



# ANTH222

## Wealth, Poverty and Consumption

S2 Day 2015

*Dept of Anthropology*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

ANTH150 or 12cp or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

We are surrounded by economic activity and yet often oblivious to it, like fish in water. Is greed universal? Is a free market inevitable? If Western societies are so wealthy, why do we feel unable to meet our needs and expectations? This unit explores wealth and poverty across cultures, examining the diverse ways people organise their economic life, decide who gets what, and determine what is valuable. From classical studies in anthropology to contemporary events like consumer fads, stock fraud, real estate bubbles, and corporate bailouts, we explore how economic phenomena cut across cultures, uniting what may appear to be different sorts of societies. This unit explores cultural diversity in a range of areas: shopping, gift giving, money, status seeking, trade, advertising, exploitation, and even get-rich-quick schemes. Across many cultures, we study the effects of the corporation, commoditisation, global trade, colonialism, materialism, and a range of other contemporary economic forces affecting the way that people consume. From cargo cults to The Secret, Native American potlatches to bank-busting weddings, Fair Trade to foraging, we find that humans, including ourselves, may be stranger than we think but not all that different from each other, and even that we are connected with those that appear to live a world away.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Develop familiarity with anthropological approaches to economic institutions and

transactions.

Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.

Question commonly held and taken for granted assumptions about what is 'natural' or 'normal' human economic experience.

Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.

Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.

Analyze how cultural difference affects the interpretation and practice of economic transactions and institutions in different societies.

Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of supporting evidence and data.

Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

## General Assessment Information

### ASSESSMENT RATIONALE

To do well in this unit you will need more than just a good memory and an ability to accumulate facts. As a student you will be helped to grasp new concepts, develop analytical techniques, and improve your research skills in the field of economic anthropology. You will be encouraged to develop your analytic capacity and your skills in written and oral communication.

In the assessments in this unit, you will be encouraged to make connections between the concerns and problems of intellectual life, and those of everyday life, both public and private. I hope that you will be encouraged to use your creativity and flexibility in problem solving when confronted by these assessment tasks, applying them to the unfamiliar and challenging environment of the cultural analysis of human economies. *This also means, however, that wherever appropriate, you should employ materials from the unit in the assessments; failure to do so will be considered a sign that the student is unfamiliar with the materials from the unit.* For example, a research essay that does not make explicit reference to material from both lectures and readings will be considered a sign that the student is unfamiliar with these materials, and not performing adequately with regard to expectations.

Respect for others and cross-cultural understanding, in both a local and international context, are the hallmarks of teaching and learning in the Faculty of Arts, but they are also a central set of issues for anyone working on issues of economic inequality. In anthropology we focus on economic institutions and interactions in local contexts, in all their messy complexity. This should encourage students to see cross-cultural differences, not merely as obstacles to creating a more just world, but as the source of concepts about universal justice, economic inequality,

and shared values.

As one of its goals for teaching and learning, the Division has set itself the task of helping you to improve your ability to work in cooperation with other members of a team. I must admit to some nervousness about team- or group-based assignments because I know that the demands placed upon you often make organizing a group to meet for these assignments very difficult. I will ask you to participate in group presentations in tutorial (see below) as a way of demonstrating how the different principles that we discuss might intersect, conflict, or build upon each other.

Although this form of assessment is relatively new, I will try to make sure that the work you do to produce this cooperative presentation might be made to carry over to your individual project.

Assessment tasks and feedback procedures have been extensively redesigned in this unit to provide students with more appropriate practice of their academic skills and an opportunity to prove their learning in different media. In addition, the timetable of the assessments will allow us to return feedback to students in time for them to be able to incorporate that feedback into subsequent assessments. These are all responses to teaching evaluation and critique by participants in previous units.

(Please note: the preceding section is not original. Sections are paraphrased from several generations of statement on Learning and Teaching in the Faculty of Arts. It is not represented here as my own original ideas or framework.)

## **THE "FINE PRINT"**

You likely already know this, but here are some important things to keep in mind to ensure a successful semester:

1. Please read the unit guide.
2. Frequently check on the iLearn announcements and questions sections.
3. If you have a question, check to see if the answer is available in the unit guide, the assessment details, or the public discussion forum in iLearn (if applicable).
4. Please do not inquire when assessments will be marked. This will not expedite the marking process. We will keep you posted with the marking timeline and strive to complete all marking within three weeks.
5. Do not put things off until the last moment or expect to automatically get a disruption of studies extension. Computer problems are not an excuse.
6. Observe basic lecture theatre and tutorial session etiquette. Do not have a conversation with your neighbour (I can hear all conversations from the front). Please turn your phone off.
7. We have a zero tolerance policy concerning threatening and disruptive behaviours in lecture or tutorials. If the tutor or convenor feels your actions are inappropriate, you will be asked to leave. Since we are all such reasonable people, this rarely happens.
8. Have fun!

## **EXTENSIONS, PENALTIES, AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

Late submissions on any assignment will incur a penalty, unless the unit convenor has granted an extension due to “unavoidable disruption” certified as such via the formal Disruption of Studies request process (see Undergraduate Student Handbook). ***The late penalty is a 5% deduction in your mark per 24-hour period.*** The unit convenor at his discretion may waive this deduction for assignments turned within 1 hour of the deadline.

### The word limit

You will be deducted 1 percentage point for each 25 words you exceed the word limit. Please take the word limit very seriously and try to make your argument concisely and clearly. It is unfair to fellow students if one person has much more space to argue their case while another student sticks firmly to the length guidelines. The word limit is designed to level the essay-writing field, so to speak. You must ***provide a word count beneath the title*** when you submit your work. If you fail to provide a word count, you will be deducted 1 percentage point and the assessor will estimate length and mark accordingly. ***The word limit excludes end-of-text references but it includes footnotes and in-text citations.***

### No consideration for lost work or technology issues

It is the student’s responsibility to keep a copy (electronic or otherwise) of all written work submitted for each unit. No consideration will be given to claims of ‘lost work’ or technology issues no matter what the circumstances. It is your responsibility to ensure that your computer is fully compatible with iLearn during exam periods.

### Returning assignments

Student work will usually be marked and returned within two to three weeks of receipt. Students who hand their work in *before* the due date will not have it returned early. Do not ask when marking will be finished. If you turned in your assignment late, it will likely be marked later.

### Extensions and Disruption of Study:

Please view the Disruption to Studies Policy at: [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html)

All Disruption to Studies notifications are to be made online via the University’s Ask MQ system.

Remember, the University has determined that some circumstances routinely encountered by students ***are not acceptable*** grounds for claiming Disruption of Studies. These grounds include, but are not limited, to:

- Routine demands of employment
- Routine family problems such as tension with or between parents, spouses, and other people closely involved with the student
- Difficulties adjusting to university life, to the self-discipline needed to study effectively, and the demands of academic work
- Stress or anxiety associated with examinations, required assignments or any aspect of academic work
- Routine need for financial support

- Routine demands of sport, clubs and social or extra-curricular activities

Conditions existing prior to commencing a unit of study are not grounds for Special Consideration. The student is responsible for managing their workload in light of any known or anticipated problems. The student is responsible for contacting Student Support Services if they have a chronic condition.

Remember that you can **miss two tutorials** without having to complete the Disruption to Studies process. This allowance is to limit the documentation burden for you, the convenor, and your tutors.

### **Re-mark of Work During the Semester:**

A re-mark will be considered only on the following grounds:

1. Administrative error
2. The feedback provided on the assessment does not justify the grade awarded

Student Procedure:

1. The student must contact the original marker of the assessment (usually your tutor) to discuss the mark or resolve the administrative error.
2. If the marking issue cannot be resolved by the original marker, the student will email the unit convenor. This email must clearly detail the marking issue at hand.

### **Grade Appeals**

The Macquarie Grade Appeal Policy is available here: <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

## **PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The fundamental principle of the University's Academic Honesty Policy is that all staff and students act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of ideas and information. This means that:

- \*All academic work claimed as original is the work of the author making the claim.
- \*All academic collaborations are acknowledged.
- \*Academic work is not falsified in any way
- \*When the ideas of others are used, these ideas are acknowledged appropriately.

The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. You must read the University's definition of plagiarism and its academic honesty policy. These can be found in the Handbook of Undergraduate studies or on the web at: [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.htm](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.htm) The policies and

procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty.

Please note that the availability of online materials has made plagiarism easier for students, but it has also made discovery of plagiarism even easier for convenors of units. We now have specialized databases that can quickly identify the source of particular phrases in a student's work, if not original, and evaluate how much is taken from sources in inappropriate ways. My best advice to you is to become familiar with the guidelines about plagiarism and then 'quarantine' the files that you are actually planning on turning in; that is, do *not* cut and paste materials directly into any work file that you plan to submit, because it is too easy to later on forget which is your original writing and which has come from other sources. It's so easy to avoid plagiarism: all you have to do is make sure you (a) put in quotes any words taken from another source, and (b) scrupulously reference all quotes and all statements of fact. No matter what, it's always better to cite than to use someone else's words without citation.

In this class I use Turnitin to detect plagiarism and I take it very, very seriously. **Plagiarism may result in a mark of zero for that assignment and, depending on the severity of the plagiarism, may also result in failing the unit and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the **Student Code of Conduct**: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Macquarie University provides a range of **Student Support Services**. Details of these services can be accessed at: <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

**Learning Skills** provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study: <http://mq.edu.au/learningskills>

**IT Help:** For help with University computer systems and technology, visit: <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>

## UNIVERSITY GRADING POLICY

<http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

The grade a student receives will signify their overall performance in meeting the learning outcomes of a unit of study. Grades will not be awarded by reference to the achievement of other students nor allocated to fit a predetermined distribution. Graded units will use the following grades:

High Distinction 85-100

Distinction 75-84

Credit 65-74

Pass	50-64
Fail	0-49

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Tutorial Participation</u>	20%	Weekly
<u>Group Tutorial Presentation</u>	20%	Various (See Unit Guide)
<u>Short Creative Essay</u>	10%	20/08/2015
<u>Short Scholarly Essay</u>	20%	15/10/2015
<u>Research Essay</u>	30%	29/10/2015

### Tutorial Participation

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

Details: Tutorial attendance is mandatory. Participation in tutorials involves more than just showing up. ***We expect students to be active participants and demonstrate that they have attended/listened to the lecture and have completed the readings.*** Participation also means contributing to a general atmosphere of scholarly enquiry, showing respect for the opinions of others. Thus, talking too much and not allowing other students adequate time to contribute could count against you. It is also important that you engage respectfully with your peers. Do not mock anyone's contributions. If you don't understand or agree with something someone says, ask them to clarify, or explain respectfully why you disagree. Everyone should feel free to speak up. If you are having trouble speaking up, please come to speak with your tutor or the course convenor privately and together we can strategize ways to facilitate your contribution.

Participation in tutorials will also entail written responses to group presentations (see below) on a form provided by the tutor. Written constructive comments will be done in class (or may be returned later to the tutor) for distribution to the presenters. They are not anonymous, so students should focus on creative feedback that genuinely helps their peers.

Again, students are expected to participate actively in discussion. If they do not; the convenor may, after one warning, institute a short written assignment (i.e., a mandatory DPG) for each tutorial, for the entire group.

A note concerning attendance of tutorials. There are 10 tutorials this semester (there is no tutorial on weeks 1, 5, and 9). You can miss two tutorials without having to complete a disruption of studies request. For your first two absences, you *do not* need to inform your tutor or convenor that you missed a tutorial. We will account for these absences automatically. **The only**

**exception to this rule is if you must miss a tutorial in which you are scheduled to present** (see below). I will only approve disruption of studies requests for missed tutorials if you have already missed two tutorials or must miss a group presentation *and* have extenuating circumstances.

A note on marking: based on your participation in tutorial over the course of the semester I will assign you a number grade on the F-HD continuum, if you have attended all required tutorials (i.e., 8 or more) this will be your participation grade (and if you have attended all the required tutorials and participated only occasionally you can expect to receive between a high pass and a low credit for this portion of your grade (showing up alone isn't a ticket to an HD). If you attend fewer than 8 tutes I will subtract points from your participation grade on the following schedule:

If you miss additional tutes **beyond your allotted two** without an authorized excuse, your final grade will be reduced in the following manner:

1. First, since I am counting 8 tutes, each of the 8 tutes are worth 12.5% (2.5 points) of your final participation grade. Thus, missing 3 tutes = 37.5% (7.5 point) reduction in your participation grade. Example: you earned an 80 (Distinction) in participation but attended only 5 tutorials. your final participation grade would be  $80 - 7.5 = 72.5$  (Credit).
2. If you miss four or more tutorials your final grade will be reduced an additional 10% (a 58% can turn into a 48%).
3. If you miss five or more tutorials I will evaluate your overall performance and assign you final grade in the unit of P or F.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop familiarity with anthropological approaches to economic institutions and transactions.
- Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.
- Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.
- Analyze how cultural difference affects the interpretation and practice of economic transactions and institutions in different societies.

## Group Tutorial Presentation

Due: **Various (See Unit Guide)**

Weighting: **20%**

Details: During weeks 4, 6, 7, 11 & 12, groups of four students will do 20 to 30 minutes of presentation (2 x 10-15 minutes for pairs), followed by discussion within the class. Topics are set in advance, but students have significant latitude for group creativity. Both sides will work together for an effective presentation, as the group will be evaluated as a whole.

Students should provide the class with a one-page outline of crucial points for each perspective (though they should NOT read this to the class—**Please** don't!). This handout must be submitted via turnitin **within 24 hours** of the presentation to receive full credit (NB: all members of each side will submit identical handouts). The class will be responsible for providing feedback as well as engaging in the post-presentation activity, whether that is further debate, question and answer, or discussion of the presentation.

Students will be evaluated on the quality of the handout, the effectiveness of the presentation, the coverage of the topic, and the presentational qualities of their work (including creativity, clarity, etc.—the Rubric is in appendix vi below). The assessor will have some latitude to award students within the group different scores if different levels of commitment are obvious, and group members will be asked to write a self evaluation of the team and their experience.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.
- Question commonly held and taken for granted assumptions about what is 'natural' or 'normal' human economic experience.
- Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.
- Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

## Short Creative Essay

Due: **20/08/2015**

Weighting: **10%**

The short essays are relatively low weight assessments so that students can quickly get feedback on their writing skills before the more heavily weighted assignments due at the end of the unit. Each short essay is a brief writing assignment that is designed to provoke a connection between the unit material (readings, lecture, and supplementary material) and your own experiences and thoughts. These short papers should be between 750 and 1000 (**Essay 1**) and 1000-1250 words (**Essay 2**). You will submit them through Turnitin before the deadline. The Turnitin link can be found on the unit iLearn page. The specific essay prompts can be found in appendix iii below. Additional details, and other resources will be available in iLearn. These assessment tasks are to help the tutor to assist the student in honing the writing skills necessary for the Research essay assignment and written work in future 300-level anthropology units.

It is imperative that your written expression is free of grammatical and spelling errors. Papers with significant spelling and grammatical errors will be heavily penalized. Essays exceeding the **word limit** by more than 25 words (not including bibliography) will receive a deduction (1% for every 25 words). You must provide a word count near your title when you submit your work.

Essay prompts will comprise both creative and argumentative (scholarly) topics. Scholarly essays must connect to the concepts in the readings and lectures. High quality essays will offer a clear thesis and argument, seamlessly integrate unit material, observations concerning the issue at hand, and demonstrate the effective use of anthropological concepts. (Rubric is in appendix v, below). In both kinds of essays, creativity is encouraged. You are permitted to use the first person (“I observed...”, “I attended...”) in your essays. Unlike many of the sciences, anthropologists often write in the first person (because our research is strongly influenced by our presence and it is important to account for that). In this writing assignment, students will be evaluated most heavily on organization, use of data and supporting materials, clarity, and writing style. As a favor to the assessor please **double space** all submissions and be sure to **indent** at the beginning of each paragraph. Students are not expected to do extensive outside research, but can rely on the required readings and recommended readings from the unit guide.

Cite all material you use (beyond your own thoughts, observations, and opinions). The citations style you use is up to you. I recommend Harvard:[http://sydney.edu.au/library/subjects/downloads/citation/Harvard\\_Complete.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/library/subjects/downloads/citation/Harvard_Complete.pdf)

Whichever style you use, all in-text citations must be consistent and include the authors’ last name, year of publication and, if you are using a direct quote, or paraphrasing, **the page number**. Lectures and lecture slides can be cited as “(Vasantkumar, date)”. *Direct quotations from other material should be employed judiciously*. I am interested in your ability to gather, synthesize, and apply information, not in your repeating it verbatim—this especially applies with regard to lecture notes. I don’t want a simple recitation of what I have said in class, I want you to put your own intellectual stamp on the material.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop familiarity with anthropological approaches to economic institutions and transactions.
- Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.
- Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of supporting evidence and data.

## Short Scholarly Essay

Due: **15/10/2015**

Weighting: **20%**

See Description of Assessment Task 3.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.

- Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.
- Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of supporting evidence and data.

## Research Essay

Due: **29/10/2015**

Weighting: **30%**

Details: Students will write a research essay for evaluation as part of this unit. The essay will be a minimum of 2500 words (maximum of 3000) and count for 30% of the final mark. The essay will be due between weeks 12 and 13.

The essay topic is provided in Appendix IV below. For this assignment, the instructor requires reading beyond the required readings for the topic that the student would like to investigate. No student will receive better than a passing mark if he or she has only used the required readings or webpages as additional research sources. For more details about how this assignment is assessed, see the assessment rubric at the end of this unit outline.

### Some Further Advice on Anthropological Essays

As in other social science fields, students in anthropology are expected to read critically and not simply accept as 'Truth' what you read. You will soon discover that much of economic anthropology is not about disputes about facts; rather, its most important emphasis is about how to balance competing principles when multiple, conflicting values are in play. Rather than detective work or one-sided diatribes, anthropological essays can often resemble legal or political discussions, with the facts not in dispute, but the weighting or relative importance of different ideas unclear and open to diverse readings. For example, the reason that so many people disagree about women's rights is that they fundamentally disagree on ideals for being a woman and women's needs. Even people from the same culture can disagree in good faith about some of the ideas we will be discussing.

Anthropological knowledge has often advanced through opposition of contrary viewpoints and argument. In the context of such debates, students may want to write extremely strong language, dismissing any disagreement, ignoring good arguments that counter their own, and using inflammatory language. It is important to fight this tendency. Instead, recognition of other arguments, even when one disagrees with their perspective is an essential ingredient in activism, persuasion, and reasoned argument.

This openness to debate means that we expect your essays to demonstrate not just factual knowledge but also some ability to present and assess arguments and counter-arguments about particular problems. A good explanation of a disagreement is a better demonstration of a complete understanding of an issue than a one-sided, imbalanced account that ignores crucial reservations. Remember: debates haven't been settled for a reason in anthropology and social scientific fields—we don't expect you to be able to settle them definitively in a few thousand words.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.
- Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.
- Analyze how cultural difference affects the interpretation and practice of economic transactions and institutions in different societies.

## Delivery and Resources

### Outline of Lectures & Readings

*Please note that minor modifications to the readings might occur during the semester. Adequate warning will always precede these adjustments*

## PART I

### Week 1: 27 July

#### Introduction: Commodity Fetishism 101 or “Getting the Luncheon Meat Anonymous”

The first week’s lecture has two purposes. First, we will go over the unit outline, paying special attention to the schedule of topics, types of assessments and unit expectations. In addition, this lecture will set out the terms, themes, and problems we will address over the course of the semester. Key today will be a discussion of Marx’s concept of commodity fetishism in which the human labor central to processes of production, distribution and consumption of everyday objects and commodities that animate our lives is made invisible by separating workers from the products of their labor. How might we start to undo this harmful obscuring of the human aspects of economic systems? What benefits might accrue to both and us and them if we do so? Today’s lecture forms the first installment of a conversation that we will be having in more depth over the course of the semester.

#### **No tutorial**

**Readings:** No Required Readings for this meeting but you are strongly requested to take a look at these (very short) readings:

1. Howard Nemerov, “Grace to be said at the supermarket,” (a poem) readily available on the internet.
2. Bertold Brecht, “Questions from a worker who reads,” (also a poem), ditto.

### Week 2: 3 August

**What does it mean to talk about “cultural economies?” Isn’t that an oxymoron?**

Today we will begin our consideration of what it means to approach economic institutions and practices anthropologically. Where economies and economics alike are usually represented as natural, universal facts, economic anthropologists are centrally concerned with a more holistic and relativistic approach that seeks to place received concepts like “wealth,” “value,” and “the market” in their proper historical and cultural (i.e., man-made) contexts. Drawing on the classic work of economic philosopher Karl Polanyi and more recent advances in cultural anthropology, we will focus particularly on whether wealth and poverty can be reduced to a single, apparently neutral quantitative framework (the bottom line) or whether wealth and value are themselves defined differently by particular groups in particular places and times.

**Readings:**

1. Ferguson, James (1992) “The Cultural Topography of Wealth: Commodity Paths and the Structure of Property in Rural Lesotho,” *American Anthropologist* 94(1):55-73.
2. Rudnykyj, Daromir (2011) “Homo Economicus and Homo Islamicus, Revisited: Islamic Finance and the Limits of Economic Reason” paper for 8th International Conference on Islamic Economics and Finance. Pp. 1-14.

**Recommended Readings:**

Polanyi, Karl (1957) “The Economy as Instituted Process, Karl Polanyi,” in C. Arensberg and H. Pearson (eds) *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory*, pp. 243–70. New York: Free Press.

Hart, Keith (2008) “Karl Polanyi’s Legacy,” *Development and Change* 39(6):1135–1143.

Mitchell, Timothy (2002) “The Character of Calculability,” Pp. 80-122 in *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, Modernity*. Berkeley: University of CA Press.

**Week 3: 10 August**

**Thinking like a World-System: Global Economies and Global Inequalities, Past and Present**

Today, as a prerequisite for thinking about wealth, poverty and consumption in the contemporary global economy, we explore previous moments of global interconnection. In doing so we will highlight both the significant continuities that link past and present forms on the one hand and the degree to which a comparative framework foregrounds the limits of contemporary concepts (like “modernity” and “globalization,” which per Michel-Rolph Trouillot are not natural or neutral concepts but geographically and cultural specific “North Atlantic universals” that must be approached with a critical eye). Starting with the massive dislocations and relocations of the Columbian exchange, we will look at the vast and surprising histories of economic and cultural connectedness that have brought the contemporary global ecumene into being, highlighting several of its key terms and concepts as a prelude to critically evaluating them in weeks to come.

**Readings:** (All but #5 are quite short)

1. Linton, Ralph (1937) "100% American," *The American Mercury* 40: 427-429.
2. Wolf, Eric. (1982) —Pp. 2-7 from the "Introduction" to *Europe and the People without History*.
3. Trouillot, Michel-Rolph (2002) "North Atlantic Universals: Analytical Fictions 1492-1945" *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101(4):839-858 (**esp. 839-847**).
4. A. Tsing (2005) Engaging the Universal, pp. 6-10 in *Friction: An Anthropology of Global Connection* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
5. Harvey, David (1990) selections on "Time-Space Compression," pp. 240- 257, 284-307 in *The Condition of Postmodernity*.

### **Recommended Readings:**

One of both of Chapters 6 ("The Fur Trade") or 7 ("The Slave Trade") in Wolf's *Europe and the People Without History*. Pp. 158-194 or Pp. 195-232.

D. Harvey, *Condition of Postmodernity*, p. 141-172.

A. Gupta and J. Ferguson (1992) Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference, *Cultural Anthropology*, 7(1): 6-23.

A. Tsing "The Global Situation" Pp. 66-98 in Inda and Rosaldo, eds., *The Anthropology of Globalization*. (orig. 2000).

Harvey, D. (2006) "Neo-liberalism as creative destruction." *Geogr. Ann.*, 88 B (2):145-158.

## **PART II**

### **Week 4: 17 August**

#### **Beyond North Atlantic Universals I—Exchange**

Today we will embark upon our collective project of provincializing and critically assessing received wisdom concerning key economic topics. Here we focus on the classic approaches to exchange in human societies of Karl Marx and Marcel Mauss. While Marx is famous (or infamous) as the great critique of commodity exchange and the free markets of capitalism, Mauss, whilst less widely known is an equally crucial thinker to become acquainted with. Where Marx focussed on the anonymizing nature of capitalist commodity economies in contemporary Europe, Mauss drew on ethnological and classical material to articulate his influential theory of the Gift in which neither the objects exchanged nor their exchangers are ever completely anonymous. In lecture we will first elaborate a contrast between these two visions of exchange and then ask whether it stands up under closer scrutiny. We do so in part by interrogating utopian notions of the free market that have emerged and become widely popular since the late eighteenth century. Is a completely free market desirable (or even possible) or are there some things that money can't (or shouldn't) buy?

### **Readings:**

1. Marx, Karl (1867) "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret." *Capital, Volume 1*, pp. 163-169.

2. Mauss, Marcel (1922), "The Exchange of Gifts and the Obligation to Reciprocate," Ch. 1 in *The Gift* pp. 10-23.

3. Doward, Jamie (2015) "Is Ross Ulbricht, Silk Road's pirate king, a mobster or a martyr?" *The Guardian*, 31 May. <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/may/31/ross-ulbricht-silk-road-jail>

**Recommended Readings:**

Miller, D. (2003) "Could the Internet defetishise the commodity?" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21(3) 359 – 372

Brown, Susan L. (1997) "The Free Market as Salvation from the Government," Pp. 99-128 in James Carrier, ed., *Meaning of the Market*. (New York: Berg).

Alder, Ken (1995) "A Revolution to Measure: The Political Economy of the Metric System in France. In Wise, M.Norton, ed., *The Values of Precision*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Pp. 39-71.

T. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, "The Market's Place," Pp.244-271.

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**THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 23:59, Short Essay #1 Due via Turnitin**

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**Week 5: 24 August**

**ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT RESEARCH WEEK: No Class, No Tutorial**

**Week 6: 31 August**

**Beyond North Atlantic Universals II—Money**

Money makes the world go round, or so we are told. But what makes Money go round? Does it work the same for all people in all places at all times or is money as we know the product of a particular history? We will address these and related themes in this week's lecture, focusing specifically on the impact of modern Western money on traditional social and cultural institutions. This question has historically formed one of the most enduring themes in economic anthropology and the anthropology of capitalism more generally. Yet where social thinkers such as Marx and Georg Simmel, author of the influential *Philosophy of Money*, have understood money as a kind of acid that dissolves traditional forms, anthropological inquiries into the meeting of global capitalism and local economic worlds paint a much complicated (and interesting) picture.

**Readings:**

1. Hart, Keith (2007) "Money Is Always Personal and Impersonal," *Anthropology Today* 23(5):12–16.

2. Bohannan, Paul (1959) "The impact of money on an African subsistence economy," *Econ.*

*Hist.* 19: 491-503.

3. Simmel, Georg (1909), "Money's relationship to the rationalism of law and logic" and "The calculating character of modern times" " from *The Philosophy of Money*, Pp. 446-450.

**Recommended Readings:**

Rec. Bloch, Maurice and Jonathan Parry (1989) Introduction, pp. 1-32 in *Money and the Morality of Exchange*.

Hart, Keith (1986) "Heads or Tails: Two Sides of the Coin." *Man* 21:620-644.

Bohannon, Paul, 1955 "Some Principles of Exchange and Investment among the Tiv." *American Anthropologist* 57:60-70.

Graeber, David (2012) "On Social Currencies and Human Economies: Some Notes on the Violence of Equivalence." *Social Anthropology* 20(4): 411-428.

Curtis, Bruce (1998) "From the Moral Thermometer to Money: Metrological Reform in Pre-Confederation Canada." *Social Studies of Science* 28(4): 547-570.

**Week 7: 7 September**

**Beyond North Atlantic Universals III: Stuff (Consumption in Critical Perspective)**

This week we ask what is culturally and historically specific about the practices of consumption that shape our everyday lives. We will examine processes by which familiar commodities (sugar, coke, instant noodles) come to be familiar in particular contexts. An orienting (and possibly disorienting) question in these explorations will be whether our consumer desires emerge from processes of individual self-fashioning or whether they are themselves the products of large-scale economic processes (i.e, are markets made in our own image, or vice versa). Do we choose the stuff or does the stuff choose us? Is consumption a matter of choice or constraint? These themes and more will be the basis of our conversation.

**Readings:**

1. Mintz, Sydney (1996) "The Conquest of Honey by Sucrose: A Psychotechnical Achievement. Pp.50-66 in *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*.

2. Bosco, Joseph (2014) "The Problem of Greed in Economic Anthropology: Sumptuary Laws and New Consumerism in China" *Economic Anthropology* 1: 167-185.

3. Errington, F., Fujikura, T. and Gewertz, D. (2012), Instant Noodles as an Anti-friction Device: Making the BOP with PPP in PNG. *American Anthropologist* 114: 19–31

**Recommended Readings:**

Tsing, A. (2005) "Friction in the Commodity Chain," Pp. 51-54 in *Friction*.

Mintz, Sydney (1996) "Food and It's Relationship to Power." Pp. 17-32 in *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*.

De Vidas, A. (2008) "Containing Modernity: The social life of Tupperware in a Mexican

indigenous village," *Ethnography* 9(2): 257-284.

Foster, R. J. (2005), Commodity futures: Labour, love and value. *Anthropology Today* 21: 8–12.

Miller, Daniel (1995) "Consumption and Commodities," *Ann Rev. Anth* (24): 141-161.

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\*BREAK (12-27 September)\*

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## PART III

### Week 8: 28 September

#### Follow that Thing!/Friction in the Commodity Chain

This week, we begin the final part of the unit in which, drawing upon recent innovative work in economic anthropology and critical human geography, we will focus on the connections across distance and difference that are crucial to the production, circulation and consumption of the stuff of everyday life. Today we delve into generative accounts of "following the thing," that augment a focus on particular, local cultural and economic worlds with an attention to the commodity chains that both tie these local worlds to global economic forces and make the movements of goods and concepts possible. By doing so, by following economic relations to their sources, hopefully we can shed some critical light on the everyday erasures and invisibilities of a world whose functioning is based on the unquestioned fetishism of the commodity. This approach will be the central focus of this part of the unit (and of your research essay) Today we will elucidate it in general terms before turning in coming weeks to a more detailed focus on following one particular commodity through the various stages of its life (and death).

#### **Readings:**

1. A. Tsing (2005) "Friction in the Commodity Chain," Pp. 51-54 in *Friction*.

#### **and at least one (1) of the following**

2. Kaplan, M, 2007 "Fijian Water in Fiji and New York: Local Politics and a Global Commodity," *Cultural Anthropology* 22(4): 685-706
3. Cook, I. (2004) "Follow the Thing: Papaya," *Antipode* 36(4): 642-664.
4. Bestor, Theodore C. (2001) "Supply-Side Sushi: Commodity, Market, and the Global City," *American Anthropologist* 103(1): 76-95.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Kopytoff, Igor (1986) The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process. In *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Arjun Appadurai, ed. Pp. 64-91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tsing, A. (2009) "Supply Chains and the Human Condition," *Rethinking Marxism* 21(2): 148-176.

Harvey D (1990) Between space and time: Reflections on the geographical imagination. *Annals, Association of American Geographers* 80(3):418–434

NPR—"Planet Money Makes a T-shirt": <http://www.npr.org/series/248799434/planet-moneys-t-shirt-project>

## Week 9: 5 October

### Movie Week — No Tutorial

This week there will be no formal class meeting, however you are **required** to watch **at least two** documentaries devoted to tracing the commodity chains that shape the production of various familiar objects. Everyone is **required** to watch the movie "**Blood Coltan**" (available on youtube) on the mining, in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, of Coltan, a rare earth of crucial importance to smartphone production. You must also watch one from a list of movies (all available on youtube or at MQ Uni Library) that can be found on the ANTH 222 iLearn page (or you may nominate via email to the convenor a similar documentary on another product (you must have email confirmation from me or your tutor before proceeding if you choose to nominate a movie of your choice)). Your second short essay will take the form of a comparison of the two movies you watch in terms of their approach to following the thing/defetishizing the commodity. A detailed essay prompt can be found on the unit iLearn page and below in appendix iii).

## Week 10: 12 October

### Following the Mobile I — Resource Extraction in the Global Shadows

Today we commence following the journey of a smartphone, our destination, the mines of Central Africa, the focus of our attention the extraction and circulation of Coltan, a crucial ingredient in contemporary information technology devices. We will trace the connections that bind together African civil wars, Cold War geopolitics and the Western cult of the entrepreneur. In doing so, we will find that an exclusive focus on the genius of Steve Jobs and others like him at the expense of any awareness of or curiosity about either the laborers on whose back actual processes of production rest or the sordid political history of the regions in which such extraction occurs is itself a kind of damaging commodity fetishism. Further, we will address the place of extractive industries in Africa more broadly, highlighting their place in new discontinuous geographies of global capitalism that are designed so that a rising tide will not lift all boats.

#### Readings:

1. The Onion (2011) "The Last American Who Knew What the Fuck He was Doing Dies," October 6. <http://www.theonion.com/article/last-american-who-knew-what-the-fuck-he-was-doing--26268>
2. Smith, James H., and Jeffrey W. Mantz (2006) "Do cellular phones dream of civil war? The mystification of production and the consequences of technology fetishism in the Eastern Congo." In *Inclusion and exclusion in the global arena*, edited by Max Kirsch and June Nash, 71–93. New

York: Routledge Press.

3. Ferguson, J, "Globalizing Africa," pp. 25-49 in *Global Shadows*.

4. Ryan, Rowena (2015) "Baotou is the world's biggest supplier of rare earth minerals and it's hell on Earth," [news.com.au](http://www.news.com.au/travel/world-travel/baotou-is-the-worlds-biggest-supplier-of-rare-earth-minerals-and-its-hell-on-earth/story-e6frfq9-1227308456947), April 17. <http://www.news.com.au/travel/world-travel/baotou-is-the-worlds-biggest-supplier-of-rare-earth-minerals-and-its-hell-on-earth/story-e6frfq9-1227308456947>

### **Recommended Readings:**

Amnesty International (2015) "United States of America: Digging for transparency: How U.S. companies are only scratching the surface of conflict minerals reporting April 22." Available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR51/1499/2015/en/>

Mantz, Jeffrey (2008) Improvisational Economies: Coltan Production in the Eastern Congo. *Social Anthropology* 16(1):34–50.

Smith, James, H. (2015) "May it never end" Price wars, networks, and temporality in the "3 Ts" mining trade of the Eastern DR Congo, *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 5 (1): 1–34

Tamm, Ingrid (2004) "Dangerous Appetites: Human Rights Activism and Conflict Commodities," *Human Rights Quarterly* 26(3): 687-704

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**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 23:59 — Short Essay #2 Due via Turnitin**

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## **Week 11: 19 October**

### **Following the Mobile II—Production (with Suicide Nets)**

From the extraction of materials discussed last week, we now turn to processes of assembly and distribution, placing the production of the mobile we are following alongside broader trends in the global economic order that condition the production of many other familiar commodities. In particular we will lay out how free trade and other related aspects of contemporary global capitalism result in a "race to the bottom" in which corporations' freedom to relocate factories in search of ever cheaper labor costs results in more and more dangerous and precarious working conditions in both the developed and developing world. We will also critically assess Western justifications for horrific working conditions in the developing world, subjecting their disingenuous use of cultural relativism to sustained critique. And we will read the poetry of one of the many young Chinese workers who found conditions in the plants assembling smartphones and other gadgets so intolerable that he killed himself in order to escape. In so doing, perhaps we can remind ourselves of these workers' humanity (and, perhaps, question our own).

### **Readings:**

1. Jenny Chan, Pun Ngai, "Suicide as Protest for the New Generation of Chinese Migrant Workers: Foxconn, Global Capital, and the State," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 37-2-10, September 13, 2010.

2. J. Collins (2007) The Rise of a Global Garment Industry and the Reimagination of Worker Solidarity, *Critique of Anthropology*, 27(4): 395-409.
3. Charles Duhigg and Keith Bradsher, "How the U.S. Lost Out on iPhone Work," *New York Times*, Jan. 21, 2012
4. Ralph Litzinger, 2013, "The Labor Question in China: Apple and Beyond," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112(1): 172-178.

**Recommended Readings:**

"The poetry and brief life of a Foxconn worker: Xu Lizhi (1990-2014)" <https://libcom.org/blog/xulizhi-foxconn-suicide-poetry>

Pun Ngai and Jenny Chan, 2012, "Global Capital, the State, and Chinese Workers: The Foxconn Experience," *Modern China* 38(4):383-410.

M. Yglesias (2013) Different Places have Different Safety Rules and that's Okay. *Slate*, April 24.

J. Miller (2003) Why Economists Are Wrong About Sweatshops and the Antisweatshop Movement, *Challenge*, 46(1): 93-122.

N. Kristof and S. WuDunn (2000) Two Cheers for Sweatshops, *New York Times*, September 24.

**Week 12: 26 October**

**Following the Mobile III — (Ethical?) Consumption and Digital Intimacies**

We will cover two main sets of issues in today's meeting. First, we will ponder the strange intimacies of our own relationships to smartphones and other gadgets, attempting in the process to make these technologies less transparent and more opaque—not windows into other worlds, but objects worth studying in their own right. How do such digital intimacies emerge from commodity fetishism and how might they undo it? Second, we will take a critical gander at Fair Trade, one of the most influential attempts to redress some of the worst abuses in the contemporary global economic system. Has Fair Trade succeeded? Does it cause its own sorts of problems? How do folks on the producing end of Fair Trade products feel about? The answers to these questions may surprise you.

**Readings:**

1. T. Luhrmann: "What students can teach us about iPhones" *Salon*, [http://www.salon.com/2010/05/30/iphone\\_college\\_students/](http://www.salon.com/2010/05/30/iphone_college_students/)
2. Apple Policy on Supplier Responsibility: <https://www.apple.com/au/supplier-responsibility/>
3. P. West, 2010, "Making the Market: Specialty Coffee, Generational Pitches, and Papua New Guinea" *Antipode* 42( 3): 690-718
4. Moberg, M. (2014), Certification and Neoliberal Governance: Moral Economies of Fair Trade in the Eastern Caribbean. *American Anthropologist*, 116: 8–22.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Daniel Miller, "The Particular Significance of SNS for Anthropology," [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic\\_staff/d\\_miller/mil-26](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic_staff/d_miller/mil-26)

Carrier, J. G. (2010), Protecting the Environment the Natural Way: Ethical Consumption and Commodity Fetishism. *Antipode*, 42: 672–689

Elias, Marlène and Magalie Saussey (2013) "The gift that keeps on giving': Unveiling the paradoxes of fair trade Shea butter," *Sociologia Ruralis*, 53(2):158–179.

Pfaff, J. (2010), Mobile Phone Geographies. *Geography Compass*, 4: 1433–1447

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## **THURSDAY OCTOBER 29, 23:59 —Research Essay Due via Turnitin**

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### **Week 13: 2 November**

#### **Following the Mobile IV—E-waste and Capitalism's Afterlives.**

In the final week of the semester, we explore the inevitable end of all things and their rebirth. Trash, e-waste, etc., too entail networks that connect us across distance and differences. Further the end of one thing may well be another's beginning. How can we adapt methodologies of following the thing to situations in which the boundaries of thingness are themselves situationally unclear. And, further, in contrast to such theoretical or abstract questions, we will ask how what we have learned from the semester long experience of pursuing commodities through the chains of human relationships that underly their apparently faceless movement through the global economy can help us to reconceptualize the latter in a more human and a more just manner as we go forward.

#### **Readings:**

1. "60 Minutes: Following the Trail of Toxic E-Waste" <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/following-the-trail-of-toxic-e-waste/>
2. Gregson, N., M. Crang, F. Ahamed, N. Akhter, and R. Ferdous, (2010) "Following things of rubbish value: End-of-life ships, 'chock-chocky' furniture and the Bangladeshi middle class consumer," *Geoforum* 41(6): 846-854
3. Reddy, Rajyashree N.(2015) "Producing abjection: E-waste improvement schemes and informal recyclers of Bangalore," *Geoforum* 62: 166–174.
4. Hamblin, James, 2015, "A Brewing Problem: What's the healthiest way to keep everyone caffeinated?" *The Atlantic*, March 2, 2015.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Herod, Andrew, [Graham Pickren](#), [Al Rainnie](#) and [Susan McGrath Champ](#) (2014) "Global

destruction networks, labour and waste,” *J Econ Geogr* (2014) 14 (2): 421-441.

Pickren, G. (2014), Geographies of E-waste: Towards a Political Ecology Approach to E-waste and Digital Technologies. *Geography Compass*, 8: 111–124.

Gidwani, V. and Reddy, R. N. (2011), The Afterlives of “Waste”: Notes from India for a Minor History of Capitalist Surplus. *Antipode*, 43(5): 1625–1658.

Yates, M. (2011) “The Human-As-Waste, the Labor Theory of Value and Disposability in Contemporary Capitalism,” *Antipode*, 43(5): 1679-1695.

## Appendix I: Schedule of Tutorial Presentations

Tutorial presentations will typically be structured as a ‘debate’ or set of two opposed presentations, each focusing on the merits of one side of question. Student groups will typically be composed of four individuals, and each will be given some leeway to restructure the question, the debate, or the composition of presentations. Also, you may find yourself arguing a position that differs from your own. In such an instance, please do your best to build a compelling case for your side, even if you disagree with it. To do well on this assignment you’ll to go beyond required readings to incorporate information from both recommended readings and from your own research. Detailed descriptions of each prompt appear below.

For all presentations, each side has 15-20 minutes to present their case. At the end of the presentation, students will vote on the question at hand; presenters’ marks will in no way be influenced by the outcome of the vote. Afterwards the class will assess the impact of each side’s case and offer feedback on the presentations

**Week 4: Silk Road:** Are There Some Things that Should not be Bought and Sold? Should there be limits on market transactions or should free markets be allowed to flourish free of government (and other sorts) of interference? How free should free markets be exactly? Is unrestricted commerce an unalloyed good or should certain kinds of things not be bought and sold (if so, what?). The focus of this debate is the so-called “Dark Web” made most famous in the recent “Silk Road” case (described here: <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/may/31/ros-s-ulbricht-silk-road-jail> and here: <http://www.mintpressnews.com/what-the-silk-road-trial-reveals-about-free-speech-political-prisoners-in-the-us/206375/>). Silk Road and other similar sites provide(d) anonymous fora for the buying and selling of illegal drugs, fake IDs and other illicit materials. Their backers argued that they provided a safe space for hazardous real world transactions and allowed market processes to flourish in the absence of government restriction, their detractors argued that they traded in goods that should not be bought and sold. Linking this case to unit materials and your own research, one side should argue for the continued existence of such markets and the other against.

**Week 6: Is Homo Economicus?** Are human beings rational self-maximizers? If they aren’t already, should they become ones? The discipline of economics insists that human beings are essentially rational, and can be counted upon to act to maximize their own self-interest in market settings. Sociologists and anthropologists of economic behavior have argued by contrast that

rational self-maximization is not a natural phenomenon but a reaction to how markets work—something that is produced by economic behavior rather than something that precedes it. In today's debate, drawing on unit materials and your own research and experiences, one side will argue that this vision of homo economicus (economic man) is essentially correct, while the other will take the position that it is untrue. The proposition both sides will be asked to comment upon is "altruism is fundamentally opposed to human nature." One side (the pro-Homo Economicus said) will argue in favor the other (anti-Homo Economicus) will argue against.

**Week 7: School Uniforms and Sumptuary Laws:** Should limits be placed on consumption? Today's debate asks whether limits should be placed on consumption in the name of social cohesion or equality. Which is more unjust, preventing people from expressing themselves via unfettered consumption or furthering divisions of wealth and poverty via such consumption? If school children in Australia are required to wear uniforms (see here for reasons why: <http://www.hattoss.com/education/2012/06/20/7-great-arguments-in-favor-of-school-uniforms/>), why shouldn't everyone else be? Drawing particularly on Bosco's article on the history of sumptuary laws (laws that limit consumption) in China this debate asks whether such a law—that limits should be placed on individual consumption—should be applied to contemporary Australian society. One side will argue in favor, the other against.

**Week 11: The Transpacific Partnership:** Are Free Trade deals a Boon or a Bane for Australia and for the world? Depending on who one talks to, Free Trade is either the best thing since sliced bread or one of the greatest threats facing the middle and working classes of developed and developing nations alike. While everyone certainly appreciates low prices and wide availability of goods, the human toll of job loss, outsourcing and the expansion of hazardous working conditions and harmful environmental effects must also be accounted for. Linking your own research into the issues with unit-related materials, one side will make the case for Free Trade, in particular for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a major trade deal in the final stages of negotiation between the US, Australia and nine other Pacific nations. The other side will argue that it should be rejected. To stir things up, this debate will be presented in character—the for side in the role of a trade delegation from the US attempting to convince skeptical Australians of the deal's benefits, the other in role of anti-globalization activists trying to convince their fellow Aussies that it should be rejected.

**Week 12: Fair Trade:** Part of the Solution or Part of the Problem? Drawing in particular on the articles by West, Moberg, Carrier, and Elias and Saussey, while supplementing these with your own research, our final debate of the semester will deal with the question of to what degree Fair Trade certification helps remedy global economic inequality. Each side will be asked to comment on the proposition that Macquarie Uni mandate that only Fair Trade and/or Sweatshop and Conflict-free goods be sold in the stores and restaurants on the university campus. Each side should make up a fictitious student group in whose name they will present their cases. Both for and against sides should link their arguments to the readings' discussion of the benefits and possible pitfalls of the Fair Trade project. Be prepared to argue a position that you may not agree with!

### **Appendix III: Short Essay Topics**

### Essay #1 (Creative) —100% Australian

For this assessment, write a creative essay of 750-1000 words in length in the style of Ralph Linton's short piece "100% American." The scenario you choose to subject to this treatment can be whatever you like—from making your way to uni in the morning to attending class to working to going to a sporting event or party with family or friends. I'm looking for engaging and interesting writing here and a thoughtful imitation of Linton's writing. (Obviously you'll have to read Linton to do this....)

### Essay #2 (Scholarly)—Film Review

In a paper of 1000-1250 words in length, compare and contrast the approaches to commodity fetishism/following the thing in two documentaries about the commodity chains of familiar products. One of these movies must be "Blood Coltan." The other can be selected from a list of approved movies to be found on the class iLearn page. Students may also suggest a possible second movie not on this list but must receive approval from their tutor in order to write about it for this essay. All essays must incorporate reference to Marx's discussion of commodity fetishism and at least two other unit readings (one of which must come from the list of recommended (rather than required) texts. Proper scholarly citation must be used. Ask if you have any questions about how to do this.

### Appendix IV: Research Essay Topic

#### Following the Thing

For the final class project you will conduct a commodity chain analysis of a commodity of your choice. Your paper will "follow" the varied travels of your chosen commodity; including a discussion of its history, a mapping of its key sites of production, distribution and consumption, an overview of varied impacts (positive and negative) created across the world by that commodity. Your commodity chain analysis will pay attention to its "social life" as well as to how its travels have been shaped by (and shape) class, race and gendered power. A more detailed prompt will be posted on the unit iLearn page.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be

imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.
- Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of supporting evidence and data.
- Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

### **Assessment tasks**

- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Creative Essay
- Short Scholarly Essay
- Research Essay

## **Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative**

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

### **Assessment task**

- Group Tutorial Presentation

## **Commitment to Continuous Learning**

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.

## Assessment tasks

- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Scholarly Essay
- Research Essay

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Develop familiarity with anthropological approaches to economic institutions and transactions.
- Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.
- Question commonly held and taken for granted assumptions about what is 'natural' or 'normal' human economic experience.
- Apply a critical, anthropologically informed understanding of economic transactions and institutions to real world situations and phenomena.
- Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.
- Analyze how cultural difference affects the interpretation and practice of economic transactions and institutions in different societies.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Creative Essay

- Short Scholarly Essay
- Research Essay

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.
- Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.
- Analyze how cultural difference affects the interpretation and practice of economic transactions and institutions in different societies.
- Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of supporting evidence and data.

### Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Creative Essay
- Short Scholarly Essay
- Research Essay

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcome

- Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of

supporting evidence and data.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Short Creative Essay
- Short Scholarly Essay

## **Effective Communication**

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Improve writing skills, especially structuring of argument, organization, and use of supporting evidence and data.
- Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Creative Essay
- Short Scholarly Essay

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Develop familiarity with anthropological approaches to economic institutions and transactions.
- Develop the ability to assess received understandings of economic discourses and practices using anthropologically informed holistic and relativistic descriptions of cultural practices.

- Question commonly held and taken for granted assumptions about what is 'natural' or 'normal' human economic experience.
- Analyze how cultural difference affects the interpretation and practice of economic transactions and institutions in different societies.
- Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Tutorial Participation
- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Creative Essay
- Short Scholarly Essay
- Research Essay

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Understand how global interconnectedness shapes contemporary practices of consumption and structures of inequality.
- Produce in cooperation with other students an effective presentation about a conflict in economic anthropology-related materials, improving presentation skills and teamwork.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Tutorial Participation
- Group Tutorial Presentation
- Short Creative Essay
- Research Essay