

# **ANTH 314: NATIVE AMERICANS**

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Fall 2006, T, Th 10:00-11:50a  
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*Anthropology, the science of man [i.e., humans], is often held to be a subject that may satisfy our curiosity regarding the early history of mankind, but of no immediate bearing upon problems that confront us. This view has always seemed to me erroneous. Growing up in our own civilization we know little how we ourselves are conditioned by it, how our bodies, our language, our modes of thinking and acting are determined by limits imposed on us by our environment. Knowledge of the life processes and behavior of man under conditions of life fundamentally different from our own can help us obtain a freer view of our own lives and our problems.*

-Franz Boas

## **OVERVIEW**

Original ecologists, vanishing races, cowboy victims, marginalized reservation-dwellers, radical separatists, casino proprietors. . . These are just some of the dominant stereotypes and conflicting images of Native Americans today. In this course we critically examine these images and introduce the study of Native Americans from an anthropological perspective. The origins, development, and contemporary variations of Native American groups in the United States and Canada are explored. The course emphasizes key problems and themes in the study of Native Americans today, including culture change, demography, economic development, ethnic identity, sovereignty and self-government, human & land/resource rights, environmental justice and biocultural health, and representations of "Natives" and "Indians" in popular culture.

We explore these themes through a variety of perspectives. The texts, lectures, films, discussions, projects, and assignments are designed to provide you with:

- an overview and appreciation of the prehistory, development, diversity, and resilience of major Native North American culture groups;
- a critical grasp of the historical responses of colonial settlers and governments to Native Americans and of Native Americans to the forces of colonization, as well as of the ethics and effect of Indian policies;
- an understanding of key contemporary issues that face Native Americans and Canadian First Nations as indigenous minorities and ethnic nationalities within modern nation states;
- knowledge of the ethnographic, scientific, and other methods, concepts, and sources used to study and compare Native American cultures;
- A critical perspective on the dominant U.S. history and popular images of Native Americans students and consumers are fed in schools and popular media.
- Ultimately, a Boasian “freer view” of American history and culture and its relation to that of Native Americans.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS AND WEBCT**

1. *A Long and Terrible Shadow: White Values, Native Rights in the Americas (LTS)* by Thomas Berger looks at the legacy of colonialism, genocide, ethnocide in the Americas from a legal-historical perspective and how Native Americans remain resilient and continue to pursue justice.
2. *Land of the Spotted Eagle by Luther Standing Bear (LSE)* edited by Luther Standing Bear is an outstanding example of “auto-ethnography,” an insider/Native writing about his own culture for a general audience.

3. *Revenge of the Pequots: How a Small Native American Tribe Created the World's most Profitable Casino (RP)* by Kim Isaac Eisler chronicles the fall and rise of the Pequots of Connecticut, who today manage a billion dollar casino known as Foxwoods.
4. *Nchi'i-Wána, The Big River: Mid-Columbia Indians and Their Land* by Eugene Hunn with James Selam and family represents a careful and collaborative ethnohistorical and ethnoecological study of Sahaptin speaking peoples who dwell just east of the Cascades in the vicinity of the Yakima, Umatilla, and War Springs reservations.
5. *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko is an outstanding novel by a leading female Native American (Laguna Pueblo) author looking at a range of contemporary Native issues, from identity to disease to spirituality to cultural change.
6. *Where the Lightning Strikes (WLS)* by Peter Nabokov offers 16 "biographies of place" that reveal the rich history and continuing cultural associations of Native Americans with landscapes across North America.
7. Other course readings and resources (e.g., syllabus and web links) will be posted on WebCT, an internet resource to facilitate communication and distribution of course materials. Students are automatically enrolled in WebCT and can access class resources with their odin account and a password (usually the last 4 digits of your PSU ID) at [www.psuonline.pdx.edu](http://www.psuonline.pdx.edu). If you do not have an odin account, please obtain one ([www.account.pdx.edu](http://www.account.pdx.edu)).

These texts will be supplemented with additional handouts and other media, especially films.

### **FORMAT & EVALUATION**

Weekly classes will feature instructor presentation of new material through lecture, film, and in-class exercises, as well as student-led discussions and presentations. Evaluation is based of the following requirements:

- 1) *Essays (90% or 900 points)*: Three 4-page (~1200 word) essays will be assigned over the course of the term (see Course Schedule), based on exam-style questions. Students will receive detailed guidelines for each paper assignments in separate handouts. Each paper will be graded on a 300 point scale.
- 2) *Talking Points* and other assignments. (10% or 100 points): Students will be asked to complete minor assignments both inside and outside of class. Among the most important of these are Talking Points worksheets (questions, comments, quotes, etc. for discussion—see example) to be turned in to the instructor 5 times during the term and worth 10 points each. Being a discussant means being prepared and ready to listen and contribute, and the Talking Points you prepare should enhance your participation, while at the same time giving the instructor valuable feedback. In addition students may be expected to attend campus or local events and report on them. Full participation in all classes is expected.

Grading is: 970+ points = A+; 930-969 = A; 900-929=A-; 870-899=B+; 830-869 =B; 800-829=B-; 770-799=C+; 730-769 =C; 700-729 = C-; 670-699=D+; 630-669 =D; 600-629 = D-; < 600 = F (⊖).

### **POLICIES**

All work must be completed to receive a grade. Late papers will be penalized or rejected, except in cases of verifiable illness or emergency. Also, please be advised of the following Department policies: a) a "P" grade for the course requires an accumulated grade of C- or better; b) an "I" grade requires, in addition to the instructor's approval and "passing" standing in the course, a written petition, documenting (extraordinary) circumstances, approved by the Department Chair; c) the Anthropology Department insists upon academic integrity and intellectual honesty and is vigilant on the matter of plagiarism (see: see <http://www.anthropology.pdx.edu/assets/plagiarism.pdf>).

Students with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychological, vision, hearing, etc.) who need to arrange reasonable accommodation must contact both the

instructor and the Disability Resources Center at the beginning of the term. Also, be aware of your responsibilities for academic integrity and intellectual honesty ().

To be an effective participant in class, it is important to keep up with the readings because they provide an important basis for what is covered in class. For discussions to succeed students must attend class and prepare assignments in a timely manner. Please abide by the following principles of discussion:

1. **Prepare “Talking Points”** as you read and engage course materials to help you comprehend, connect, and assess the readings and put key ideas, questions, and concepts into play for discussion. I will collect Talking Points 5 times during the term, but encourage you to complete them for each set of reading assignments.
2. **Listen actively and reflectively**—Try to understand and analyze others’ opinions as they are spoken; ask questions to clarify and further your understanding. Don’t just sit passively “waiting your turn” or thinking about your own responses. Reflective silence is okay.
3. **Respond constructively**—Imagine what kind of role you are playing in responding to others and to texts. Do you wish to: 1) comprehend their analysis by paraphrasing or analyzing it; 2) extend their analysis by applying it new situations; 3) synthesize or link it with other concepts, issues, or arguments (especially those raised by others in the class and by the texts, which we share) through comparison, etc.; 4) evaluate it against relevant criteria? Do not engage in *ad hominem* or personal attacks. Agreement or disagreement is not necessarily the goal—Comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating important concepts, theories, and perspectives are the main objectives.

### **ADVISING**

If you are an anthropology major, or are considering declaring the major, please chose a faculty advisor and meet with them once or twice a year to chart a course and assess your progress through the major. A natural sequel to this course is ANTH 313, which is taught winter quarter.

**COURSE SCHEDULE (not etched in stone)**

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
1	9/26: Introduction, Pre-Assessment, & Overview. What are our dominant images of Native Americans? 9/28: Dominant Images (cont.). How do we understand Native American Origins and Prehistory? Films: <i>In Whose Honor</i> ; <i>Box of Daylight</i> ; <i>Kennewick Man</i> ;	LTS Intro.; WLS 12  Dixon (WebCT); LSE I- II <b>Image due on WebCT</b>
2	10/3: Why is Native American Identity not a “black and white” issue? 10/5: Did New World “Savages” help to “civilize” and give new identity to Old World cultures? How? Films: <i>White Shamans</i> ; <i>More than Bows and Arrows</i>	LSE III-VI,  LSE VII-IX <b>Thurs.: Talking Points #1 Due</b>
3	10/10: Did the Euroamerican colonization of the Americas constitute a holocaust (genocide, ecocide, and ethnocide?) for Native Americans? Demographic and other perspectives. 10/12: Why did Southeastern Indians, arguably the most “civilized” tribes in the eyes of contemporary whites, suffer removal and the Trail of Tears? How does this anticipate the Battle of Little Bighorn, Ghost Dance, and Massacre at Wounded Knee? Films: <i>500 Nations</i> ; <i>Last Stand at Little Bighorn</i> ; <i>Ishi: The Last Yahi</i>	LTS 1-2, 4 (pp.47-53),  LTS 6, 7; WLS 3, 4, 11, 16  <b>Thurs.: Essay #1 Due</b>
4	10/17: Why do Far Northern Arctic and Subarctic aboriginal peoples hold a special status in the popular imagination and why have they gone from least threatened to most? 10/19: What roles have animism, shamanism, subsistence, and climate played in the evolution of arctic and subarctic cultures? How can political ecology help us understand these developments? Films: <i>Nanook of the North</i> ; <i>Make Prayers to the Raven</i> , <i>Sila Alangotok</i>	LTS 3, 10  Thornton CSQ (WebCT), Fienup-Riordan (Web CT), WLS 2  <b>Thurs.: Talking Points # 2 Due</b>
5	10/24: Why did some Northeastern tribes but not others go from near extinction to powerful revitalization? 10/26: Pequots: Revenge or Revitalization? Films: <i>500 Nations: Iroquois Democracy</i> ; <i>The Witness</i>	LTS 5, RP 1-4, WLS 1  RP 5-end <b>Thurs.: Talking Points #3 Due</b>
6	10/31: How do we explain the diversity of socioeconomic organization among Native American hunter-gatherers? 11/2: What can an ethnoecological approach teach us about the development of Plateau cultures? Films: <i>Rabbit Boss</i> ; <i>500 Nations</i>	Nch’i-Wána 1-2, WLS 9  Nch’i-Wána 3, 4, 5  <b>Thurs.: Talking Points #4 Due</b>
7	11/7: How does Plateau Indian spirituality connect with their ecology? 11/9: What affect has reservation life had on Native Americans in the Plateau and elsewhere? Films: <i>Smoke Signals (excerpt)</i> ; <i>500 Nations</i>	Nch’i-Wána 6, 7, 8  LTS 8, Rez Road (excerpts, WebCT), <b>Thurs: Essay # 2 Due</b>
8	11/14: Why were Northwest Coast Natives Americans among the most complex hunting-gathering groups in the world? How is this reflected in their central ritual, the potlatch? 11/16 Beyond reservations, how did turning Alaska Natives into corporate stockholders affect their sovereignty, socioeconomic organization, and values? Films: <i>Haa Shagóon</i> ; <i>Then Fight for It</i>	Thornton (WebCT); Kan (WebCT)  Thornton (WebCT)  <b>Thurs.: Talking Points #5</b>
9	11/21: How do Native American languages relate to world view (Sapir-Whorf)? Do we need an endangered languages act? 11/23: Thanksgiving—No class Films: <i>Seasons of the Navajo</i>	Witherspoon (WebCT), WLS 5, 6, 7, 8  <b>Read Ceremony (first half)</b> <b>Thurs.: Talking Points due</b>
10	11/28: Culture, Autonomy, and Biocultural Health; Student Presentations 11/30: Student Presentations, Evaluations	<b>Ceremony (finish)</b>
11	12/4—12/9 Final Exams	<b>Essay #3 Due 12/4</b>

See <http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/cultmap.html> for a dynamic, scaleable link to this map, which shows culture areas and other information for more than 500 tribes of North America tribes. (Clickable dots below the line bring up overviews written by various American scholars, usually for Indian Studies courses.)



