

Environmental Anthropology

(Anthropology 4400/5400)

Fall 2014

Thursdays 6:00-8:50 pm

ENV building, room 115

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Course Description

Environmental Anthropology is a more recent outgrowth of Ecological Anthropology, which can be characterized as the study of the interrelationship between human groups, cultures, and societies and the ecosystem in which they are embedded in all places across planet earth. Scholars have delineated environmental anthropology as becoming more prominent in the 1980s and typically focus on analysis and application of anthropological knowledge to contemporary environmental issues. Ecological and Environmental Anthropology can most productively be viewed as a single interrelated discipline, with Ecological Anthropology focusing more on basic academic research and Environmental Anthropology more on contemporary environmental issues and having more of an applied, practicing, critical, and/or advocacy approach.

Part 1 of this course will focus on theoretical developments in Ecological and Environmental Anthropology from the 1950s forward and will introduce students to four of the most prominent research programs in Environmental/Ecological anthropology today: Ethnoecology, Historical Ecology, Political Ecology, and Spiritual Ecology. Part II will focus on analysis and the application of anthropological knowledge to five of the most pressing environmental issues facing the contemporary world: population, consumption, biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture, and global climate change. The last week of the course will focus on the role of anthropology in creating viable alternative political ecologies leading to a sustainable future for humankind.

Course Format

This is a critical thinking course based primarily on readings and class discussion. Every student should have read and come prepared to discuss the material for each class period. A final research paper will also allow students to pursue their own particular interests within Environmental Anthropology. The instructor reserves the right to add or subtract readings, videos, or guest lectures as deemed necessary as the course develops, yet the course syllabus will be followed in the main as indicated below.

Course Objectives

The primary goals of this course are to provide:

- 1) An introduction to key theoretical concepts, thinkers, and practitioners of Environmental Anthropology
- 2) A relevant and global sampling of key literature in Environmental Anthropology
- 3) A familiarity with a sampling of the most important environmental issues facing the world today and theoretical and practical tools being used by anthropologists to research and address them
- 4) An in-depth exploration of a particular topic in Environmental Anthropology through an individual research paper.

Course Grading

The final course grade (A, B, C, D, or F) for each student will be calculated as follows:

- 25% regular class attendance as well as active and meaningful participation in class discussions of readings and other subjects. Graduate students will lead discussion during one class period as part of their participation grade.
- 5% research paper proposal (one page single-spaced emailed to the instructor BY WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8th)
- 30% Mid-term Examination, Thursday, OCTOBER 16th
- 40% final research paper (8 pages double-spaced for undergraduates and 12 pages double-spaced for graduate students emailed to the instructor BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10th, using American Anthropological Association formatting guidelines – see http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf)
- Students are expected to arrive at class on time and remain attentive throughout the entire period. Attendance will be taken every meeting. The final course grade will be lowered by one letter grade on the third absence from class and one letter grade for every absence after the third, unless excused by an official memo from a medical doctor, administrator, etc. A 10-15 minute break will be given approximately half way through each class.

Disability Statement

The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please see the instructor and/or contact the office of Disability Accommodation as 940-565-4323 during the first week of class.

Computer and cell phone policy

If it is your practice to take notes through the use of laptop/notebook, please sit in the front of the classroom and type as quietly as possible. No internet or email usage during class. Turn cell phones off during class time; that means no answering calls, texts, or tweeting during class. You have the rest of your waking hours to catch up with others; this class will be utilized for direct human interaction and communication with your instructor and classmates related to Environmental Anthropology.

Student Behavior in the Classroom

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instrumental forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

Required textbooks

- Hannen, Nora and Richard R. Wilk (editors). 2006. *The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living*. New York: New York University Press.
- Townsend, Patricia K. 2000. *Environmental Anthropology: From Pigs to Policies*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Additional Course Reading

Additional course readings taken from journals and selected books will be posted electronically on blackboard or are available online through the UNT library or other external links.

Schedule of Class Meetings and Assignments*

*For each class date listed, the readings are to be read during the prior week and student should be prepared to thoroughly discuss them in class.

**indicates readings that are required for graduate students and optional for undergraduates

I. Ecological and Environmental Anthropology: Theory Since the 1950s and Contemporary Subfields

Thurs. Aug. 28: Introduction, Purpose, Goals, Syllabus, Expectations

Thurs. Sept. 4: The Theoretical Foundations of Ecological and Environmental Anthropology

(Part 1)

- 1) **Sponsel.** 2007. "Ecological Anthropology" available at:
http://eearth.org/article/Ecological_anthropology
- 2) **Townsend Book:** Chpt. 2 "Julian Steward's Cultural Ecology" p.9-16.
- 3) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Moran, Chpt. 1, "The Concept and Method of Cultural Ecology" p. 5-9
- 4) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Moran, Chpt. 3, "Ecosystem Ecology in Biology and Anthropology" p.15-26
- 5) **Townsend Book:** Chpt. 4, "Pigs for the Ancestors" p. 23-28.
- 6) **Rappaport.** 1967. "Ritual Regulation of Environmental Relations Among a New Guinea People"

Thurs. Sept. 11: The Theoretical Foundations of Ecological and Environmental Anthropology (Part II)

- 1) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Orlove, Chpt. 19, "The Third Stage of Ecological Anthropology" Processual Approaches" p. 205-14.
- 2) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Kottak, Chpt 6, "The New Ecological Anthropology" p. 40-52.
3) **Brosius. 1999. "Analyses and Interventions: Anthropological Engagements with Environmentalism"
- 3) **Ingold.** 2000. "Culture, Nature, and Environment: Steps to an Ecology of Life"

Thurs. Sept. 18: Ethnoecology

- 1) **Hunn.** 2007. "Ethnobiology in Four Phases"
- 2) **Townsend Book:** Chpt. 3, "Ethnoecology" p. 17-22.
- 3) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Chpt. 5, Nazarea, "A View from a Point: Ethnoecology as Situated Knowledge" p.34-9
- 4) **Conklin.** 1954. "An Ethnoecology Approach to Shifting Agriculture"
- 5) **Posey.** 2008. "Indigenous Management of Tropical Forest Ecosystems: The Case of the Kayapo' Indians of the Brazilian Amazon."

Thurs. Sept. 25 Historical Ecology

- 1) **Balee.** 1998. "Historical Ecology: Premises and Postulates"
a. ****Balee.** 2006. "The Research Program of Historical Ecology"
- 2) **Dove.** 1999. "The Agronomy of Memory and the Memory of Agronomy: Ritual Conservation of Archaic Cultigens in Contemporary Farming Systems."
- 3) **Winthrop.** 2001. "Historical Ecology: Landscapes of Change in the Pacific Northwest"

Thurs. Oct. 2 Political Ecology

- 1) **Greenberg and Park.** 1994. "Political Ecology"
- 2) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Chpt. 27. Stonich and Dewalt, "The Political Ecology of Deforestation in Honduras" p. 284-301.
- 3) **Townsend Book:** Ch. 11. "It Isn't Easy being Green" p. 87-95.
- 4) **Ortiz.** 1992. "Our Homeland, A National Sacrifice Area"
a. **** Fairhead and Leach.** 1995. "False Forest History, Complicit Social Analysis: Rethinking Some West African Reforestation Narratives"

Thurs. Oct. 9 Spiritual Ecology

- 1) **Sponsel.** 2007. "Spiritual Ecology: One Anthropologist's Reflections"
- 2) **Townsend Book:** Chpt. 9, "Holy Ground" p. 61-8
- 3) **Anderson.** 1996. "Learning from the Land Otter: Religious Representation of Traditional Resource Management"
 - a. ****Basso.** 1998. "Stalking with Stories"
- 4) **Lane.** 1999. "Practical and Religious Meanings of the Navajo Hogan"

II. The Application of Environmental Anthropology to Contemporary Environmental Issues

Thurs. Oct. 16

MID-TERM EXAM!!

Thurs. Oct. 23 Population

- 5) **Malthus.** 1798. "An Essay on the Principle of Population" Chpts. 1-2, p. 1-11.
- 6) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Chpt. 8, Boserup, "Some Perspective & Implications"
- 7) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Chpt. 9 Brown et al., "Beyond Malthus: Sixteen Dimensions of the Population Problem"
- 8) **Townsend Book:** Chpt. 10, "Population" p. 69-78
- 9) **Kaplan.** 1994. "The Coming Anarchy"

Thurs. Oct. 30 Consumption

- 1) **Haenn and Wilk Book:** Chpt. 38, "The Ecology of Global Consumer Culture"
- 2) **Townsend Book:** Chpt. 13, "Consumer Cultures" p.97-101
- 3) **Gardener et al.** 2004. "The State of Consumption Today"
- 4) **Gardener and Assadourian.** 2004. "Rethinking the Good Life"
- 5) **Snyder.** 1995. "Four Changes, With a Postscript"

Thurs. Nov. 6 Biodiversity Conservation

- 1) **Orlove and Brush.** 1996. "Anthropology and the Conservation of Biodiversity"
- 2) **Ehrlich.** 1998. "The Loss of Diversity: Causes and Consequence"
- 3) **Nabhan.** 1997. "Pledging Allegiance to All Sorts of Diversity"
 - a. ****Nazarea.** 2006. "Local Knowledge and Memory in Biodiversity Conservation"

Thurs. Nov. 13. Sustainable Agriculture

- 1) **Rhoades.** 2005. "Agricultural Anthropology"
- 2) **Netting.** 1993. "Does the Smallholder Have a Future?"
- 3) **Pena.** 1999. "The Ethnoecology of an Upper Rio Grande Watershed Commons"
- 4) **Veteto and Skarbo.** 2008. "Sowing the Seeds: Anthropological Contributions to Agrobiodiversity Studies"
- 5) **Berry.** 2006. "Conservationist and Agrarian"

Thurs. Nov. 20. The Anthropology of Global Climate Change

- 1) Roncoli, Crane, and Orlove. 2009. "Fielding Climate Change in Cultural Anthropology"
- 2) Townsend Book: Chpt. 8, "The Climate is Changing"

- 3) Cruikshank. 2001. "Glaciers and Climate Change: Perspectives from Oral Tradition"
- 4) Rhoades. 2007. "Disappearance of the Glacier on Mama Cotacachi: Ethnoecological Research and Climate Change in the Ecuadorian Andes"

Thurs. Nov. 27. Thanksgiving Break!!!

Thurs. Dec. 4 Alternative Political Ecologies and the Sustainable Future

- 1) **Lockyer.** 2010. "Community-Initiated Carbon Reduction & Climate Change Action: From Ecovillages to Transition Towns"
- 2) **Lockyer.** 2008. "From Earthships to Straw bales"
 - a. ****Kasper.** 2008. "Redefining Community in the Ecovillage"
- 3) **Veteto and Lockyer.** 2008. "Environmental Anthropology Engaging Permaculture: Moving Theory and Practice Toward Sustainability"
- 4) **Aistara.** In Press. "Weeds or Wisdom? Permaculture in the Eye of the Beholder on Latvian Eco-Health Farms"
- 5) **Snyder.** 1995. "Coming Into the Watershed"

Final Research papers Due by Midnight, Sunday, December 7th, Emailed to Instructor!

Have a Great Winter Break.