

THIRD

EDITION

Carol Delaney

with Deborah Kaspin

An Experiential Introduction
to Anthropology

WILEY Blackwell

PRAISE FOR THE SECOND EDITION

"Using an innovative and novel framework, Delaney's *Investigating Culture* moves students through a series of anthropological concepts and demonstrates the ways in which universal human concepts – time, space, family, status, and gender – are reformulated across the breadth of human cultural diversity. This book draws from classical and contemporary ethnographic texts providing students a week-by-week journey through the study of human culture. Pedagogically brilliant, easy to teach, and well structured, this work provides students with engaging assignments, topics for discussion, and advanced questions for those interested in more advanced research. I use it every year..."

Michael Wilcox, Stanford University

In this fully updated and revised third edition of *Investigating Culture: An Experiential Introduction to Anthropology*, Delaney and Kaspin build on the foundations of their popular and student-friendly textbook, exploring key anthropological concepts of human culture including: language, the body, food, and time, alongside a wealth of new research material, case studies, and examples.

The new edition includes an increased emphasis on the intersections of culture and power (especially with regards to race, class, and governance) along with all-new material on Kaspin's research in Malawi and New England, and on Delaney's recent pilgrimage along El Camino de Santiago in north-western Spain.

Chapters incorporate the latest information relating to such topical concerns as nuclear waste, sports injuries, the World Trade Center memorial, the food pyramid, fashion trends, electronic media, and many more.

As in previous editions, *Investigating Culture* continues to challenge students to think in new ways and apply their insights to their own lives. With carefully chosen readings, exercises, and more, Delaney and Kaspin's essential student textbook retains its reputation as an innovative and invaluable introduction to the field of anthropology that shows students how to gain an understanding of other cultures – as well as their own.

Carol Delaney is Associate Professor Emerita of Cultural and Social Anthropology at Stanford University. She is author of *The Seed and the Soil: Gender and Cosmology in Turkish Village Society* (1991), *Abraham on Trial: The Social Legacy of Biblical Myth* (1998), and *Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem* (2011).

Deborah Kaspin is an Adjunct Professor of Anthropology at Rhode Island College and has also taught at Yale University, the University of Virginia, and Wheaton College. She is editor of *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa* (2002) with Paul Landau.

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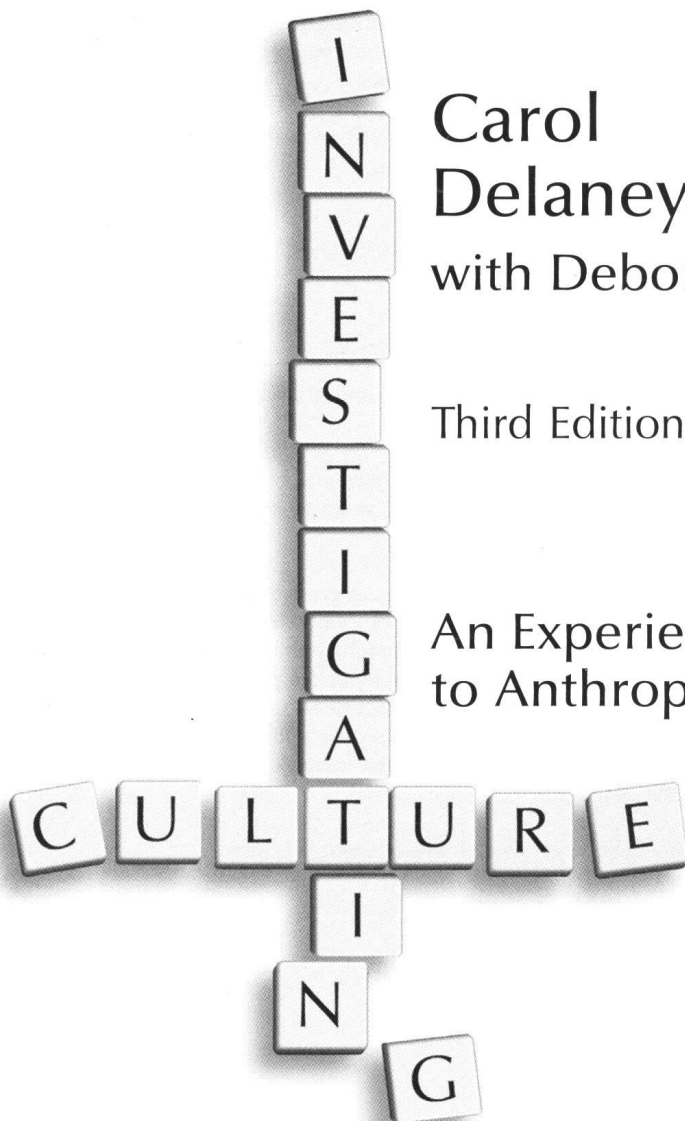
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INVESTIGATING CULTURE

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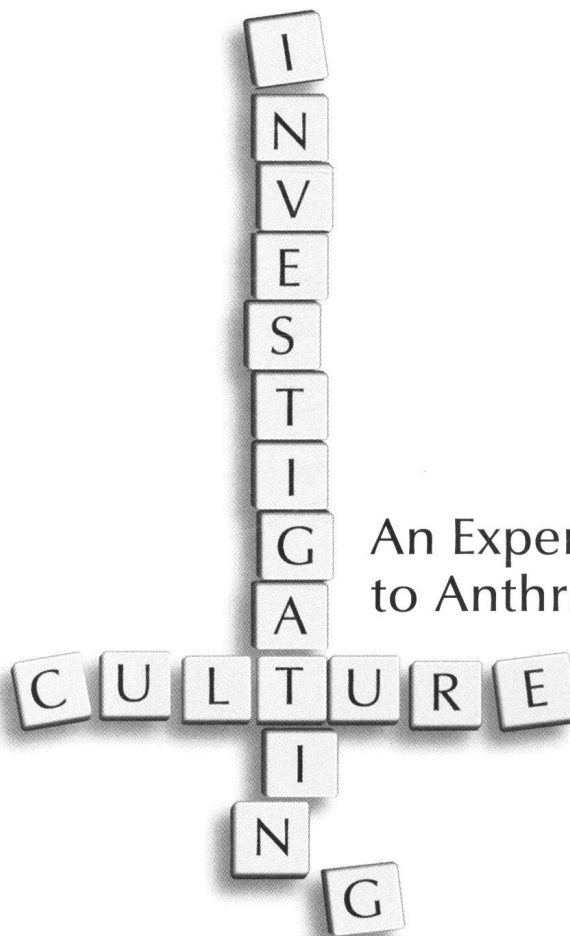
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An Experiential Introduction
to Anthropology

*To all of the students
who have participated in one
version or another of our
Investigating Culture classes.*

Acknowledgments

The course on which this book is based emerged as a result of “trial by fire” when I had to offer a course – to start in two weeks’ time – in cultural anthropology and comparative religion to a small group of freshmen in the University Professors’ Program at Boston University. I had very little time to prepare and decided to use the class as an experiment, that is, to use the experience of entering the university as an analogy to think about what it was like for anthropologists to go elsewhere. It worked. It was exciting. We had a great time and learned a lot. I continue to hear from the students who took that first course long ago (1986), and who feel it set them on a path of discovery. This what an undergraduate education ought to be.

I taught the course regularly at Stanford University, where it came to the attention of Jane Huber, an editor at Blackwell Publishers. She first suggested that it become a book. I was able to hire as research assistants several students who were eligible for federal work-study grants. They made many trips to the library and found material on the Internet, with which they were far more proficient than I. Even more important, they served as “guinea pigs,” telling me when the tone was all wrong or that a particular example was passé, and suggested new topics and new material. Here I acknowledge the help of Alisha Niehaus (my first student research assistant), who was indefatigable in locating interesting material and telling me when I was “off.” Sam Gellman and Andrea Christensen helped during the summer of 2001, and Andrea, along with Katie Cueva, helped during the final phases in the summer of 2002. They had a tough job: in addition to new research, they had to trace everything I had neglected to record, and serve as editors, reading and rereading each chapter. In addition, my daughter, Elizabeth Quaratiello, and colleagues Miyako Inoue (Stanford) and Don Brenneis (University of California, Santa Cruz) read and made suggestions for the language chapter. Steve Piker, a professor at Swarthmore, was brave enough to try out the penultimate draft on his students at the same time I used it with mine, and the response was gratifying.

Because the response from students and professors to the first edition was very positive, I was asked to prepare a second edition. I took on this task after I had retired from Stanford and was teaching the course at Brown University. Once again, my students helped to pinpoint areas that needed updating. In particular I wish to acknowledge Sarah Cocuzzo, Lydia Magyar, and Andrew Mathis, who met with me on a regular basis. As we went over each chapter, they made suggestions for revisions and brought in material from their experience and independent research. To all of these people I extend my heartfelt thanks. Your input made this a better book, and I am deeply grateful for your help.

The second edition would not have happened without the gentle persistence of Rosalie Robertson at Blackwell Publishers. When she suggested that I find a collaborator, I immediately thought of Deborah Kaspin, who had been a fellow graduate student at the University of Chicago, and had taught at the University of Virginia, Yale University, Wheaton College, and Rhode Island College. Working with her proved to be a great pleasure; not only did she smooth out the narrative and update existing material, but she added material from her own research and made subtle but important elaborations and clarifications in the text. She also drew on her own teaching experience to suggest ways to make the material more accessible to a broader student population.

In this, the third and final edition of *Investigating Culture*, we have updated material in the first and second editions, and added new material not found in either. Because I am now retired from teaching, we did not hire students to act as research assistants or “guinea pigs,” but drew instead on our own work experience and concerns. Much of the new material comes from my research in Turkey and in Spain, and from Deborah Kaspin’s in Malawi. Much else comes from revisiting topics in the earlier editions that we felt warranted fresh insight and consideration. We also worked to make this the most readable of the three editions. In all of these efforts we are very grateful to our editor, Giles Flitney, whose scrupulous attention to detail saved us from some embarrassing goofs. He engaged our subject matter seriously, pointed out weaknesses in fact and logic, and relentlessly chased down large and small errors in grammar, syntax, and consistency. Our hats are off to Giles for ensuring that this is, indeed, the best of the three editions.

Notwithstanding the updates and additions, the third edition remains committed to the goals of the first and second. Unlike most introductory anthropology textbooks, ours is intended less to teach facts *about* other cultures, and more to help students learn to investigate any culture, including their own. Additionally, this book is not constructed according to traditional categories such as the family, religion, economy, and politics, because we feel these domains cannot be so easily separated. Instead, it is organized in terms of space, time, language, social relations, body, food, clothing, and culture icons – important people, places, and performances – in order to show how systems of cultural symbols and meanings span a range of domains. Material gleaned from a variety of cultures is used primarily as illustration, so that the text and the ethnographic exercises will enable students to think like anthropologists. Towards this end, we hope that professors will draw on their own experience and expertise to widen the scope of the issues we raise.

Although this book was originally intended for entering freshman, it can be used at any time during college, might even be adapted for high school, and has been used productively

for people posted to positions in foreign countries – military, diplomats, journalists, and so on. We hope that all future users of this book will find enlightenment, inspiration, new perspectives, and ways of making connections between things they never thought were related.

Carol Delaney
Deborah Kaspin

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