ANTHROPOLOGY 220W, SPRING 2004 PAPER TOPIC IDEAS

The following are topic suggestions, in no way are students limited to these topics. I encourage students to modify these suggestions in a way that makes them interesting to you. As stated in the syllabus, you must have your topic approved before you begin earnest work on it.

1. What are the effects of television on American and other societies?

2. Are there such things as “human universals”? If so what are they and what can we learn from discovering them?

3. Is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis a true affect?

4. What can anthropology teach us about economic choices people make? This topic would include a review of the contributions anthropology has made to the study of economic behavior cross-culturally. Alternatively, the paper could compare economic theory with anthropological theory of economic exchange.

5. How does culture affect our notions of love, marriage, and/or kinship?

6. How have reproductive technologies changed our idea of pregnancy, childbirth, and childrearing? You may want to only choose one of these sub-topics for your paper.
e. Small, 1997- Our Babies, Ourselves

7. Do men who participate in tribal warfare have higher fitness than men who don’t?

8. Does homicide have evolutionary roots?

9. Why do some populations have high fertility and others have low fertility?

10. Examine the cross-cultural variation in gender roles.
    a. Bonvillain, 1998- Women and Men: Cultural Constructs of Gender
11. How do different political systems evolve? This paper would look at the history of human political systems from Band level societies to modern Nation-States

12. What is the function of religion in human society? This topic delves into the question of why is religion universal? Is there some evolutionary reason why all human groups have religion, or is it a social phenomenon outside of evolution?

13. Why do humans have art?

14. Currently there are numerous diasporas (large scale movements of people from their homelands to new areas- generally for economic reasons) occurring throughout the world, what are some of these movements and what do anthropologists have to say about them?