

ANTH 459: ECOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

SPRING 2016

T, Th - 3:30 to 4:45

Alumni 203

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Course Description

Ecological anthropology explores the interface between human populations and their ecological surroundings, viewing culture as both something which influences the natural environment and is in turn shaped by it. It investigates how the human/environment relationship varies cross-culturally, over time, in different socio-political contexts, and in different ecosystems, and seeks explanations for this diversity. With the current ecological crises and assimilation of many non-Western cultures, such investigation takes on added urgency and importance. Our main focus will be current theoretical themes in the field of ecological anthropology, including political ecology, disequilibrium, cultural ecology, development anthropology, climate anthropology and complexity. The books chosen represent a sampling of modern ecological anthropology monographs. The readings span a variety of perspectives but include some classic works along with more contemporary pieces.

Course Format

The course will combine lectures with discussion and student presentations. Weekly lectures will provide background material and theories pertaining both to the corresponding readings and beyond. Discussions will enable us to analyze and evaluate in-depth the human-ecological relationships conceptualized in each work. Weekly discussions will be facilitated by individual students who will be responsible for doing some extra background reading, briefly presenting that information, and leading discussion. Each student will also present their own research project at the end of class based on their final paper.

Assignment Descriptions

Synthesis paper – Each student will write a synthesis paper based on readings from the first part of the course. The goal is to get students to engage with the readings and make connections among them to themes within ecological anthropology. A handout describing the synthesis paper will be given in Week 2.

Undergraduate students are expected to submit a paper of 5-7 pages (double-spaced, with references). Graduate students are expected to submit a paper of 7-10 pages (double-spaced, with references). The paper must contain no spelling or grammatical errors and students are expected to proof-read and spell-check them using at least computer software before turning them in. This paper is due Friday, Feb. 6 in class. Hardcopy is preferred. *The grade will be reduced by 10% each day it is late unless arranged beforehand.*

Weekly discussion/presentation – Each student will prepare one presentation to summarize one of the readings and discuss one of the authors during a class period. The presentation should briefly introduce one author, discuss what their previous and current affiliations are, and what their expertise is. Last, the student will summarize and synthesize the paper/book and put it in context with previous readings. The presentation should be approximately 5-10 minutes. Depending on the number of students, some class periods may have two student presentations.

Book review – Graduate students will write a review based on a book of their choosing from outside of class. This should be a work that pertains to their own research interests and have some relevance to ecological anthropology. They are expected to meet with West outside of class to discuss the book they plan to review,

show that they have read other book reviews of similar works. This book review will be approximately 5 pages (double-spaced) and be of sufficient quality that it could be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal by the end of class. The first draft is due Friday, Mar. 6 and West will review the document and make comments. The student will then revise it based on these comments so that by the end of class, the book review is of sufficient quality it can be submitted to an ecological anthropology journal. The final book review is due during the final exam on Monday, April 27 or before.

Final paper – All students will write a final paper as well. They have two choices for the content of this final paper. One, it can be a revised version of their original synthesis paper that incorporates works from the later parts of class. Two, it can be a research paper based on the student’s own research interests that relates to themes within the course and draws on class material. Undergraduate students are expected to submit a paper of 7-10 pages (double-spaced, with references). Graduate students are expected to submit a paper of 10-12 pages (double-spaced, with references). The same expectations for the original synthesis paper apply. Our final exam is scheduled for Monday, April 27 from 8 a.m. 12 noon. So, final papers must be turned in as hard-copy on this day during the exam period in lieu of a final exam.

Final presentation – All students will make a final presentation based on their final paper or their own environmental interests. This presentation will be ~15 minutes and take place in the last two weeks of class. If it is based on their own research interests, the student should briefly introduce their topic and discuss how it relates to course content. Otherwise, the final presentation can be based on the student’s final paper synthesizing readings. Graduate students are expected to make a 20-30 minute presentation similar to those of professional meetings.

Participation – All students are expected to attend all classes, read all of the readings, and come to class prepared to discuss them. *Students are allowed up to three excused absences from class for religious reasons, university activities, family emergencies, etc.* Please inform the instructor of these absences by email ahead of time. *Missing more than three classes (excused or unexcused) reduces a student’s participation grade to 0.* The instructor will post participation grades on Sakai that reflect student attendance and involvement.

Grading

Your grade will be based on two papers, an in-class presentation/discussion, final presentation, and class participation. Graduate students will have an additional book review. The weights of each component are:

| Assignment | Undergraduates | Graduates |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Synthesis paper #1 | 30% | 25% |
| Weekly presentation/discussion | 10% | 10% |
| Book review | NA | 10% |
| Final paper | 40% | 35% |
| Final presentation | 10% | 10% |
| Attendance and Participation | 10% | 10% |

For undergraduates, their final grade is determined as follows: A(90% or above); B(80-89%); C(70-79%); D(60-69%); F(<59%).

For graduate students, their final grade is determines as follows: High pass(95% or above); Pass(80-95%); Low pass (70-80%); Fail(<70%).

Honor Code

All students are expected to adhere to the UNC Instrument of Student Governance available at: <http://instrument.unc.edu/>. Any infraction of the Instrument will be dealt with according to UNC policies.

Readings

Six books and a series of articles make up the required reading for the course. Nearly all articles or chapters are available through www.lib.unc.edu using the Articles+ feature. Some material will be posted by West on Sakai.

BOOKS

- Vitebsky, Piers. 2005. *The Reindeer People: Living with Animals and Spirits in Siberia*. Boston: Mariner Books.
- Lansing, J. Stephen. 1991 (2007). *Priests and Programmers: Technologies of Power in the Engineered Landscape of Bali*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- McCabe, J. Terrence. 2004. *Cattle Bring Us to Our Enemies: Turkana Ecology, Politics, and Raiding in a Disequilibrium System*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- McMillan, Della E. 1995. *Sahel Visions: Planned Settlement and River Blindness Control in Burkina Faso*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

ARTICLES

- Orlove, B. S. 1980. Ecological anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 9:235-273.
- Kottak, C. P. 1999. The new ecological anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 101(1): 23-35.
- Steward, J. H.* 1955. The Great Basin Shoshonean Indians: An example of a family level of sociocultural integration. Chapter 6 from *Theory of Culture Change: The Methodology of Multilinear Evolution*. University of Illinois Press: Urbana, IL. Pp. 101-121.
- Harris, M. 1966. The cultural ecology of India's sacred cattle. *Current Anthropology* 7(1): 261-269.
- Rappaport, R. A. 1967. Ritual regulation of environmental relations among a New Guinea people. *Ethnology* 6(1): 17-30.
- Moran, E. F. 1991. Human adaptive strategies in Amazonian blackwater ecosystems. *American Anthropologist* 93(2): 361-380.
- Scoones, I. 1999. New ecology and the social sciences: What prospects for a fruitful engagement? *Annual Review of Anthropology* 28: 479-507.
- Nadasdy, P. 1999. The politics of TEK: Power and the "integration" of knowledge. *Arctic Anthropology* 36(1-2): 1-18.
- Richards, P*. 1993. Cultivation: Knowledge or performance? In Hobart, M. (Ed.) *An Anthropological Critique of Development: The Growth of Ignorance*. Routledge: London. Pp. 61-78.
- Fairhead, J. and M. Leach. 1996. Enriching the landscape: Social history and the management of transition ecology in the forest-savanna mosaic of the Republic of Guinea. *Africa* 66(1):14-36.
- Roncoli, C., K. Ingram, and P. Kirshen. 2002. Reading the rains: Local knowledge and rainfall forecasting in Burkina Faso. *Society and Natural Resources* 15(5): 409-427.
- Orlove, B. S., J. C. H. Chiang, and M. A. Cane. 2002. Ethnoclimatology in the Andes. *American Scientist* 90(5): 428-435.
- Greenberg, J. B. and T. K. Park. 1994. Political ecology. *Journal of Political Ecology* 1: 1-11.
- Vayda, A. P. and B. Walters. Against political ecology. *Human Ecology* 27(1): 167-179.
- Escobar, A. 1999. After nature: Steps to an antiessentialist political ecology. *Current Anthropology* 40(1): 1-30.

Course Schedule

| Week/theme | Readings | Assignments |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Week 1 - Introduction | | |
| Jan. 7 -- Class intro | -none- | |
| Jan. 9 -- Introduction to Ecol. Anth.. | Orlove 1980 | |
| Week 2 – Cultural Ecology | | |
| Jan. 12 – New ecological anthropology | Kottak 1999 | |
| Jan. 14 – Multilinear evolution / cultural ecology | Steward 1955*, Harris 1966 | Pres. sign up |
| Jan. 16 – Against environmental determinism | Rappaport 1967 | Synthesis paper handout |
| Week 3 – Ecosystems and the New Ecology | | |
| Jan. 19 – No class – MLK Day | | |
| Jan. 21 – Ecosystems | Moran 1991 | |
| Jan. 23 – New Ecology | Scoones 1999 | |
| Week 4 – Ecoystems and the New Ecology – The Turkana | | |
| Jan. 26—The Turkana I | McCabe 2004:xi-105 | |
| Jan. 28 —The Turkana II | McCabe 2004:109-156 | |
| Jan. 30—The Turkana III | McCabe 2004:159-199 | |
| Week 5 – Ecoystems and the New Ecology – The Turkana, cont'd | | |
| Feb. 2 —The Turkana IV | McCabe 2004:203-247 | |
| Feb. 4 — The Turkana Documentary | Video – Year of the Clouds | |
| Feb. 6 – Guest lecture on Africa | TBA | Syn. Paper due |
| Week 6 – Smallholder sustainability | | |
| Feb. 9 —Smallholders/householders I | Netting 1993:1-101 | |
| Feb. 11—Smallholders/householders II | Netting 1993:123-156 | |
| Feb. 13 —Smallholders/householders III | Netting 1993: 295-334 | |
| Week 7 – TEK | | |
| Feb. 16—Traditional Ecological Knowledge | Nadasdy 1999, Richards 1993* | |
| Feb. 18— West Africa deforestation | Fairhead and Leach 1996 | |
| Feb. 20— Deforestation documentary | Video - Second Nature | |
| Week 8—Case study on Reindeer Herders | | |
| Feb. 23—Reindeer People I | Vitebsky 2005:3-13;17-39;40-59 | |
| Feb. 25—Reindeer People II | Vitebsky 2005:63-105 | |
| Feb. 27—Reindeer People III | Vitebsky 2005:129-148; 369-395 | |
| Week 9 – Political Ecology | | |
| Mar. 2 – Introduction to Political Ecology I | Greenberg and Park 1999 | |
| Mar. 4 – Introduction to Political Ecology II | Vayda and Walters 1999 | |
| Mar. 6 – Reindeer herding documentary | Video - Siberia: After the Shaman | Book review due |
| Week 10 – No classes – Spring Break | | |
| Week 11 – Political Ecology, cont'd | | |
| Mar. 16 – Political ecology of NW Mexico II | Sheridan 1988:xiii - 49 | |
| Mar. 18 – Political ecology of NW Mexico III | Sheridan 1988:51- 117 | |
| Mar. 20 – Political ecology of NW Mexico IV | Sheridan 1988:171-196 | Sign up for final presentations |
| Week 12 – Case Study - Sustainable Development | | |
| Mar. 23 – Voluntary resettlement, Burkina Faso I | McMillan 1995:xxi-70 | |
| Mar. 25 – Voluntary resettlement, Burkina Faso II | McMillan 1995:71-99 | |
| Mar. 27 – No Class - West at SfAAs in Pittsburgh | | |
| Week 13 – Climate Change Anthropology | | |
| Mar. 30 – Voluntary resettlement, Burkina Faso III | McMillan 1995:101-149 | |
| Apr. 1 – Climate Forecasting: Burkina Faso | Roncoli et al. 2002 | |
| Apr. 3 – No Class - University holiday | | |
| Week 14 – Complexity | | |
| Apr. 6 – Balinese water temples I | Lansing 1991:xv-72 | |
| Apr. 8 – Balinese water temples II | Lansing 1991:73-110 | |
| Apr. 10 – Balinese water temples III | Lansing 1991:111-133; | |
| Week 15 – Agent-based modeling | | |

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|---|--|---------------------|
| Apr. 13 – Lansing and agent-based modeling | Modeling demo | |
| Apr. 15 – Documentary film - Bali | Video: The Goddess and the Computer | |
| Apr. 17 – Climate Change I | TBA | -- |
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| Week 16 – Student presentations | | |
| Apr. 20 – Climate Change II | TBA | |
| Apr. 22 – Student presentations | None | Final presentations |
| Apr. 24 – Student Presentations | None | Final presentations |
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| Week 17 - Finals | | |
| M, Apr. 27 – 8 AM Meet to turn in final paper | Final papers due / final book review due / Final presentations | |

However: The professor reserves to right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates (excluding the officially scheduled final examination), when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules.