

Anthropology 371
Contemporary Native American Cultures
Fall, 2007
Thomas H. Johnson, professor

Office: 413 Collins

Hours: 11-12 AM, M,W, and 11-12:45 PM Friday, and by appointment

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Rental Texts: 1. American Indians and the Urban Experience, ed. by Lobo and Peters
2. Indian Nations of Wisconsin by Patty Loew
3. Breaking the Iron Bonds: Indian Control of Energy Development
(on electronic reserve)

Required paperbacks

1. Prison Writings, by Leonard Peltier
2. Wisconsin Indians by Nancy O. Lurie (also on electronic reserve)
3. Rez Road Follies, by Jim Northrup

Recommended paperback

Also Called Sacajawea - Chief Woman's Stolen Identity
by Thomas H. Johnson

This course has a different emphasis and content from Anth 339, Native Cultures of North America, which emphasizes the aboriginal cultures and early documented history of the First Nations of North America, the American Indians. That course will be taught second semester of this academic year. Since the estimated 550 different peoples of North America did not have a collective name for themselves, were not organized into state-level societies, and only had names for themselves and other tribes around them, it is difficult to find an appropriate collective term. Today, many, but not all of those peoples have recognized, official "tribal" names given to them by the governments of the European invaders, who conquered the continent between the 1500's and 1900. We are still searching for the most appropriate term to use for a course like Anthropology 371 which deals with the original native societies and cultures that have either disappeared, amalgamated, or changed drastically over the past 500 years. Thus, neither "Indian" nor "Native American" are really accurate or appropriate. At present, First Nations is the preferred term in Canada, and is being used more often in the United States. But many Native people still refer to themselves as "Indians", and prefer that term to "Native Americans", a term that came into favor among many who sought to dispel the inaccuracy of of the term, "Indian".

Regardless, the main focus of our course will be on the more recent events and changes of the past 40 years of the 20th century, and into the 21st, and how those peoples have adapted to the modern world and to their conquerors, who have now also become native to North America as well, although with very different cultural backgrounds (modified European, African, or Asian).

The most striking developments in the last 40 years have been the enormous upsurge in interest by “Indian” people in knowing about their history and culture, and portraying their lives and histories in the most accurate way, without the stereotypes, ignorance and racial or ethnic prejudices of the dominant, conquering European societies who governed them and wrote books about them. In North America those conquering European groups have been: Russian (in Alaska); Scandinavian (in Greenland); French (in parts of Eastern Canada, the Great Lakes and Louisiana); English (in much of Canada and the United States); and Spanish (in the old Southwest of the United States, an area conquered by the United States), in Florida, the site of the first European settlements, and of course, Mexico. The number of “native” people in North America prior to 1500 has been variously estimated as between 10 and 20 million. Today the number of people in the United States alone who self-identified as American Indian has increased with each census and has risen from a low of 250,000 in 1900 to more than two million. It is estimated that at least 15 million U.S. citizens have some “Indian” ancestry. Many students at UWSP have told me about their Indian ancestry, even though they are not enrolled in any tribe.

We will be learning about the many issues that make the newspapers each day: sovereignty, gaming, hunting and fishing rights, religious issues and the protection of sacred sites and archeological remains. Most of these issues are attempts by the “Indians” to recover and regain what they lost over the centuries. But these cultures are also evolving and renewing themselves, in ways that were never expected 50 years ago. The emphasis on economic development of tribal societies today, with gaming as one of the largest of these, but also mineral exploitation, has created new wealth for many tribes. But populations have also increased. As a result, the desire to reclaim heritage and language has increased, resulting in new pride in what it is to be Indian today. This course does not have all the answers, nor can it deal with all issues. But we will try to explore them.

Exams and Course Requirements

Grading

Attendance

1. Exams. There will be three 75 minute essay exams each worth 60 points each. The last of these will be the Final. 180 points.

Attendance is required for all exams, unless you have a legitimate excuse. Please let me know in advance if you must miss an exam or a date

due for a paper, and I will decide if the excuse is legitimate. It is important to attend each class for the purpose of contributing to discussion.

2. Project. You must complete a written project or paper, consisting of a contemporary topic of your choice, to be chosen in consultation with the professor during the 4th and 5th weeks of the course, worth 50 points. The final project must be written and handed in on the last day of class, and should be a minimum of 8 pages. As a substitute, you may make an oral presentation of at least 20 minutes, with a written outline handed in at the same time. The last week or two of class will be reserved for these presentations, depending on how many students select that choice. Power Point may be used in this presentation. You must notify me by the 10th week of class if you plan to do one so I can allow enough time in my schedule of lectures. I will set up conferences for each student to guide these papers and presentations, beginning the fifth week of class.

3. Three two page typewritten pages of summaries of newspaper articles of general contemporary interest, to be handed in at the end of the third, sixth and 9th week in the course (dates: Sept. 20, Oct. 9, and Nov. 1): 10 points each. The articles can be obtained from papers I store in our classroom, from on-line sources, and from News from Indian Country, a publication of the Lac Court Oreilles Chippewa nation in NW Wisconsin in the periodicals section of the Library.

Total: 30 points

4. Discussion: you may earn up to 10 points. This number has to be subjective, as I cannot easily determine discussion after each class period; regular attenders who participate in discussion should have no trouble receiving the full 10 points.

Total possible points in course is 270

Grades are assigned on a percentage basis. Thus, if the total number of points on an exam is 60 and you received 50, your percentage would be 83.3, and your grade a B-. Percentages over .5 will be rounded off to the next higher number, so if you had received 83.5 you would receive a B.

The grade equivalents of percentage points are as follows:

A = 94-100

A- = 90-94

B+ = 87-90

B = 84-87

B- = 80-84

C+ = 77-80

C = 74-77

C- = 70-74

D+ = 67-70

D = 64-67

There are no A+ or D- grades in this university.

Syllabus of Lectures, Videos, Exams and Assignments
Readings are due the *following* class period

Week

1

9/4

Introduction to the course. Origins controversies: Deloria (the Native) and non Native perspectives. NAGPRA and Kennewick Man. Ethnic, racial stereotypes of the conquering people. The mascot controversy. Read: Hirschfelder pp. 27-39 (handout)

9/6

Video: ISHI, the Last Yahi. Discussion of American colonialism
Read: American Indian Identities, by Devon Mihesuah (handout)

2

9/11

Lakota tribal history as a reflection of US Policy. Contrast with Wind River Shoshone and Arapaho, other tribes. View in class: The Spirit of Crazy Horse (LRC)
Read: The Crucible of American Indian Identity, by Ward Churchill (handout)

9/13

Discussion of video and articles. Ethnic and cultural divisions at Rosebud and among other nations. Identity issues. View: video Anna Mae Aquash (in the IMC, 3rd floor of library). Check out video for viewing on the hour (9,10, etc).

3

9/18

Contemporary Issues - poverty and its results. Health problems. Mortality and morbidity. Begin reading: Peltier: Prison Writings, and finish this narrative within the next week.

9/20

American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Wounded Knee conflict.
First newspaper article paper due.

4

9/25

Sovereignty issues; treaty rights. Mineral rights: the Council of Energy Resource Tribes. The Cobell lawsuit. Read Ambler (e-reserve) , chapters 3 and 4.

9/27

Crandon Mine controversy.
Video: Keepers of the Waters. Read : Lurie, chapter 9 pp. 72-75 (e-reserve) and Gedicks, chapter 4 (e-reserve).

5

10/2

Menominee Termination and Restoration.

- Read: Lurie: chapters 6,7, pp. 46-64 (e-reserve).
- 10/4 Discussion. Read Lurie chapters 8 and 10 (e-reserve) pp. 65-71; 76-82.
- 6
- 10/9 Chippewa/Ojibwa Hunting and Fishing Rights. Video. Second newspaper article due.
- 10/11 Sacred Sites controversies.
Read: Native American Sacred Sites in Wisconsin (handout)
Video: In the Light of Reverence.
- 7
- 10/16 EXAM 1
- 10/18 Native Environmentalism - the Ecological Indian (Shepard Kretch).
Read: Trosper, Native American Political Issues: (e-reserve, pp. 135-162).
- 8
- 10/23 Traditional Native Economic and Political life. Read: Trosper Native American Political Issues), pp. 135-162 (E-reserve)
Read: Lurie, chapters 11, 12 (e-reserve)
- 10/25 The N.A. Gaming Act. Gaming as a major economic issue: The Arapaho struggle to have a casino approved in Wyoming.
- 9
- 10/30 The shift of power relations as a result of gaming.
- 11/1 Third newspaper summary due.
NAGPRA (Native American Graves and Repatriation Act)
Read: articles by Perregoy and Goldberg (25 pp. and 5 pp) e-reserve.
- 10
- 11/6 Discussion of NAGPRA. Cultural Revitalizations: The Sun Dance Religion (handout) Read: Johnson, Also Called Sacajawea (124 pp.)
- 11/8 The contemporary Sun Dance (continued). The Sacajawea myth at Wind River and the cover up of Paraivo's true identity.
- 11
- 11/13 Religious Revitalization and religious innovation. The political dimensions of religion.

Read: Lobo, pp. 262 and 265; 267-280

11/15 Indian Boarding Schools: pros and cons.
Act 31 in Wisconsin and its implementation.

12

11/20 Exam II

THANKSGIVING BREAK

13

11/27,29 Guest Lectures. Language revitalization, education. These will be on the Final Exam. Work on projects.
I will be attending the American Anthropological Assoc. Meeting in Washington, DC. , giving a paper, etc.
Read (for week 14): Rez Road Follies, by Northrup.

14

12/4 Education Issues (discussion). Indian High Schools and Colleges.
Health and Welfare Issues: Read Brooke Olson,
In Medicine Ways (pp. 163-184 on e-reserve)

12/6

Video: Children of Wind River
Public Health issues.
Diabetes, obesity, alcoholism
Read: The Epidemiology of Alcohol Abuse Among American Indians (e-reserve, pp. 436-447)

15

12/11 Injury prevention, poverty.
Oral presentations.

12/15 Projects and Papers due. Oral presentations. Review for Final

Final Exam: Dec. 18, at 8 AM in D314.