

ANTH 303 Anthropological Theory

By Susan Vincent

Missed class assignment for 7 Sept. 2017

Glick Schiller, Nina (2016) "Positioning theory: An introduction." **Anthropological Theory** 16(2-3): 133-145.

1) a brief summary (in your own words) of the argument of the reading

Glick Schiller argues that anthropological theory should have politics at its core. Specifically, she takes the position that anthropological theory should work towards social justice, that it should recognize different positions (gender, class, age, "race," "cultural" background, historical experience of colonialism, place in a political hierarchy, etc.), that it should be inclusively for and from everyone, and that it should arise from empirical observation to produce an understanding that is close to reality. It should be written in accessible language and should take the view that cultures are not essentially distinct, but that human experience shares commonalities.

2) a brief summary (in your own words) of the evidence being used to support the argument

This work is the introduction to a special issue of the journal, **Anthropological Theory**, of which Glick Schiller is one of the editors. She refers to the other contributions in the issue, highlighting their specific claims about theory, and emphasizing their points of common concern, as well as the particular ways they pursue theory.

3) your appraisal of the validity of the claims being made in the article.

This is not always as accessibly written as Glick Schiller claims theory should be. Further, I have concerns about the term "glocal", in that it tends to emphasize dynamic "global" culture, to which "local" culture simply responds and adapts. This may often be empirically true, but it would assist the theoretical and political project that Glick Schiller and the others have if more emphasis could be placed on how there is a dynamic intermingling that is mutually constitutive. For the rest, I am in agreement with her.