

Indigenous Amazonia

ANG 6930/ANT 4930; Spring 2021; Friday 3:00-6:00 pm

Instructor: Michael Heckenberger (mheck@ufl.edu)



Chief Afukaka Kuikuro, (New York, 10/2019) and Burial Urn from Marajoara culture.

Indigenous Amazonia is a hybrid seminar that focuses on native peoples of the lowland tropical forest region of South America from pre-Columbian times to the 21st century place of indigenous peoples in national and global arenas. The seminar considers indigenous peoples and their place in global debate on climate change, pandemics, poverty and marginality. The anthropological view shifts common scientific focus from impersonal environmental or economic forces, climate and development, to actual people, the heritage and points of view in dynamic historical, symbolic and political ecologies. For anthropologists and others working with indigenous and other traditional peoples, the question is not what but who is the Amazon: what or who is indigenous, why does this matter and to whom?

Considered globally, Amazonian peoples share much in common with other parts of Global South - the tropical world - and native peoples across the Americas who occupy marginal political and economic positions in contemporary Latin America societies. The interests of self-determination and social justice that pervade unified social movements, such as BIPOC, are amplified in Amazonia given their vulnerability and acute uncertainty, so extreme that many indigenous societies teeter on the brink of an existential crisis or even ethnocide in the 21st century.

Amazonian indigenous peoples not only have a deep and varied history in the region, rivaling other world areas, but their knowledge systems provide critical clues to preserving the Amazon for everyone. At its broadest level, the idea that Amazonians share basic generative cultural premises about humans, non-humans and us, provides a critical perspective, an alter-ego, on or of Western philosophy and science. In the seminar, we situate diverse indigenous histories in the context of broader historical and political ecology, which link people in communities that blur distinctions between diverse groups, including many traditional “mixed blood” peoples and even urban society. The seminar is guided by a critical point of view, which takes scientific discovery – itself as an invasive act, a form of colonization and control – as the object, foregrounding questions of positionality, voice and inclusion. The task is not only asking ourselves how we – the people in this Z-room, for instance – see and engage them, but how they can speak for themselves, including hybrid, transdisciplinary and inclusive (citizen science/public) knowledge production.

Format: Indigenous Amazonia is a hybrid delivery seminar with 50% being conducted via synchronous “live” Zoom meetings and discussion during the Friday 6-9 pm class time during weeks 1-7 and then 50% administered from the classroom with enrolled in-person students present and online only via “live” Zoom as before during week 8-14. Each week there will be lecture for 40-50 minutes. There will also be 30-50 minutes of discussion on readings. During many weeks there will also be guest speaker (one hour), including lectures on: Amazonian Dynamical Environmental Systems (Dr. Paul Baker, Duke); Holocene Domesticated Landscapes (Dr. Eduardo Neves, USão Paulo); Anthropocene Indigenous History (Dr. Helena Lima, Museu Goeldi); Indigenous Art, Agency and History (Dr. Carlos Fausto, Museu Nacional); Indigenous Languages & Native Histories (Dr. Bruna Franchetto, Museu Nacional); Colonial History & Hybrid Indigenous Spaces (Dr. Susanna Hecht, UCLA); and fire and environmental degradation in indigenous areas (Dr. Paulo Brando, UCIrvine). During the semester, we will schedule one or two in-class encounters with Chief Afukaka Kuikuro and leaders of the Kuikuro Indigenous Association. By mid-semester, we will have presentations and update forums for at least an hour each week, together with guest lectures and discussion of readings, including student-led discussion of 2 selected readings by each student over the course of the semester.

Individual projects: Each student will select an example from across indigenous Amazonia. The focus or point of departure could be about the past, whether millennia, centuries or decades ago, or a single indigenous group or person, in micro-historical detail, or it could take a general conceptual or practical topic. The project will be problem-oriented and tied to current issues, stakeholders and voice of indigenous peoples today to consider common multi-cultural solutions, something that can be relevant to the people themselves – addressing questions of free, prior and informed consent and engagement. There are 8 stepwise activities. Activities 1-5 include basic materials (problem statement, abstract, outline of topics and reading list to be developed into annotated bibliography of 5-10 readings, 1-2 of

which will be distributed and discussed by the class. Activities 6-8 are focused on three student products during the second half of semester: (1) a PowerPoint "reader" aimed at broad audience (to be presented mid-semester to the group); (2) abbreviated 3-5 slide presentation translated to Portuguese to AIKAX that emphasize relevance of project to partner indigenous people, the Kuikuro (mid-late semester); and (3) academic poster for final class/es presentation.

Evaluation: As a seminar, the class will depend on participation, including student selected topics. Participation includes weekly discussion thread, student-led discussion based on reading lists (10 readings annotated by each student based for their projects). Two PowerPoint presentations and final poster/product, as described above. All activities and discussion items (with instructions in individual assignments) are evaluated as submitted as either (1) satisfactory (fully meets the requirement or A), (2) passable (acceptably meets requirement, or B); or (3) unsatisfactory (C or below), which will be averaged for the final grade. All assignments can be resubmitted one time for revisions.

Provisional Course Outline (adjustable for student interests and speaker availability).

Note: Topics discussed in live Zoom lectures for weeks 1-7 are summarized more fully, since mid-late semester face-to-face will be developed in conjunction with student projects and presentations.

Week 1 (1/15): Who is the Amazon?

Lecture Topics: Introduction; What is the Amazon? Nature, History and Imaginary; Orientalism & the un-West; Perspective/Positionality, Familiarization and Pragmatics; The Science of Who and How (beyond method'n theory to the social life of research).

Readings:

Ailton Krenak, "Tomorrow is Not for Sale" & "Ideas to Postpone the End of the World" (2020)

Davi Kopenawa, "Words of Omama" (*The Falling Sky*, pp. 412-423)

Watch Video: "Lost Kingdoms of the Amazon" (2020; watch first 45 minutes)

Week 2 (1/22): What is Indigenous?

Lecture Topics: Indigenous history, cultural and linguistic areas; Eco-92 & UN Charter; Heritage politics and realities; Indigenous Associations and

Movements; Ethno-rights; from a world of science to world of research, and back again.

Readings:

Ailton Krenak, "Of Dreams and the Earth" & "The Humanity We Think We Are" (2020).

The Falling Sky (Davi Kopenawa/Bruce Albert); "Setting the Scene," pp. 1-10; "How this book was written," pp. 424-454.

Judith Butler, *Precarious Lives*, "Violence, Mourning and Politics" (2004)

Heck & Neves 2009, Amazonian Archaeology, *Annual Review of Anthropology*.

Viveiros de Castro 1996. Images of Nature and Society in Amazonian Ethnology, *Annual Review of Anthropology*.

Week 3 (1/29): Indigenous History: Deep Ecology

Topics: Long-term Historical Ecology & The Right to Life; Historical Ecology promoted by North American approaches and archaeology, inspired by early influence of Julian Steward and Carl Sauer in the mid-20th century. It considers these approaches in relation to contextual or pragmatic (applied) approaches that engage diverse viewpoints and promote not only interdisciplinary but transdisciplinary approaches, which bridge scientific and historical approaches, archaeology, ethnohistory, oral history, historical ethnography and indigenous knowledge systems.

Readings:

William Balee 2006, The Research Program of Historical Ecology, *Annual Review of Anthropology*

Charles Clement et al. 2015; Domestication of Amazonia before European Conquest, *Phil. Trans Royal Society B*

Bruno Latour 1998, From a World of Science to a World of Research, *Science*

Viveiros de Castro, 1998, Cosmological Deixis (*JRAI*)

2005, Perspectival Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Equivocation (*Tipiti/SALSA*)

Kopenawa & Albert, *The Falling Sky*, Words of a Yanomami Shaman (Davi Kopenawa & Bruce Albert), selections from Part I: Becoming Other, pp. 17-151.

Invited Guest: Dr. Paul Baker (Duke):

Week 4 (2/5): Deep Indigenous History: Anthropocene

Topics: Domesticated Landscapes and Indigenous Knowledge

Symbolic ecology and the Franco-Brazilian school, inspired by Claude Lévi-Strauss and dominated by Amazonian animism or so-called Amerindian perspectivism that treats Amazonian ontologies as the extreme other edge or alter-egos of Western society and science, which makes logical sense historically, as they are – one of the last and last to be contacted. Also continues discussion of contextual approach, which shares views deriving from hermeneutics (interpretation) and explores way people dwell and do in landscapes, as well as pragmatics and critical approaches in multi-cultural research, rather than interrogation or participant observation as the primary tool.

Readings: Kopenawa & Albert, *The Falling Sky*, Words of a Yanomami Shaman (Davi Kopenawa & Bruce Albert), selections from Part III: *The Falling Sky*, pp. 299-411;

Eduardo Kohn, Interview with Phillipe Descola (2009);

Neves and Heck 2019, *Call of the Wild*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*

Invited Guest: Dr. Eduardo Neves (MAE, USão Paulo)

Week 5 (2/12): Guianas/Carib & History:

Topics: Colonialism & Indigenous History; Critical Political Ecology - part of the politics of nature is packaging by elite groups who know better than the groups themselves, so called mechanical (in practice) and statistical models: the theory is so deeply cited as to be impenetrable and assumed (the "I" of research). It is also a political question how these groups are brought into the fold, particularly scientific methodologies, tools, resources, dissemination, and credit.

Readings:

Neil Whitehead: Chapter 1: *The Discoverie as Enchanted Text*; Chapter 2: *The Discoverie as Ethnological Text*, in *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana*, Sir Walter Raleigh.

Susanna Hecht, selections from *Euclides da Cunha* (from Hecht 2013).

Latour 2009, "Amerindian Perspectivism: Type or Bomb."

Invited Guest: Susanna Hecht

Week 6 (2/19): Tupi-Guarani & Arawak/Xingu I

Topics: TG and Arawak; Garden Cities (Science I, II and Amazonian Urbanism); Critical Political Ecology: taking scientific discovery itself, as an invasive, and foregrounding the question of positionality, voice and inclusion.

Readings:

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *Cosmology and Society, From the Enemies Point of View* (1992);

Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think* (2016)

Nahum-Claudel (2018), "Introduction," "Affinal Diplomacy in a United, Egalitarian Society," *Vital Diplomacy: The Ritual of Everyday Life on a Dammed River in Amazonia*.

MHeck: "Amazonia 1492" (2003), "Pre-Columbian Urbanism, Anthropogenic, Landscapes, and the Future of the Amazon" (2008), Xingu Garden Cities: Amazonian Urbanism, or What? (2020);

Terence Turner, "The Crisis of Late Structuralism: Perspectivism and Animism: Rethinking Culture, Nature, Spirituality and Bodiliness" (2009).

Week 7 (2/26): Perspectivism & Pragmatism/Xingu II

Topics: Xingu Story Map & Collaboration

Readings:

MHeck: "Anthropology as Indigenous Advocacy" (2004), "Entering the Agora" (2007), *Mapping Indigenous Histories* (2009);

Helena Lima, *Community Archaeology in NW Amazon/Gurupa* (2020); Xingu Story Map;

Invited Guest: Dr. Helena Lima (Museu Goeldi, Belém)

Week 8 (3/5): Abstract and project

Preparation of poster for AIKAX); distribution of reading lists; Select one reading from five readings for annotated bibliography (distributed to class by 3/5)

Week 9 (3/12): Cultural Heritage

Topics: Museums and Materiality

Readings: Student-selected readings; Moraes et al. 2021.

Invited Guest: Bruno Moraes (Museu Goeldi, Belém) and AIKAX

Week 10 (3/19): The right to language and self-determination

Topics: Indigenous Language, southern Carib, Kayapo, gender

Readings: student-selected reading and:

Franchetto 2006, "Ethnography in Language Documentation," *Essentials of Language Documentation*.

Zanotti 2016, "The Making of a Border and Territory" (Ch. 2), "Communities and Conservation Redux" (Ch. 5), "Returns" (Ch. 6), *Radical Territories in the Brazilian Amazon: The Kayapo's Fight for Just Livelihoods*.

Invited Guest: Dr. Bruna Franchetto (PPGAS, Museu Nacional, Rio)

Week 11 (3/26): Familiarity, Art and Identity in the Modern World

Topics: Politics of Nature: Climate and Pandemics

Readings: student-selected reading and:

Carlos Fausto 1999, *Of Enemies and Pets: Warfare and Shamanism in Amazonia (American Ethnologist)*

2020, "Body Artifact," "A Chief's Two Bodies," other reading from *Art Effects*.

Invited Guest: Dr. Carlos Fausto (PPGAS, Museu Nacional, Rio)

Week 12 (4/2): Who is the Indigenous in Amazonia, and why does that matter in a dissolving world?

Topics: Urban Indigenous Realities

Readings: student-selected reading and:

Nick Kawa 2016; "Forests" (Ch. 5) and "From the Anthropocene to the Ecozoic" (Ch. 6), *Amazonian in the Anthropocene*.

Balee et al. 2020, Ancient Transformation, Current Conservation: Traditional Forest Management on the Iri River, Brazilian Amazon (*Human Ecology*)

Invited Guest: Dr. Paulo Brando (UC-Irvine)

Week 13 (4/9): Student-led discussion (& AIKAX revised poster)

Based on student-selected reading lists

Week 14 (4/16): In-class poster session and group conclusions

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:

UF POLICIES

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This course will be using systems that check for copying and plagiarism from websites and fellow students. Your instructors can Google too. If there is an infraction, you will receive a warning as well as a zero (0) for the assignment and be reported to the Dean of Students Office. After receiving a warning, if cheating persists, you will receive a zero (0) for the subsequent assignment, be reported to the Dean of Students Office again, and incur any further penalties that are administered by the Dean of Students Office.

Once you have been reported for cheating or plagiarism you cannot drop the class. Plagiarism includes copying from websites or other students. Any direct quotes should be properly cited. If you have questions about this, please use the Course Questions discussion board or email your instructors directly. You are strongly discouraged from sharing your notes for this class on any online website. You are not permitted to distribute screen shots of any course content.

Basic guidelines for not plagiarizing: • Do not copy and paste from any website • Write your own words • Do not collaborate with fellow students on any assignment unless otherwise noted • Use in-text citations when using direct quotes, when paraphrasing, or when citing original research (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/2/>)

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS: 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 semesters, 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>.