



ANT 4274 sec. 2975
Political Anthropology:
Case Studies of Classic Themes & Contemporary Concerns

Wed, per.10E1 (5:10-8:10pm)

Rm. 120 Pugh Hall

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(illustrations: spectraleyes.com, nomadlife.com, newint.org, globalgang.org)

Course Description

Political Anthropology is a vast field covering the spectrum of human political organization, past and present. In addition to documenting the organization of political life in small-scale societies, political anthropologists are concerned with the incorporation of such societies into wider political orders via colonialism, capitalism and processes of predatory expansion. The field equally seeks to understand the similarities and differences between indigenous, non-western and non-modern polities, and modern states. As few so-called 'traditional societies' remain to be discovered (or have ceased to exist) political anthropologists have become increasingly preoccupied with the nation-state and the challenges and alternatives that follow in its wake.

Whatever the specific society, location or time-period at hand, this realm of anthropological inquiry hinges on four fundamental concerns. 1. The problem of order: How is political life structured? Through what mechanisms are social relations regulated and power distributed? 2. The problem of inequality: How is the unequal distribution of power and resources achieved and sustained? How are inequalities experienced and how is opposition to them expressed? 3. The problem of culture: In what ways are cultural symbols, beliefs and practices bound up with political life? How do they represent and reinforce systems of domination as well as resistance? 4. The problem of violence: How is violence expressed and contained? How does it contribute to both the constitution and break down of specific political orders?

In this class, we bring these perspectives to bear on case studies of peoples and polities in Africa, Asia and the Americas. We also explore their relevance with regard to contemporary political concerns, ranging from the mobilization of rural communities against global capitalism and development interventions, and the persistence of gendered inequality around the world, to the prevalence of violence within modern nation-states and the sweep of militarization at home and abroad. The course equally attends to the politics of anthropological practice, whether the dangers, risks and ethics

of anthropological research or the role of anthropology in revealing the dynamics of political abuse and political empowerment.

This course will be meaningful to students interested in activism and social change, international issues and careers, engaged interaction with broad spectrum of the American public, or simply a better understanding their own context and community. By developing students' familiarity with the tools and tenets of anthropological inquiry through research, writing, data analysis, discussion and debate, the ultimate goal of the class is to cultivate an informed skepticism with regard to received knowledge so we can all ask better questions about the 'foreign' and the 'familiar.'

Course Requirements

Unit 1 Exam (Feb 16): 30%

Unit 1 Yanomamo Position Paper: (Jan 26): 10%

Unit 2 Gender Position Paper (Mar 2): 10%

Unit 2 Social Movement Research Paper (Mar 30) 20%

Unit 3 Militarization and Security Research Proposal (Apr 20) 20%

Participation and Attendance: 10%

Course attendance and participation in discussions, debates and class presentations are required. Excused absence will require documentation from the student's advisor or physician. Unexcused absence may result in failure as stated in the Undergraduate Catalog. Late papers will not be accepted. No make-up or early exams will be administered. During class meetings, it is forbidden to use cell phones, use computers for anything but taking notes, or read material unrelated to the class. Students with disability requesting accommodation must provide documentation from the Dean of Students Office.

Required Texts (marked B in syllabus):

N. Chagnon, Yanomamo, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1997, 5th edition.

E. Fernea, Guests of the Sheik, Anchor, 1965

S. Sawyer, Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil and Neoliberalism in Ecuador, Duke, 2004.

K. Fosher, Under Construction: Making Homeland Security at the Local Level, U Chicago, 2009.

Used and early editions and internet purchase of books is recommended.

The remaining required course readings will be available on-line through the UF Library Electronic Course Reserves (ares).

All reading assignments are required. Students are expected to read the assigned material prior to the class designated on the syllabus and to bring the reading material to class with them.

Final Letter Grades: Grades will be assigned according to the following percentile breakdown.

100-93=A, 92-89=A-, 88-85=B+, 84-81=B, 80-77=B-, 76-73 =C+, 72-69= C, 68-65= C-, 64-61= D+, 60-57= D, 56-55= D-, < 55 = E (failing grade)

Tutoring: For scholastic assistance, please contact the [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, and the [Reading & Writing Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-0791.

Stress and Student Life: Students struggling with personal issues are encouraged to contact the UF [Counseling Center](#) located in P301 Peabody Hall at (352) 392-1575 or [Student Mental Health Services](#) in Room 245, Infirmary Bldg. at (352) 392-1171 for individual and group sessions or [Sexual Assault Recovery Services](#) (SARS) in the Student Health Care Center at (352) 392-1161.

Academic Honesty:

All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines and Honor Code, which have been accepted by the University. Violations of the Honor Code will be handled according to the guidelines set by Student Judicial Affairs.

Academic Honesty Guidelines

The Academic Honesty Guidelines at the University of Florida are designed to develop and engender a community of honor, trust and respect. The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students within the system receive the benefits of the academic pursuit of knowledge, free from the obstacles of lying, cheating and stealing. In return, the Academic Honesty Guidelines demand that students act with integrity in all of their endeavors. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to also act with integrity. Every student who approaches their studies with honesty and forthrightness suffers when another student attains an unfair advantage by cheating. An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. As a University of Florida student, one is expected to neither commit nor assist another in committing an academic honesty violation. Additionally, it is the student's duty to report observed academic honesty violations.

On all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied: **"On my honor I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."**

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action according to the judicial process. A student adjudicated responsible for violations of the Code of Student Conduct or the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall be subject to sanctions commensurate with the offense and any aggravating and mitigating circumstances, which may include reduced or failing grade, educational sanction, suspension or expulsion. (For more details go to: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm>)

The following actions are examples of violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines:

Cheating. The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes, but is not limited to, copying graded homework assignments from another student; working together with another individual(s) on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted by the teacher; looking or attempting to look at another student's paper during an examination; looking or attempting to look at text or notes during an examination when not permitted. Tendering of information includes, but is not limited to, giving your work to another student to be used or copied; giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after taking an exam; giving or selling a term paper or other written materials to another student; sharing information on a graded assignment.

Plagiarism. The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.

Misrepresentation. Any act or omission with intent to deceive a teacher for academic advantage. Misrepresentation includes using computer programs generated by another and handing it in as your own work unless expressly allowed by the teacher; lying to a teacher to increase your grade; lying or misrepresenting facts when confronted with an allegation of academic honesty.

Fabrication. The use of invented or fabricated information, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive for academic or professional advantage.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class 1. 1/5 Introduction: Overview of Course

UNIT 1: COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Class 2. 1/12 Fundamentals of Political Anthropology and Human Political Organization Case Study #1: Kalahari Band Societies

Background:

R. Lavenda and E. Schultz, Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology, McGraw Hill, 2007, pp. 112-124

T. Lewellen, Political Anthropology, Bergin & Garvey, 1992, pp. 22-30

Case Study:

G. Silberbauer, "Political Process in G/wi bands," in E. Leacock and R. Lee (eds), Politics and History in Band Societies, Cambridge, 1982, pp. 23-35.

R. Lee, "Conflict, Politics and Exchange," in The Dobe Ju/'huansi, Holt, 1993, pp. 93-108.

FILMS

Class 3. 1/19 Violence and Political Order in Tribal Societies Case Study #2: Yanomamo Peoples of Venezuela

N. Chagnon, Yanomamo, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1997, Ch. 1, 5, 6, 7 **B**

FILMS

Class 4. 1/26 Tribal Societies and Predatory Expansion: Debating the Ethics of Yanomamo Research

B. Ferguson, 'A Savage Encounter: Western Contact and the Yanomami War Complex', in R. Brian Ferguson and Neil L. Whitehead (eds.) War in the Tribal Zone: Expanding States and Indigenous Warfare, SAR, 1992, pp. 199-227. (read carefully!)

S. Davis, "Highways and the future of the Yanomamo," in Spradley & McCurdy eds., Conformity and Conflict, 1980, Little, pp. 379-388.

American Anthropological Association Code of Ethics"
on-line: www.aaanet.org

P. Tierney, "The Fierce Anthropologist," The New Yorker, Oct. 9, 2000

Borofsky, R. (ed), Yanomami: The Fierce Controversy and what we can learn from it, California, 2005, pp. 22-34, 61-71.

IN-CLASS DEBATE: Position Paper #1 due/do in class (10%)

Class 5. 2/2 Contemporary Roles and Relevance of Chieftaincy

Case Study #3: Chieftaincies in Ghana

T. Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa" (1983) in Perspectives on Africa, R. Grinker et al. eds, 2010, pp. 450-461

GA, AKAN, KUSASI/MAMPRUSSI material will be posted

(Optional 5% extra credit discussion write-up due 2/9)

Class 6. 2/9 Symbols, Ritual and States Power:

Case Study #4: The Balinese State

C. Geertz, Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali, Princeton, 1980, pp. 11-25, 121-136

B. Anderson, "The idea of power in Javanese culture," in Language and Power in Indonesia, Cornell, 1990, pp. 17-33.

FILM

Class 7. 2/16 Unit 1 Exam (30%)

In class examination

UNIT 2: DIFFERENCE & INEQUALITY; DOMINATION & RESISTANCE

Class 8. 2/23 The Politics of Gender

Case Study #6: Gendered Power in the Middle East

M. Rosaldo "Women, Culture and Society," in M. Rosaldo, ed. Women Culture and Society, Stanford, 1974, pp. 17-42, 97-12

Guests of the Sheik, Elizabeth Fernea, Anchor, 1989 **B**

FILM

Class 9. 3/2 The Politics of Gender

Case Study #6 continued: Gender and Power in the Middle East

L. Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving," American Anthropologist, 2002, 104/3, pp. 783-790.

L. Abu-Lughod, "Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power Through Bedouin Women," American Ethnologist, 17/1, pp. 41-55

Larry Rosen, Varieties of Muslim Experience: Encounters with Arab Political and Cultural Life, Princeton, 2008. excerpt.

IN CLASS DEBATE: Position Paper #2 due/do in class (10%)

NO CLASS MARCH 9: SPRING BREAK

Class 10. 3/16 Domination and Resistance: Structural Violence & Weapons of the Weak

Case Study #7: Indigenous Groups and Oil Companies in Ecuador

Background:

R. Robbins, R. Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism, Allyn & Bacon, 1999, pp. 305-316

P. Farmer, "On Suffering and Structural Violence," in N. Scheper-Hughes ed., Violence in War and Peace, Blackwell, 2004.

M. Edelman, Introduction, Peasants Against Globalization, Stanford, 1999, pp. 17-21

Case Study:

S. Sawyer, Crude Chronicles, 2004, Duke, Opening, Chs. 2, 3 **B**

Class 11. 3/23 Domination and Resistance: Social Movements Old and New

Case Study #7 cont'd: Indigenous Groups and Oil Companies in Ecuador

S. Sawyer, "Opening," Crude Chronicles, 2004, Duke, Chs. 4, 5, Closing **B**

C. Mendez et al., "Seeking Common Ground in Ecuador," Environment, 1998, Vol. 40, no. 5, pp. 13-27

LIBRARY VISIT

Class 12. 3/30 SOCIAL MOVEMENT RESEARCH PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Social Movement Research Papers and Presentations: Due in class (20%)

UNIT #3: THE NATION STATE AND VIOLENCE

Class 13. 4/6 War and Security on the Homefront

Case Study #8: Homeland Security in the Contemporary US

C. Lutz, Making War at Home in the United States: Militarization and the Current Crisis. *American Anthropologist*, 2002, 104 (3): 723-35.

K. Fosher, Under Construction: Making Homeland Security at the Local Level, University of Chicago, 2009. Introduction, Chapters 4-8. **B**

**Class 14. 4/13 The Militarization of Everyday Life
Case Study #9 and #10: JROTC and Militia Movements**

L. Bartlett and C. Lutz, "Disciplining Social Difference: Some Cultural Politics of Military Training in Public High Schools," *Urban Review*, Jun98, Vol. 30 Issue 2, pp.119-136.

Churchill, Robert H. To shake their guns in the tyrant's face : libertarian political violence and the origins of the militia movement. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009. excerpt.

Class 15. 4/20 Final Class - RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE (20%)