

Readings in Legal Anthropology

ANG 6930 – 24B1

Fall 2017



FIGURE 44. The magical path of the pea weevil larva

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Mondays 7-9 (1:55-4:55pm)
CBD 0230
Office Hours:
Tues. 2-4:30pm or by appt.

Course Description: In this class, we examine some thematic crossings and convergences between the philosophy of law and the tradition of anthropology in light of recent ethnographic studies on the legal entanglements of neoliberalism, postcolony and the aftermaths of counter-insurgency wars. Given that legal phenomena begin with and are primarily entailed through relations—above all, the movements of bodies and passions that shape and alter social life—the course’s theoretical orientation is broadly empiricist. We will focus, however, less on relationality per se than on the specificity of relations themselves: their terms, potency, transformational potential, and affective charge. We will also question what the word “law” variously names—whether it draws upon violence and provocation, endorses rights, ramifies through divergent temporalities or haunts the imagination. Why should so much legal practice and scholarship revolve around attempts to anchor sense and reference? Is rendering evidence itself not always a reading into or out of *something*: a confession, an extended silence, a cautious look, a nervous twitching, a partial print...? As such this seminar does not take reading for granted. Rather, through a slow, careful review of a handful of select canonical and contemporary texts, we will consider the multiple rhythms, pleasures, solitudes and encounters enabled by historically-situated acts of reading (including our own) for what new, critical insights they can bring to the anthropology of law.

Overview of Requirements: This class is run as a seminar with active participation in all discussions expected. At least once during the semester each student will be asked to prepare and present a seminar report on one or more of the assigned readings. There is a final paper—of which an abstract is due by mid-semester.

Required

Butler, *Antigone's Claim* (Columbia UP, 2002)

Hobbes, *The Elements of Law* (Oxford UP, 2008)

Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Int'l Publishers Co. 1963)

Obarrio, *The Spirit of the Laws in Mozambique* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2014)

Rojas-Perez, *Mourning Remains* (Stanford UP, 2017)

Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise* (Cambridge UP, 2007)

Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Cambridge UP, 1999)

Strathern, *Kinship, Law and the Unexpected* (Cambridge UP, 2005)

The above books have been placed on reserve at Library West. All remaining assigned or supplementary readings may be downloaded from the Canvas course page.

Attendance: Please arrive punctually and remain until the end of class. An attendance sign-up sheet will be circulated each session. If you must miss class, please inform me ahead of time (or as soon as possible) and provide appropriate documentation. Don't forget to contact a classmate and obtain notes on materials covered while away.

Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are excused; however, proper notification must still be provided. **Please note:** *More than one unexcused absence will undermine performance in the course. After the second unexcused absence, the final grade will be reduced a full letter. Students with four or more unexcused absences risk failing. Bonus credit will, however, be granted for perfect (or near perfect) attendance.*

For official UF Policy on attendance and absences please consult:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Evaluations – Final course grades will be calculated according to a combination of three criteria:

Participation (35%): A grade for participation will be assessed at the end of the semester based on the degree to which you play an active, informed role in class discussions, and in so doing contribute to the course's overall success. Please be prepared at each session to share your impressions, questions and interpretations of all assigned materials. You are also highly encouraged to meet with me in office hours two or three times during the semester to talk about your progress in the course and your on-going work on the final project.

Seminar Report/Presentation (25%): You will be responsible for the preparation and presentation of one seminar report (length: 5-6 double spaced pages) on the topic of your assigned week. The seminar report should not merely summarize but offer a well-crafted, spirited interpretation that situates the required readings within the ideas and concepts of the course. It should also outline specific concerns and hone questions. Student(s) in charge of the presentation must circulate a list of discussion points and questions *at least 24 hours* prior to class (that is, no later than 2pm Sunday) via Canvas.

Term project essay (40%): The final paper should be an original, persuasive and creative engagement with one or more of the class concepts. Of approximately 5500-7000 words in length, it should contribute directly towards the development of a conference paper, journal article or dissertation chapter. *A concise 250-word abstract outlining the objectives of the project is due on October 16.*

The term project essay must be handed in no later than the last day of class.

All paper must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins and pages numbered. *Staple and number the pages.* In addition to submitting a hard copy, please email me an electronic version.

Assignment Deadlines:

- 1) seminar paper: TBA
- 2) final project abstract: October 16
- 4) final paper: December 4

Late policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class of the calendar deadline. Seminar reports handed in late but still within one week of the original due date will be docked the equivalent of a full letter grade. After that they will no longer be accepted. No extensions will be granted for the final term paper.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. All work submitted for a grade must be free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations of one's own efforts. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question. In such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students.

If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. See: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/seminars-modules/academic-integrity-module> also <http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=2486#academic-integrity>

ADA Statement: "Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the

instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the [Disability Resource Center](#) to assist in planning accommodations.”

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments and exams: 94-100=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 84-86=B; 80-83=B-; 77-79=C+; 74-76=C; 70-73=C-; 67-69=D+; 64-66=D; 60-63=D-; 59 and below=E (failing).

You may consult current UF policy on how grade point averages are calculated at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>.

Course feedback: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Additional UF Resources:

Health & Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student
- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road (392-1575)
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
- University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- Student Health Care Center (392-1161) <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>

Academic

- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- The Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall (864-1138)
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/>
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union (392-1601) <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Please note: I may make minor adjustments to class readings or assignment requirements during the course of the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.

Course Schedule

week 1	problems
8/21	Kafka, "the problem of our laws" Pitt-Rivers, "the law of hospitality"
week 2	bodies
8/28	Hobbes, <i>The Elements of Law</i>
week 3	no class
9/4	Labor Day Holiday
week 4	prophecies
9/11	Spinoza, <i>Theological-Political Treatise</i>
week 5	sovereignities
9/18	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> Butler, <i>Antigone's Claim</i>
week 6	revolutions
9/25	Marx, <i>The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte</i>
week 7	myths
10/2	Sorel, <i>Reflections on Violence</i>
week 8	readings
10/9	final project workshop

week 9	relations	
10/16	Strathern, <i>Kinship, Law & the Unexpected</i>	<u>due</u> : final essay abstract
week 10	customs	
10/23	Obarrio, <i>The Spirit of the Laws in Mozambique</i> , Introduction & Part I	
week 11	reforms	
10/30	Obarrio, <i>The Spirit of the Laws in Mozambique</i> , Part II & Conclusion	
week 12	prescriptions	
11/6	TBA	
week 13	aftermaths	
11/13	Rojas-Perez, <i>Mourning Remains</i> (Introduction, chapters 1-4)	
week 14	peoples	
11/20	Rojas-Perez, <i>Mourning Remains</i> (chapters 5-8, Afterword)	
week 15	research projects	
11/27	presentations	
week 16	research projects	
12/4	presentations	<u>due</u> : final paper