementary articles on social exchange in contemporary societies around the globe. Students will be required to do presentations, to conduct a mini research project on social exchange, and, based on their readings, discussion, and research, to write a short research paper (5-8 pages) on gift-giving or social exchange in general. The paper is due on March 21 (Monday).

Grade will be based on: (1) attendance and participation (20 points); (2) presentation (15 points); and (3) research paper (65 points).

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Week 1. Introduction and Organization (Jan. 6)

Week 2. Gift Exchange and Social Communication (Jan. 13)


Week 3. Of Person and Things (Jan. 20)


**Week 4. Contested Generosity (Jan. 27)**


**Week 5. Gift-giving and Social Solidarity (Feb. 3)**


**Week 6. Gifts and Personal Networks (Feb. 10)**


**Week 7. The Gender of the Gift (Feb. 17)**


**Week 8. Morality and Emotionality in the Gift (Feb. 24)**


**Week 9. The Enigma of the Gift (Mar. 3)**

Week 10. Research conference (Mar. 10)
  Discussion of student projects.

Week 11. Research conference (Mar. 15)
  Discussion of student projects.