

COLONIALISM AND ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTH 415

Tues 4-6:50 PM

Office Hours Tues 2-3 PM and by appointment

Condon 104

CRN 26091

Prof. Lamia Karim

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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 in the present.

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.

All the books are available at the Duck Book Store. A course pack will be available through the UO Duck Book Store.

- 1) Kincaid, Jamaica. 2002. *Lucy*. Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux
- 2) Hochschild, Adam. 1999. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Africa*, Mariner Books

- 3) Stern, Orin. 2004. *Ishim's Brain: In Search of America's Last Wild Man*, WW Norton
- 4) Tierney, Patrick. 2002. *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon*, WWW Norton and Co.
- 5) Orwell, George. *Burmese Days*, Harvest Books
- 6) Herzfeld, Jean. *Machete Season: Killers of Rwanda Speak*, Harcourt 2007

The following are required texts for graduate students:

Lomb, Anya. *Colonialism/Post colonialism (required)*

Ashcroft, Bill. *The Postcolonial Studies Reader (required)*

Grading:

Undergraduates

Class Participation	10%
Class Projects	15%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Paper/Project	45%
Total	100%

Graduate Student Requirements

- a) Graduates students will write a 20-25 original page paper on a topic to be mutually agreed upon with professor.
- b) Graduate students will meet three times outside of class hours with the professor as a group to discuss readings assigned to them from the *Postcolonial Reader*.

UNDERGRADUATE ASSIGNMENTS:

1) CLASS PARTICIPATION

BLACKBOARD will be used to communicate with students.

Use the following questions as a guide to the readings.

- 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?

2) CRITERIA FOR JUDGING YOUR WORK

- 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).

3) CLASS PROJECT

15 POINTS

You will do three short class projects.

- a) You are required to be present in class on that day.
- b) Be prepared to give a short account of what you discovered.
- c) Turn in a one-page account of your project.

Project #1

Please do this with a fellow class-mate. Walk around campus and look for signs of colonialism on campus. These can be buildings, statues, paintings, and images. Look for how presence/absence in representations. How are Pilgrims represented versus Native Americans? Are they located in visible or invisible spots? What does that say about our American society values different social groups? Is there any building on campus named after a Native American/American African tribe or a leader?

Project #2

Interview (4/5 questions) a fellow University of Oregon student about genocides in Rwanda and Darfur, Sudan. What do they know? What do they know about US foreign policy with regard to the genocides? What do they think the US should do to prevent genocides from occurring? Do we have a moral responsibility to stop genocide?

Project #3

Interview a fellow student about Native Americans. What do they know about Native Americans in the PNW? What are the images they think about when they hear Native Americans?

5) MIDTERM EXAM

30 POINTS

The mid-term exam will be in an essay format. 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/PROJECT

45 POINTS

Due on the last day of class, no exceptions!

You will write a short research paper (8-10 pages) on a topic that interests you. The topic must be specific and doable. You will discuss it with me during week five 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 that students have written about in the past:

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
Representations of Minorities in the Media
Colonialism and Native Sexuality

Adoption of non-western children in the US
US laws and Interracial Marriages

Instead of writing a final paper, you have the option of doing a creative project. You could do a documentary, poster, rap song, or write a short skit on one of the topics covered in this class. If you want to do a creative project, please consult with the professor prior to undertaking the project.

Week One Colonialism and the Third World

Introduction to course, assignments

Film: *Said on Orientals*

Week Two Introduction to Colonialism

Project #1 due

Assad, Tall. "From the History of Colonial Anthropology to the History of Western Hegemony," In *The Anthropology of Politics*, Joan Vincent (ed) Blackwell Readers.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*

Week Three Colonialism in India

George Orwell. *Burmese Days*

Film: *A Passage to India*

Week Four Colonialism in India and Antigua

Kincaid, Jamaica. *Lucy*.

Film: *Life and Debt*

Week Five Colonialism in Africa

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

Film: *Sometimes in April*

Week Six Genocide

Herzfeld, Jean. *Machete Season: Killers of the Rwanda Massacre Speak Out*

Project #2 due

Week Seven

Exam I in class.

Week Eight Colonialism in the Americas

De la Casa, Bartolomeo. "Synopsis/Prologue" (pp.3-14) and "New Spain," and "The Kingdom of Guatemala," pp. 45-65, in *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, Penguin Classics (1999)

Stern, Orin. *Ishim's Brain*
Project #3 due

Week Nine Knowledge and Anthropology

Tierney, Patrick. *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists
Devastated the Amazon*, WW Norton and Co (2002)

Film: *The Ax War*

AAA Report on Tierney's Book

Week Ten War as Neo-Colonialism

Final Student Projects

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