

Anthropology of Religion

ANT 3241x1289 :: Summer A 2011 (May 9 - June 17)
Period 3 (11:00am - 12:15pm), Monday - Friday, Turlington L005

Instructor: Ryan Morini
Email: rmorini@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00 - 3:00pm and by appointment
Office: B325 Turlington

Required Texts:

Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft (3rd ed.)
Philip L. Stein and Rebecca Stein
ISBN: 0205718116

Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux
Nicholas Black Elk and John G. Neihardt
ISBN: 0803283857

Additional required reading materials will be downloadable from the “Resources” folder on the course website on Sakai (<http://lss.at.ufl.edu>). Some optional readings may also be offered.

Recommended Texts:

A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion (2nd ed.)
Michael Lambek
ISBN: 1405136146

Course Description:

This course is designed to offer a general overview of anthropological approaches to religion, spirituality, and the supernatural. It is cross-cultural in scope, and we will consider the past as well as the present. The focus is primarily through the lens of cultural anthropology, though we will include considerations from all four “subfields” (besides cultural, these include archaeology, biological anthropology, and linguistic anthropology).

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will:

- Have a basic understanding of the value of anthropological approaches to religion
- Have knowledge of different theories of religion as it relates to culture and society
- Understand the significance and functions of rituals, myths, and symbols
- Develop a deeper understanding of human religious and cultural diversity
- Understand the relationships between religion, politics, economics, and history

Mutual Respect:

This course does not promote or denigrate any particular religious belief, practice, or person, though it will promote critical thinking toward each and all of these. All religious practices will be regarded as forms of social and cultural expression. Open discussion is encouraged and everyone’s opinion is valid as we strive to understand the topic in a spirit of free inquiry and

critical thinking. Students should leave any preconceived notions and prejudices behind when they enter the classroom and at all times be respectful of others' opinions.

Grading:

- **Exams:** There will be **3** exams worth **40** points each, 120 points total (60% of the final grade.) Exams will be non-cumulative, and will be taken on Sakai--but be advised that concepts from earlier units may be integral to later ones. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. There will also be a review during the class period before each exam; these reviews are intended not only to recapitulate previous material, but deepen and reinforce students' understanding of key concepts.
- **Quizzes:** There will be **5** quizzes worth **10** points each, 50 points total (25% of the final grade). Quizzes will be administered in class; the instructor reserves the right to give them without advance notice.
- **Journals:** There will be **3** journal entries worth **10** points each, 30 points total (15% of the final grade). Every other week I will post a topic for a reflective journal entry on Sakai; specific directions will be on each document. In general, each entry will be 1-2 double-spaced pages (minimum one *full* page) in size 12 font or smaller with 1-inch margins. Grades will be based largely on critical thinking, creativity, and reflection; grammar, spelling, and flow will factor in on a more minor level. Journals will be
- **Total points:** There will be **200** total points available in the course.

Course Grading Scale (by %)

A 93-100	B 84-86.9	C 74 - 76.9	D 64-66.9
A- 90-92.9	B- 80-83.9	C- 70-73.9	D- 60-63.9
B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9	E 59.9 and below

48-Hour Grade Dispute Policy

Students who wish to discuss grades on assignments and exams should contact the instructor within 48 hours of posting to arrange a meeting time. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to question grades or request special consideration. Forty-eight hours after posting, all grades are final.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class punctually--i.e. show up early rather than late. While attendance is not taken in class, the instructor reserves the right to institute pop quizzes, sign-in sheets, or other measures to enforce attendance if it becomes necessary to do so.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty will not be tolerated. As a registered student in this course and at the University of Florida, you have agreed to the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University." If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating on exams you will receive an automatic

zero and will be referred to University administration for disciplinary action. If you have any questions, please refer to the University's Honor Code which is available online at: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>

Student Conduct

All students must comply with the Student Conduct Code which can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php>. Any behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instructional program will not be tolerated. Please turn off cell phones and all other electronic devices before class. Laptops may only be used to take notes. Disruptive students will be asked to leave. **Texting or talking on cell phones is not permitted during class.**

Disability Accommodations:

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting further accommodation. The Disability Resource Office can be found at 001 Reid Hall. Further information can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp>

Class Schedule:

Note: Readings on Sakai may be subject to change; advance notice will be provided if such changes are necessary.

Week / Day	Reading	Topic
Week 1 (5/9 - 5/13)		
Mon (5/9)		Introduction to class, overview of syllabus
Tue (5/10)	Stein & Stein Ch. 1	Overview of anthropology Discussion of key concepts
Wed (5/11)		Defining and discussing terms (religion, spirituality, magic, 'witchcraft,' etc.); further discussion of the anthropological approach
Thu (5/12)	Stein & Stein Ch. 2; Edwards, "Myths Over Miami"	Dimensions of myths and mythology: 'Myths' vs. 'religion,' 'myths' vs. 'science,' myths about 'myths'
Fri (5/13)	Stein & Stein Ch. 3; Sinha, "Theories of Symbolization"	Defining 'symbols' and the role of symbolism in religion and culture
Week 2 (5/16 - 5/20)		
Mon (5/16)	Stein & Stein Ch. 4;	Defining ritual and its significance

	Denbow et al. 2009	to religion and culture
Tue (5/17)	Stein & Stein Ch. 5; Price-Williams & Hughes 1994; Heinze 2008	Altered states of consciousness: biological and cultural dimensions
Wed (5/18)	Stein & Stein Ch. 6	Religious specialists & cultural expertise
Thu (5/19)		Review for exam Journal entry #1 due
Fri (5/20)		EXAM 1 (no class)
Week 3 (5/23 - 5/27)		
Mon (5/23)	Stein & Stein Ch. 7	Magic, sorcery, divination; ‘magic’ in the popular imaginary
Tue (5/24)	Stein & Stein Ch. 8; Harner (excerpt on <i>tsanta</i>)	Souls, ghosts, and death
Wed (5/25)	Fadiman Ch. 4; Wachtel Ch. 4; Barber Ch. 12 (skim)	Monsters & other creatures-- zombis, vampires, pishtacos, kawasiri, golems, etc.
Thu (5/26)	Davis (excerpts); Seabrook (excerpt)	Zombies: a four-field case study of the living dead
Fri (5/27)	Stein & Stein Ch. 9; Harding, “Convicted by the Holy Spirit”	Gods and spirits
Week 4 (5/30 - 6/3)		
Mon (5/30)	MEMORIAL DAY -- NO CLASS	
Tue (5/31)	Stein & Stein Ch. 10	Witchcraft and sorcery in cross- cultural perspective
Wed (6/1)	Stein & Stein Ch. 11; Comaroff and Comaroff 2008	Culture change and religion: ‘the search for new meaning’
Thu (6/2)		Review for exam Journal entry #2 due
Fri (6/3)		EXAM 2 (no class)
Week 5 (6/6 - 6/10)		
Mon (6/6)	Deloria, “Anthropologists and Other Friends”; Langford, “Our Heritage, Your Playground”	Colonialism, postcoloniality, and millenarian movements
Tue (6/7)	Black Elk Speaks (ch. 1-8)	Lakota Sioux spirituality; overview

		of Native American history and the political and legal history of Native religion
Wed (6/8)	Black Elk Speaks (ch. 9-18)	Can the subaltern speak? Discussion of native religious texts written for Western audiences
Thu (6/9)	Black Elk Speaks (finish book); Wallis 1999	Native religion vs. New Age mysticism
Fri (6/10)	Vander (excerpts); Basso (excerpt)	Concluding thoughts; situating ritual and practice; how meanings and rituals change as practices diffuse
Week 6 (6/13 - 6/17)		
Mon (6/13)	White 2002; Ortiz 2005	Religion and the state: caste systems; secularism; international news in Gainesville; religion, Civil Rights, and self-determination
Tue (6/14)	Masco, "Target Audience"; [also selections of oral history transcripts]	The nuclear sublime & the Nevada Test Site
Wed (6/15)	Bellah 2008	So really, what <i>is</i> religion? Modernist secularism, cosmological science, etc.
Thu (6/16)		Review for exam; Journal entry #3 due
Fri (6/17)		EXAM 3 (no class)

Bibliography (readings other than the main text):

These readings will all be available as .pdfs on Sakai.

Barber, Paul

1988 The Body After Death [Ch. 12] In *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality*. Pp. 102-119. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Basso, Keith

1996 Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on a Western Apache Landscape. In *Senses of Place*. Steven Feld and Keith Basso, eds. Pp.: 53-90. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press. [Excerpts]

Comaroff, John, and Jean Comaroff

- 2008 The Colonization of Consciousness. [Orig. published in 1992.] In Lambek, ed. Pp 464-478.
- Davis, Wade
 1985 *The Serpent and the Rainbow*. New York, NY: Touchstone. [1997 reprint.] [Excerpts]
 1988 *Passage of Darkness: The Ethnobiology of the Haitian Zombie*. Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press. [Excerpts]
- Deloria, Vine, Jr.
 1969 Anthropologists and Other Friends. In *Custer Died for Your Sins*. Pp. 78-100. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press. [1988 reprint]
- Denbow, James, Morongwa Mosothwane, and Nonofho Mathibidi Ndobochani
 2009 "Everybody Here Is All Mixed Up": Postcolonial Encounters with the Past at Bosutswe, Botswana. In *Postcolonial Archaeologies in Africa*. Peter R. Schmidt, ed. Pp. 211-230. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press.
- Edwards, Lynda
 1997 Myths Over Miami. *Miami New Times*. Jun 5. Online: <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/1997-06-05/news/myths-over-miami/>
- Fadiman, Anne
 1997 Do Doctors Eat Brains? [Ch. 4]. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. Farrar, Streix, & Geiroux.
- Harding, Susan F.
 2008 Convicted by the Holy Spirit: The Rhetoric of Fundamental Baptist Conversion. In Lambek , ed. Pp. 479-494.
- Harner, Michael J.
 1973 *The Jivaro: People of the Sacred Waterfall*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press & Doubleday. [Excerpts]
- Heinze, Ruth-Inge
 2008 Applications of Altered States of Consciousness in Daily Life. *Anthropology of Consciousness* 5(3): 8- 12.
- Langford, Ros
 1983 Our Heritage--Your Playground. *Australian Archaeology* 16: 1-6.
- Masco, Joseph
 2006 Target Audience. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 64(3): 22-31, 45.
- Ortiz, Paul

- 2005 To See That None Suffer: Mutual Aid and Resistance [Ch. 6]. In *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920*. Pp. 101-127. Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Price-Williams, Douglass, and Dureen J. Hughes
1994 Shamanism and Altered States of Consciousness. *Anthropology of Consciousness* 5(2): 1-15.
- Seabrook, William
1929 Dead Men Working in the Cane Fields. In *The Magic Island*. Pp. 92-103. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co.
- Sinha, Christopher G.
1999 Theories of Symbolization and Development. In *Handbook of Human Symbolic Evolution*. Andrew Lock and Charles R. Peters, eds. Pp. 483-500. Oxford, UK, and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Vander, Judith
1997 *Shoshone Ghost Dance Religion: Poetry Songs and Great Basin Context*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. [Excerpts]
- Wachtel, Nathan
1994 Tales of Vampires (Ch. 4). *Gods and Vampires: Return to Chipaya*. Trans. Carol Volk. Pp. 72-89. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Wallis, Robert J.
1999 Altered States, Conflicting Cultures: Shamans, Neo-Shamans, and Academics. *Anthropology of Consciousness* 10(2): 41-49.
- White, Jenny B.
2002 *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press. [Excerpts.]