

COLONIALISM AND ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTH 407/507

M/W 2-3:50 PM

175 Lillis

CRN 30385

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Anthropology is generally defined as the study of human diversity. A more radical definition of anthropology is how the West encountered the world through a system of political, economic and cultural domination. This course takes the latter definition as the point of departure. Historically, anthropology as a discipline emerged as a *mode* of understanding the subjects of European colonialism and its goal was to “scientifically” understand what factors (biological, environmental, sociological, etc.) produced human “difference.” Indirectly, anthropology through its study of non-western societies became a “reluctant” aid in the governance of colonized people. Fifty years since the end of WWII and the beginning of decolonization, much has been debated about the state of anthropology. Scholars from the formerly colonized countries, and scholars in the West have radically questioned the colonial power relations that informed the discipline of anthropology. This course analyzes the formations of anthropological knowledge through an interdisciplinary approach that draws on a variety of philosophical, anthropological, historical, literary, and visual texts. In this course, we do not analyze colonialism as a political and military project that stopped after WWII, but as a *process* that has transformed into neo-colonial and postcolonial forms into the present. The objectives of this course are two-fold: First, what is the relationship between anthropology and colonialism/neo-colonialism/postcolonialism? Second, how do we move toward an anthropology that seeks non-hierarchical forms of knowledge?

Students are expected to analyze contemporary events in light of the readings. Students are advised to read the international section of the *New York Times* and keep up to date with how the world gets represented in the national paper of record in the US. The library also subscribes to the paper.

The course will be conducted in a seminar format. Students are expected to do the readings prior to class and come prepared to engage in discussion originating from the readings.

Required Texts (additional articles will be available as PDFs on Blackboard). The books will also be put on reserve at the Knight Library.

Fanon, Frantz. 2004. *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove Press

Kincaid, Jamaica. 2000. *A Small Place*, Farras, Straus and Giroux

Hochschild, Adam. 1999. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Africa*, Mariner Books
Starn, Orin. 2004. *Ishi's Brain: In Search of America's Last Wild Man*, WW Norton
Tierney, Patrick. 2002. *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon*, WW Norton and Co.
Orwell, George. *Burmese Days*, Harvest Books

Graduate Students:

The following book is on reserve at the library:

Ania, Loomba. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*

Grading:

Undergraduates

Class Presentation	10%
Class Projects	10%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Research Paper	50%
Total	100%

Graduate

Presentation	20%
Final Paper	80%

UNDERGRADUATE ASSIGNMENTS:

1) BLACKBOARD will be used to communicate with students. The day before class, the presenters will post two questions from the readings on blackboard for the class to collectively think about.

I will also open a discussion chat-room on black board for you to post your thoughts. I will not monitor the blackboard discussion, but I will use that as a record of class participation.

2) CLASS PRESENTATION 10 Points

Undergraduate students are expected to do a class presentation for 10 minutes. Since we will all do the readings, do not summarize the reading. Instead, raise two to three questions that address the text. On the day of your presentation, you will turn in one-page summary of your presentation/questions.

The following is a guide of the kinds of questions your are expected to raise.

- a) How does knowledge of the *other* operate in the text?
- b) What is the role of the anthropologist/observer in the text?
- c) What is the object of analysis? Who is speaking? Who is being represented?
- d) What forms of evidence do we need to be convinced of the arguments that are being made?
- e) How do power hierarchies operate in the text? What is the relationship between the former colonialists/and former colonized in the text?

- f) How do colonial fantasies operate in the text?
- g) How do we analyze representations of self/others?

3) CRITERIA FOR JUDGING:

- a) What are the author's key arguments? Select one or two arguments and develop them. Support your arguments with illustrations from the readings.
- b) Relevance of your questions to class objectives.
- c) Relevance of questions to contemporary issues.
- d) Coherent presentation of your arguments (feel free to not like the reading but you have to defend your position).
- e) Overall quality of the presentation (clarity of thought, questions, analysis, illustrations).

4) CLASS PROJECT

10 POINTS

You will do two short class projects in collaboration with a fellow student.

Project #1. Your responses are due in class on Mon 4/14. Be prepared to give a short description of what you discovered. You are required to be present in class on that day. Please also turn in a one-page account of your project.

Walk around campus and try to find signs of colonialism on campus. These can be buildings, statues, paintings, and images. Look for presence as well as absence. For example, the University of Oregon is on Native American tribal land. Is there any building on campus named after a Native American tribe or a leader? Does the university acknowledge that? If so, how?

Project #2. Your responses are due in class on 5/7. Be prepared to give a short description of what you discovered. You are required to be present in class on that day. Please also turn in a one-page account of your project.

Interview (4/5 question) a fellow University of Oregon student about what they think of when they hear the word Africa or Native Americans. What do they know about Africa/native Americans? What are the images they think of? Do they want to learn more? If so, what would they like to know more about?

5) MIDTERM EXAM

30 Points

You will be given a short-essay midterm-term exam on April, 28. You are expected to bring your blue books to class. I will give you a set of possible questions prior to the exam.

6) FINAL PAPER

50 Points (between 10-12 pages)

The final paper is due on the last day of classes, 6/4. No exceptions!

You will write a short research paper on a topic that interests you. The topic must be specific and doable. You will discuss it with me during week six of classes to discuss it more detail. Please bring in a short one-paragraph outline of what you aim to do in the paper. Here are some suggested topics:

Native Americans and the Repatriation of Native Remains
Museum Representations of Native People

Native Americans and the Mascot Controversy
The Struggle for Land and Native Americans
Relationship between Politics and Representations (especially in contemporary western media)
Representations of Minorities in the Media
Colonialism and Native Sexuality
Adoption of non-western children in the US
US laws and Interracial Marriages

Week One

3/31 **Introduction to course, assignments**

4/2 Film: *Said on Orientalism*

Start reading the *Wretched of the Earth*

Graduate Students:

Said, Edward. "Introduction" in *Orientalism*.

Ahmed, Aijaz. Orientalism and After: Ambivalence and Metropolitan Location in the World of Edward Said. 1994. In *Theory* (Delhi: Oxford University Press), pp.159-220

Week Two Colonialism and the Third World

4/7 Asad, Talal. "From the History of Colonial Anthropology to the History of Western Hegemony," In *The Anthropology of Politics*, Joan Vincent (ed) Blackwell Readers.

4/9 Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove Press (2004)

Graduate Students:

Cesaire, Aimee. *Discourse on Colonialism*

Week Three Colonial Constructions of Race

4/14 Kincaid, Jamaica. *A Small Place*

Marx, Karl and Engels. "The Communist Manifesto," from *Manifesto: Three Classic Essays on How to Change the World*

Film: *Life and Debt*

4/16 Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skins, White Masks*.

Film: *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman: the Hottentot Venus*

Graduate Students:

Alloula, Malik. *The Colonial Harem*

Week Four Colonialism in Africa

4/21 Hochschild, Adam. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Africa*, Mariner Books 1999

Film: *White King, red rubber, black death*

- 4/23 Watch the movie *Blood Diamond* in class
Suggested Reading: Campbell, Greg. "Death by Diamonds: Operation no Living Things, Sierra Leone," *Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path of the World's Most Precious Stone*, pp.79-98.

Week Five

4/28 Mid-term Exam for Undergraduates

- 4/30 **Research Day.** After the mid-term exam, students will start focusing on researching a final topic for the paper.

Week Six Race and Colonialism in the Americas

- 5/5 Starn, Orin. *Ishi's Brain: In Search of America's Last Wild Man*, WW Norton (2004)

Film: *Ishi, the Last Yahi*

- 5/7 In-class Student Responses to Project #2 on Africa
De la Casa, Bartoleme. "Synopsis/Prologue" (pp.3-14) and "New Spain," and "The Kingdom of Guatemala," pp. 45-65, in a *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, Penguin Classics (1999)

Week Seven Knowledge and Anthropology

- 5/12 Tierney, Patrick. *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon*, WWW Norton and Co (2002)

- 5/14 AAA Report on Tierney's Book

Week Eight British Colonialism in South Asia

- 5/19 Orwell, George. *Burmese Days*, Harvest Books (Latest)

- 5/21 Burnard, Trevor. "Adaptation, Accommodation and Resistance," and "Weapons of the Strong and Response of the Weak." In *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*

Week Nine Colonialism and Ecology

- 5/26 Memorial day

- 5/28 Reed, Jr., Adolph. 2008. "Class Inequality, Liberal Bad Faith, and Neoliberalism: The True Disaster of Katrina." In *Capitalizing on Catastrophe*, Gunewardena and Schuller (eds). Alta Mia Press.

Film: *Darwin's Nightmare*

Week Ten Student Presentations

- 6/2 Student Presentations

- 6/4 Student Presentations and Final Papers Due