

ANTHROPOLOGY 6186 (4930)

SOCIETAL COLLAPSE ?:
**RELATIONSHIPS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE IN
RADICAL ADAPTIVE RECONFIGURATION**

RELEVANCE: By the end of the 20th century loss of human life, property and livelihood was significantly exceeded by losses to natural disasters and environmental change. “Ecological Refugees” now comprise more than 25 million people and constitute an ever-growing portion of the World’s displaced people. Global Warming will exacerbate this deteriorating situation during your life time and provide support opportunities for applied research underpinning informed future policy decisions.

The topic is “hot,” witness Jeered Diamond’s recent popular best seller, “COLLAPSE: HOW SOCIETIES CHOOSE TO FAIL OR SUCEED.” (that you are required to read before the first seminar meeting).

Concomitantly, some factions of the Anthropology community are shedding aspects of the traditional view of “culture as a super-organic phenomena” and post modernism to address radical environmental change and ensuing social stress in a positivistic mode. These works, just as Diamond’s, will guide our explorations and discussions of change. They include but are not limited to the following:

Bawen G. and R. Reycraft

2000 *Environmental Disaster and the Archaeology of Human Response*, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, Anthropology Papers No.7, Albuquerque.

Fagan, Brian

1999. *Floods, Famines, and Emperors: El Nino and the Fate of Civilizations*. New York: Basic

2004. *The Long Summer: How Climate Changed Civilization*. New York: Basic Books.

Oliver-Smith, A and S. Hoffman eds

1999 *The Angry Earth: Disasters in Anthropological Perspective*, , Routledge..

Susanna Hoffman and Anthony Oliver-Smith eds

2002 *Catastrophe & Culture*, School of American Research, Santa Fe.

Yoffee, Norman and George Cowgill, (eds.)

1991. *A Green History of the World: The Environment and the Collapse of Great Civilizations*. New York: Penguin.

Redman, Charles, Steven James, Paul Fish, and J. Daniel Rogers (eds.)

2004. *The Archaeology of Global Change: The Impact of Humans on Their environment*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books.

Prerequisites: Natural disaster and environmental change cross-cuts all disciplines and time frames. There is, of course a “time lag” frame work, as with Hurricane Katrina. Thus, we look at the topic in hind sight, while striving for foresight.

In terms of recent hind sight on global warming you must read: The Climate of Man, by E. Kolbert, New Yorker May 9, 2005.

Do that and then talk to me about your chances of getting into the seminar.

The seminar is open to all students of any discipline interested in the topic.

Seminar Structure: This is largely an exploratory reading course intended to bring all concerned parties into awareness of growing social concerns and the relevant literature about the consequences of environmental change.

We will have a scheduled first meeting at the designated UF time and place and explore the convenience of meeting elsewhere at an early evening hour.

Because this is an exploratory seminar, I would like no more than 6-8 participants at a maximum.. Thus, please contact me if you have interest in the course.

Written Work:

- 1) Weekly Assignments
- 2) Final Paper that should follow American Antiquity format with 2 references per page.

Grading: Class presentations, and Written work.