

ANTH 105 WORLD CULTURES

Spring 2009

HIRC 7

ANTH 105-81 W 5-7:30pm

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

What's it like to grow up in New Guinea? How do the Maya fit into the world system? Where do the Masai go when looking for a mate? The major goal of this course is to develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. Such a broad perspective fosters a global consciousness, provides insights about the variety of human lifeways, and helps develop a greater understanding of the world's peoples. Several selected cultures will be examined in depth using ethnographic literature and films, including hunting-gathering, kin-based, and agricultural societies, as well as ethnic groups in complex societies. Credit: 3 s.h. No prerequisites (LA, HO2)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The goal of this course is not to collect fascinating facts about other interesting cultures. For that, you might browse the Web or turn to a program on the Discovery Channel. Nor is this course an exercise in multiculturalism and political correctness. That is trivializing the larger goal of understanding, which is the aim of education and knowledge production.

Paradoxical as it might seem, a significant goal of this course will be to arrive at an understanding of why you might need to take a course on "world cultures." To this end, the course is organized around three questions and answers that we will discuss over the course of the semester:

- **What do we know about the "West" versus the "rest"?** The problem is not that we do not know the "facts" about other peoples. Rather, it is that we are unprepared to understand what the differences between people actually mean – or do not mean. This leads to mistaken impressions and misinformation or "stereotypes" about the "rest." To learn how to understand difference is the important and meaningful purpose of ANTH 105. This question and answer will be pursued through assigned readings, Angel quizzes, lectures, and discussions.
- **How do we know what (we think) we know?** In the last century, cinema has been a significant influence on the way we both literally and metaphorically see "us" and "them." This is why the focus of this particular course will be on world cultures as they have been represented in the movies. Over the course of the semester, we will be practicing how to view culture on film with an anthropological eye. During each class, you will be viewing a film, either excerpted or in entirety, and completing an in-class assignment, which will be the basis of discussion to analyze the film.
- **Why do our mistaken impressions go uncorrected?** As we will consider in this course, misinformation can serve various purposes and interests – our own as well as others. A running theme in the films themselves will be the consequences of misunderstanding. As we will see, the misapprehension of another culture can be manipulated or promoted deliberately for particular political reasons. This is why a course on "world cultures" must consider what the "West" has to do with the "rest."

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade will be based on meeting all of the following requirements. Failure to meet any one of the requirements can result in a failing grade. Your final grades for the course will be based on total cumulative points, broken down *approximately* as follows:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Weekly quizzes (5 points each x 10) = | 50 points |
| Weekly in-class assignments (5 points each x 10) = | 50 points |
| 3 exams (25 + 30 + 35) = | 90 points |
| Final exam | <u>40 points</u> |

Total = 230 points

QUIZZES

Due at the start of class every Wednesday, you will be required to complete a short, multiple-choice quiz on Angel. The questions will draw from the reading assignments for that week. If a student misses a quiz and wishes to take it for full credit, it is his or her responsibility to arrange a make-up within 1 week of the date on which the quiz was given.

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Due at the end of class every Wednesday, you will be required to complete a short written assignment that summarizes the elements of the film under discussion. This assignment will be the basis of discussion at the end of class in which we analyze the film in terms of the concerns of this course on world cultures. It also will serve as the basis of the short essays that will be featured on each of the four exams. As a result, it is in your best interest to take good notes during the screening of the films, and to be thorough in your responses on the in-class assignment.

If a student misses a film, it is his or her responsibility to arrange a make-up within 1 week in order to receive full credit on the film assignment. Assignments submitted more than 1 week late will be eligible for half credit. All of the films will be placed on 2-hour reserve at the Milne library after each class. Please also note the attendance policy below.

EXAMS

There will be three in-class exams, and a final exam. The format of the exams will include multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short essays. As academic exercises, the exams are intended both to “test” and reinforce your comprehension of the content that we discuss in this class, and your ability to apply key concepts. Careful attention to the reading assignments and film and video screenings, regular attendance in class, and participation in discussion will contribute to your success on the exams. If extenuated circumstances prevent a student from taking an exam, you may be permitted one opportunity to “make up” the exam by writing an essay of five pages (typed and double-spaced), as assigned by the instructor. You must present official documentation.

OPTIONAL RESPONSE PAPERS

The experience of learning does not begin and end in the classroom. During the semester, I will announce lectures, presentations, and other events on topics of relevance to cultural anthropology. You are encouraged to attend these or other scholarly events on campus. As an incentive, you can earn additional points for this class by attending a lecture or presentation, then writing a response of 1-2 pages (in 12-point standard font, with regular margins). In your paper, you should:

- Introduce, briefly, the speaker’s central argument or main points.
- Describe, again briefly, the speaker’s evidence (e.g., the film or text that he or she is analyzing, or his or her experiences in the field).
- Conclude with a discussion of the topic’s relevance to anthropology (e.g., the connections between the speaker’s main points and material that we have considered in class).

The response paper is due 1 week after the event. You can submit a maximum of 3 response papers, which will be worth 3 points each.

COURSE PROCEDURES & POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is required. It will be taken at the start of class, so please be punctual. Given that this class meets only one evening a week, you are expected to be especially conscientious about attendance and punctuality. Regardless of absence, you will be responsible for material covered in class.

Concerning in-class assignments that you miss due to absence from class, see above. In addition, please know that if you are absent more than once, 3 points for each class that you miss will be subtracted from your total points for the course. Missing 3 or more classes can result in a failing grade for the course.

ANGEL

All students will be expected to use the Angel site for this class. Announcements, instructions for written assignments, presentation notes, and supplemental readings will be available on Angel. You also will submit written assignments on Angel.

E-MAIL

When you are e-mailing Dr. Han, please use only the following information in the subject line:
Your Last Name Anth 100

PARTICIPATION AND CONDUCT

This is a reading and discussion-intensive class. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings. Although it is not necessary for you to bring all of your books to class, **you are required to bring your reading assignment (textbook, reader, ethnography, or hard copy of PDF).**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and courteous of their classmates and their professor.

ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING

Creating an environment for learning conducive to learning involves community effort. **If you wish to use a laptop during class, you must receive the instructor's permission.** Students are expected to refrain from using cellular phones, iPods, etc., during classes. Otherwise, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In order to meet the requirements of this class, it is expected that all of your written work, including take-home writing assignments and in-class essay exams, will represent your own honest, individual, and original efforts to engage with the material in this class. Please be careful with your written work. Dishonesty of any kind (e.g., "copying" or "borrowing") will not be tolerated, and will result in a failing grade for the class.

You will be expected to cite your sources properly and include a list of references. You may prepare your citations in any standard style used in scholarly writing (e.g., MLA, APA), but please be sure to use it consistently and correctly. For example, the style guideline for American Anthropologist is available at www.aaanet.org.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please note that special considerations such as extensions on deadlines will be permitted only with official documentation. If special circumstances arise that prevent the regular and timely completion of assignments, it is the student's responsibility to communicate them with the instructor. Please do so as soon as possible.

All material on this syllabus is subject to change.

REQUIRED TEXTS *

Glenn King, *Traditional Cultures: A Survey of Nonwestern Experience and Achievement*.

Additional readings will be posted on Angel.

*** You will be expected to bring the reading assignment to the class meetings, i.e., your textbook or a hard copy of readings posted on Angel.**

COURSE SCHEDULE

| DATE | TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION READING / ASSIGNMENT DUE | FILM |
|-------------|--|---|
| | Introduction to the study of “world cultures” | |
| W 1-14 | Why study world cultures? Overview of cultural anthropology: Principles and methods <i>In-class reading assignment</i> | “A Man Called Bee: Studying the Yanomamo” (1974) |
| W 1-21 | Challenges to understanding “other” cultures <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapters 1, 2, and 3 | “Krippendorf’s Tribe” (1998) |
| | The New World Domain | |
| W 1-28 | Northern American Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapters 4 and 5 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Black Robe” (1991) |
| W 2-4 | Southern American Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapters 6 and 7 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Mending Ways: The Canela Indians of Brazil” (1999) |
| W 2-11 | 1 st Exam | |
| | The Old World Domain | |
| W 2-18 | Central Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapters 8 and 9 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Divorce, Iranian Style” (1998) |
| W 2-25 | NO CLASS – WINTER BREAK | |
| W 3-4 | African Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapter 10 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “The Gods Must Be Crazy” (1981) |
| W 3-11 | Circumpolar Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapter 11 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Nanook of the North” (1922) “Kabloonak – The Stranger” (1994) |
| W 3-18 | 2 nd Exam | |
| | The Oceanic Domain | |
| W 3-25 | Pacific Island Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapters 12 and 13 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Whale Rider” (2002) |
| W 4-1 | Australian Zone <i>Traditional Cultures</i> Chapter 14 Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Rabbit-Proof Fence” (2002) |
| W 4-8 | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK | |
| W 4-15 | 3 rd Exam | |
| | A Film’s Anthropology | |
| W 4-22 | Excerpt from <i>Lawrence of Arabia: A Film’s Anthropology</i> Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Lawrence of Arabia” (1962) (Part 1) |
| W 4-29 | Excerpt from <i>Lawrence of Arabia: A Film’s Anthropology</i> | “Lawrence of Arabia” (Part 2) |
| | Other Visions | |
| W 5-6 | John Mihelich, “Smoke or Signals? American Popular Culture and the Challenge to Hegemonic Images of American Indians in Native American Film.” Selected movie reviews (see Angel) | “Smoke Signals” (1998) |
| W 5-13 | Final Exam | |