Critique of Civilization
Syllabus
A program of study

ANTH 229-01 Fall 2017
TuTh 2:30-3:45 pm, PSCI 146
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Office Hours: M 2:00-2:50 pm, TR 1:00-2:15 pm, and by appointment (drop-ins are welcome)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course explores the concept of civilization and its opposite, the primitive or savage, from anthropology’s unique cross-cultural perspective. We will examine how these paired concepts figure prominently in the origin and development of anthropology, and how anthropology ultimately challenges the validity of both. We will explore what various people have meant by these terms and the contexts of their use, how anthropological research gradually weakened both, and how anthropologists study the contemporary uses of these concepts as aspects of culture. This intellectual history touches upon the ideologies and social consequences of progressivism, romanticism, colonialism, neocolonialism, environmentalism, indigenism, New Age religions, neoconservativism, and traditionalist social movements. The course is lecture based and includes several writing assignments.

Prerequisites: SoS

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

ANTH 229 counts toward the Other World Civilizations (OW3 or HO2) General Education requirement and toward the Liberal Arts credits required of all College majors. Anthropology majors may use the course to fulfill an upper division elective in the major. The course also counts toward the requirements for the anthropology minor.

POLICIES:

Cell phones must be turned off and put away while you are in the classroom.

Attendance will be taken each class because participation is part of your grade (see below) and you have to be in class to participate. Students should expect their grades to suffer if they are absent often. Please notify me if you expect to miss a class. Students who miss class regularly will be involuntarily withdrawn.

All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the College’s policies on academic honesty. Any student found cheating will receive a failing grade and will be reported to the Student Conduct Committee for possible further action consistent with College policy, including possible dismissal from the College.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures: In the event of a fire alarm or evacuation announcement, you are directed to assemble outside in the President’s Garden area (in front of the Library), and away from roads and walkways used by emergency vehicles. In the event of a prolonged building evacuation, you are directed to reassemble in Chase Gymnasium so that all

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persons can be accounted for. Complete details of the College's emergency evacuation, shelter-in-place and other emergency procedures can be found at http://www.oneonta.edu/security/.

**GRADING:**

The course grade will be based on the following measures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One short assignment</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three short reaction papers</td>
<td>30% (10% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research annotated bibliography</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper outline</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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All of the above assignments must be submitted (or demonstrated, in the case of participation) to receive a final course grade higher than a C+.

**Participation:** In-class participation is extremely important. Come prepared to discuss all readings. To each class, bring 1) a quotation from that day’s reading one which you’d like to express an opinion, reaction, or question, and 2) a question pertaining to or based on the reading which, if answered, will enhance your learning and that of the class. The class participation grade also includes your individual presentation of your research results to the class at the end of the semester.

Your final grade for participation will be based on attendance, quantity and quality of discussion, insight, clarity, and initiative (e.g., looking up material outside the readings). I will give you a progress report on your participation grade twice during the semester.

**Reaction papers:** In-class discussion provides us with the opportunity to compare and contrast different insights and interpretations from each other, but it does not allow time for reflection. The three short reaction papers provide you with a chance for this type of reflection. These papers are meant to be a means for you to express your thoughts on the readings and the topics they explore. You may focus your paper however you choose, but the more readings that you address while doing so from the recent block of readings (since the last reaction paper) the better your essay is likely to be.

I am looking for your overall reaction to the topic(s) and the associated readings, lecture, and discussion. This type of paper is intentionally open-ended, but at the heart of it, you should focus on this question: What did you think of the ideas presented in the readings, lecture, and discussion? Your answer must be well defended and well written. In addition to your own insights from the readings, you should address important points that may have come up in lecture or class discussion. You are also encouraged to use other sources of insight, such as content from other classes (and not just in anthropology), as well as outside readings. Just be sure to properly cite and acknowledge your sources.

Each reaction papers should be short and concise. I suggest a length of about four or five double-spaced pages, although you are free to write more if you wish. Use one-inch margins and a 12-point font. Be sure to come see me if you are stuck!

**Research projects and papers:** You will each be doing an individual library research project, which will generate an annotated bibliography, an outline, and a final paper. You will
have freedom to select your specific topic within a few broad topical areas that I will specify. I will work with each of you to develop and focus your research topic, and help to guide you through the research process. Research projects will require extensive outside reading.

Research papers should be in the range of 12 to 15 pages including references (double-spaced, 12 point font, with 1 inch margins all around). These will be in-depth explorations of a particular topic (e.g., What role does primitivism play in modern fascinations with shamanism?). I expect to see a clearly defined topic or problem, the use of high quality sources (we will go over what this means), a gathering and well-organized presentation of evidence, and a thoughtful analysis or conclusion.

Reaction and research papers will be graded based on content, clarity, originality, and style (including spelling and grammar). In all papers, quotations must be kept to a minimum: only quote when it is absolutely necessary to capture a writer’s exact words. The best writers paraphrase well.

Late work: Any assignment submitted late without prior permission will be lowered $\frac{1}{3}$ of a grade for each day it is late. Avoid this predicament by starting your assignment before the last minute so that you can seek my advice if you hit any stumbling blocks.

BlackBoard site: Required readings, handouts, and other materials will be available via BlackBoard. Everything will be organized in the Content section.

**SCHEDULE: (Readings should be completed by the date shown.)**

Some adjustments during the semester are likely.

**Overview**

**Week 1:** Aug. 29 Course Introduction
Aug. 31 Binary oppositions and the romance of *Dances With Wolves*

**Conceptual Roots**

**Week 2:** Sep. 5 Progressivism and civilization
Sep. 7 Primitivism and civilization’s antithesis

**Anthropology is Shaped by the Concepts**

**Week 3:** Sep. 12 The Great Chain of Being: Precursor to biological anthropology
Sep. 14 Assignment #1 due
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Week 4: Sep. 19 The Columbian Encounter, from Earthly Paradise to the Enlightenment
Read: John F. Moffitt and Santiago Sebastián, selection from “Medieval Literary Conventions,” from O Brave New People: The European Invention of the American Indian (New Mexico, 1997).

Sep. 21 Discussion of research paper topics (and below)

Week 5: Sep. 26 Romanticism to Evolutionism
Read: Lewis Henry Morgan, “Ethnical Periods,” from Ancient Society
Other TBA

Sep. 28

Anthropology Challenges the Concepts

Week 6: Oct. 3 The Myth of the Mound Builders

Reaction paper #1 due
Oct. 6 Annotated bibliography due

Week 7: Oct. 10 HOLIDAY
Oct. 12 The Boasian critique

Week 8: Oct. 17 ... and romanticism creeps back in

Oct. 19 Research paper outline due

Week 9: Oct. 24 The Indus Harrapan Problem: What is a civilization?
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Last day for approval of alternative research paper topic

Oct. 26

**Week 10:** Oct. 31 Hunter-gatherers: The status of the primitive archetype


Nov. 2 ... and the Ecological Noble Savage

**Studying Primitivism & Progressivism**

**Week 11:** Nov. 7 Counter-culture Primitivisms


Reaction paper #2 due

Nov. 9 Research progress reports (oral)

**Week 12:** Nov. 14 Strategic Primitivism


Nov. 16

**Week 13:** Nov. 21 Neoconservative Progressivism


TBA

Nov. 23 HOLIDAY

**Week 14:** Nov. 28 Visions of progress and savagery in other cultures


Nov. 30 Where are we? Others, selves, and grand scales of identity.

Research papers due

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Week 15:  Dec. 5  Student presentations
          Dec. 7  Student presentations

Week 16:  Dec. 12 STUDY DAY
          Dec. 14 Final Exam (Reaction paper #3), 2:00 pm-4:30 pm