Narrative and Times of Trouble
Anthropology 266N – Fall 2011
Tuesday 10:00 am–12:50 pm, Haines 314

Instructor:
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Office Hours: Mon 1:30-3PM
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Course Description:
This seminar explores linguistic and psycho-medical anthropological analysis of narrative in the context of troubling life events. Topics explored include narrative sense-making of illness and misfortune; the temporal structuring of human experience; narrative’s role in healing; morally infused remembering through narrative; narrative subjectivity; and narrative and selves in motion. The seminar is designed for graduate students in linguistic and psycho-medical anthropology. It explores the linkages and tensions that inhere in bridging the methodologies and analytic perspectives of the two sub-disciplines.

Texts:
(The books are available at bookstore and through Graduate Reserve)
• Additional required readings available on the class website: https://classes.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/11F-ANTHRO266N-1

Course Requirements:
Class sessions will consist of a group discussion based on the assigned readings. Every participant is also expected to bring to class a proactive orientation—active participation in class discussions is essential to the success of this course.

Specific guidelines:
1. Whole Class Commentaries. For selected weeks, you are expected to write a brief commentary of no more than 250 words in length (typed double-spaced in a 12 point font, 1" margins; headed by your name and date of assignment). Unless otherwise directed in the syllabus, your “reaction” commentaries should list questions the reading(s) raised for you and issues you would like to have aired in class discussion (or that may have been previously raised in class discussion but you would like to see revisited in class). You are encouraged to critically evaluate the ideas, the methodology, and/or the findings/data as presented in the readings and link your reflections, when appropriate, to other readings in the course. If you quote or refer to a specific statement in the reading, please provide a page number. Send commentaries to the
instructor by email no later than 3 p.m. on the Sunday before each class session. Please provide a unique file name for each commentary using your last name and the week’s theme (e.g., “Smith_Making Stories”). The individual commentaries will not be graded, but they do count toward your final grade. Late commentaries will not receive full credit. Reaction commentaries must be turned in, even if you are not going to be in class.

2. Team Presentations. On other weeks, teamwork is required, and advance preparation for group presentations is expected. In-class group presentations will involve a discussion of narrative using subtitled audio and/or video-recorded data segments. Presentations, including showing of the data itself, should be limited to 20 minutes. Following your presentation, there will be open discussion. Narrative data presented should be limited to one or two brief subtitled segments—totaling less than 3 minutes.

Use InqScribe (http://www.inqscribe.com/docs/index.html) to subtitle audio and video recordings. InqScribe is available on computers in the Digital Lab (Haines 320). To obtain a key code for using the Digital Lab and to get assistance with InqScribe, contact Alethea Marti (Digital Lab RA, Haines 320).

Presentations of issues, subtitled recordings, transcribed data segments, and analytic points should be displayed in PowerPoint/Keynote. ***Bring to class: 1) a digital file of your presentation to class on a USB drive to be copied onto a Mac laptop for presentation; 2) hard copies of transcripts of recordings (handouts for seminar participants).

3. Final Paper. Students are expected to write a final paper (15-pages, double spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins on all sides) that provides a narrative analysis of interest to you. The 15 pages do not include the bibliography.

Grading Structure:
Students are graded based on three criteria:
1) Reaction commentaries and participation in seminar discussions – 30%
2) Team presentations related to the readings – 30%
3) Final paper – 40%

Schedule
September 27
Week 1 – Introduction

October 4
Week 2 – Making Stories
Readings:
Assignment:
Write a reaction commentary discussing ways in which the readings bring different perspectives on the role of narrative in configuring lived experience.

October 11
Week 3 – Narrative Sense-Making
Readings:

Assignment:
For Group B: Write a reaction commentary discussing ways in which the readings bring different perspectives on the socio-cultural organization of narrative activity.
For Group A: Together with your team, find a brief, naturally occurring audio or video-recorded narrative of personal experience (from your own data or from another source). Analyze the structure and meaning of narrative in terms of the approaches to narrative in this week’s readings. Present an analysis of the narrative using PowerPoint/Keynote and hard copy transcripts, as indicated in the Course Requirements (see above in the syllabus).

October 18
Week 4 – The Phenomenology of Time in Narrative
Readings:

Assignment:
For Group A: Write a reaction commentary discussing ways in which the readings bring different perspectives on the temporal organization of narrative activity.
For Group B: Together with your team, find a brief, naturally occurring audio or video-recorded narrative of personal experience (from your own data or from another source). Analyze the structure and meaning of narrative in terms of the approaches to time and temporality in narrative in this week’s readings. Present an analysis of the narrative using PowerPoint/Keynote and hard copy transcripts, as indicated in the Course Requirements (see above in the syllabus).
October 25  
**Week 5 – The Ethics of Remembering**  
Readings:  

**Assignments:**  
**For Group B:** Write a reaction commentary discussing ways in which the readings bring different perspectives on the moral structuring of narrative remembering.  
**For Group A:** Together with your team, find a brief naturally occurring audio or video-recorded narrative of personal experience (from your own data or from another source). Analyze how remembering is morally configured using one or more of the approaches to narrative in the readings. Present your analysis using PowerPoint/Keynote and hard copy transcripts, as indicated in the Course Requirements (see above in the syllabus).

November 1  
**Week 6 – Narrative Fragmentation I**  
Readings:  

**Assignment:**  
**For Group A:** Write a reaction commentary in which you formulate an issue or question arising from the readings that will generate an interesting discussion about narrative fragmentation.  
**For Group B:** Together with your team, find a brief naturally occurring audio or video-recorded narrative of personal experience (from your own data or from another source). Analyze how a narrative account is temporally, causally, or morally fragmented.
in terms of this and previous weeks’ readings. Present your analysis using PowerPoint/Keynote and hard copy transcripts, as indicated in the Course Requirements (see above in the syllabus).

November 8
Week 7 – Narrative Fragmentation II
Readings:

Assignment:
For Group B: Write a reaction commentary in which you formulate an issue or question arising from the readings that will generate an interesting discussion about psychopathologies and narrative fragmentation.
For Group A: Together with your team, find a brief, naturally occurring narrative of personal experience (from your own data or from another source) reflecting narrative fragmentation. Analyze how a narrative account is temporally, causally, or morally fragmented narrative fragmentation in terms of this and previous weeks’ readings. Present your analysis of the narrative using PowerPoint/Keynote and hard copy transcripts, as indicated in the Course Requirements (see above in the syllabus).

November 15
Week 8 – Narrative Fragmentation III
Readings:

Assignment:
Write a reaction commentary in which you formulate an issue or question arising from the readings that will generate an interesting discussion about narrative fragmentation.

November 22
Week 9 – Selves in Motion
Readings:

Assignment:
For Group A: Write a reaction commentary in which you formulate an issue or question arising from the readings that will generate an interesting discussion about selves in motion.
For Group B: Together with your team, find a brief, naturally occurring narrative of personal experience (from your own data or from another source) that display changing presentations of self or others. Present your analysis of the narrative using PowerPoint/Keynote and hard copy transcripts, as indicated in the Course Requirements (see above in the syllabus).

November 29

Week 10 – Narrative, Healing and Experience
Readings:

Assignment:
Write a reaction commentary in which you formulate an issue or question arising from the readings that will generate an interesting discussion about narrative and healing.

Final paper DUE Monday, December 5, 3 pm, hard copy and e-mail as an attachment to instructor.