

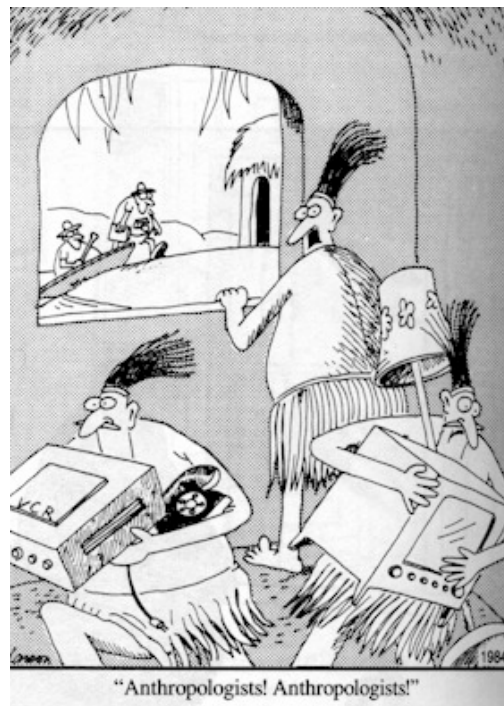
# Informatics 162W

Monday Jan 7 2012

First day of class

## Our Aim

Experience “in the wild”



## *Serious* Course Objectives

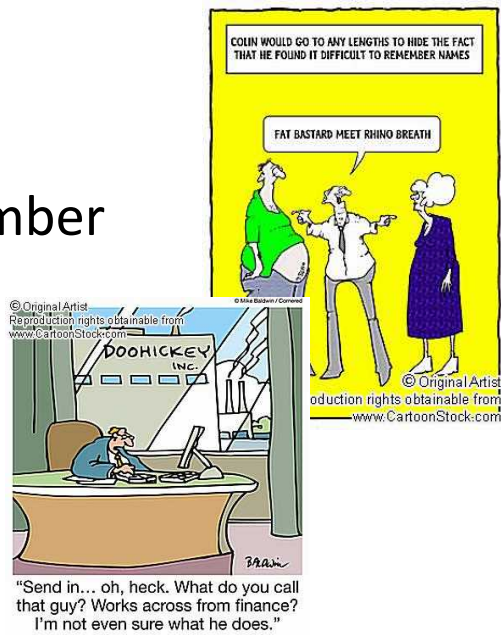
- Learn qualitative data gathering methods (primarily observation)
- Learn qualitative data analysis techniques
  - Grounded theory
  - Critical Thinking
- Learn how and when to apply these methods
- Learn about the background of these methods

## About the instructors

- Gillian: Assistant Professor in Informatics; Computer Scientist by training, qualitative researcher by choice; Decent emailer (so use that!); First time teaching this class
- Steve: PhD student in Informatics; excellent and experienced writer (use his help!)

Oh and also...

Help me remember  
your names  
please



## What's expected of you?

- Come to each class prepared to participate by asking questions and providing answers to others
- Conduct observation assignments
- Write a lot
  - Fieldnotes
  - Analysis
  - Individual writing assignments

## What do you get in return?

- Discussion Attendance, Weekly Writing Assignments, and Critique (20%)
- Mid-Terms (15% Each)
- Participation and Discussion in Lectures (10%)
- Writing Portfolio (40%)

## Regrading Policy

- If you request a change in grade, be aware that it could go up or down
- You should present Prof/TA with a written paragraph describing
  - Why your work has met the criteria of the grade you seek
  - Based on the evidence in the summary that you turned in
  - We will use this as a basis for discussion
- You need to turn in your regrade request within two weeks of the assignment being returned

## So, what does she expect?

- I know that life happens, other things compete with class time
- But, I promise it's easier if you do come to class—I add to resources
- And there's a cost... Flexibility = Responsibility
  - You have flexibility, but that means that you have to be responsible
  - like finding a field site- don't wait!
- I have a strong sense of deadlines
  - If I say 5pm, you should assume it's in the Pacific Time Zone
- I am a literal grader
  - Follow the instructions, use the structure
  - If I say “discuss X” then have a section called “X discussed”

## Participation and Discussion in Lectures

- I don't expect you to attend every lecture
  - I do expect you to attend most lectures
  - I don't want to hear why you aren't here if you aren't here
- Readings are important to prepare you for the lectures
  - I will expect you to have read everything at least once BEFORE class
  - I will ask you questions about the reading in discussion... I may also give up opportunities for bonus points based on the readings
- Not everyone feels comfortable talking in class
  - For you, it may be best to use the EEE tools or class mailing list to participate

## Mid-terms

- These are pretty standard
- You will take them in class, on paper, without books or notes
- They will cover information covered in the readings and in class

## Your Writing Portfolio

- This is a *WRITING* class. It is also an Orgs class.
- Do some fieldwork (we will cover how in class)
- Write it up!
  - Five different ways
  - Get critique throughout the quarter
  - At the end of the quarter, turn in your final writings PLUS a reflection on the process

## Discussion

- Every Friday at noon with Steve
- Some Fridays you will learn about a type of writing; some Fridays you will critique each other's writing
  - Project Overview
  - Case Study
  - Progress Report
  - Research Paper
  - Executive Summary

## Quick Overview of the Writing Styles

- Project Overview: general discussion of the place and issue you are tackling
- Case Study: A puzzle to be solved; more than a description
- Progress Report: Plan/timeline/milestones, where you are, open issues, risks, and plans
- Research Paper: like the ones you have been reading in 161 and in this class but shorter
- Executive Summary: Site, the problem, the solution, why now and how

And now on to the academic part  
of today...

## Metaphors

- Each metaphor suggests a way of thinking
  - none of them is absolutely right!
  - need to see all sides of the issues
  - useful in different circumstances
- What varies?
  - historical period, relations to other disciplines, boundaries
  - implications for design

Think about:

- How these metaphors explain what organizations do
- How they explain how people act in organizations
- How they explain how organizations use information



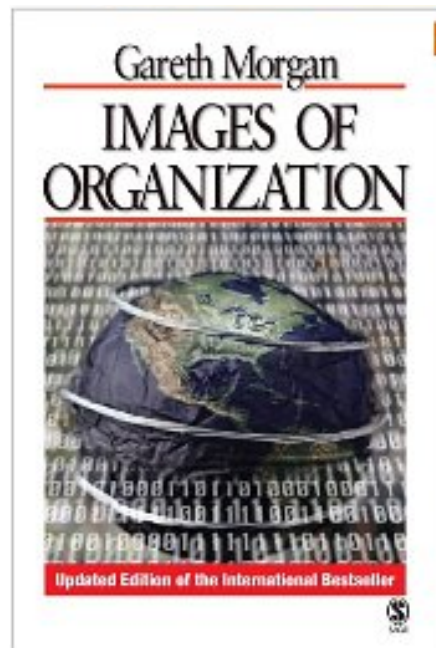
## Similes and Metaphors

- metaphors are conceptual systems
  - a set of associations between one thing and another
  - framing ways of thinking
  - arguably, our brains are wired in terms of metaphors
- Lakoff and Johnson, “Metaphors We Live By”
  - time is money
  - argument is war
  - activities are containers
  - up is good, down is bad

## A book of metaphors

(We will not cover them all):

- machines
- organisms
- brains
- cultures
- political systems
- prisons
- flux and transformation
- instruments of domination



## Next Class

- Organizations as Machines
- Read Chapter 2 in the Morgan book (scanned online)
- Start to think about where you might want to do some observations (we can chat in class)