MI 501: PEOPLES AND CULTURES OF MICRONESIA

Course Schedule, Fall 2013
Tuesday 5:30–8:20 PM, MARC Seminar Room
Professor Donald H. Rubinstein
Office hours (MARC 209) MW 2:00–5:00 PM
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August 27: Overview of course and requirements

September 3: Defining Micronesia, constructing/deconstructing a “culture area”

Required reading:


Recommended:


September 10: Islanders in a real world. The physical environment of Micronesia

Required reading:


**Recommended:**


Film: *Mokil*. Filmed by Conrac Bentzen (1948, 61 min.)

**Required reading (for film):**


**Recommended (for film):**


**September 17:** **Fishing in Micronesia — “More than a Living”**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended:**


Film: *Traditional Fishing on Guam*. Produced by Judy Amesbury (PBS Guam, 2011, 28:21 min)

**Living off the physical environment — Agricultural systems**

Films: *Nourish the Roots, Gather the Leaves: Sustainable Taro Culture in the Pacific*. 1992 (27 min.). Produced by the College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources, University of Hawaii.

Rev 08/26/2013 2
Honolulu: Victoria Keith Productions.

Required reading:

Recommended:
Raynor, Bill; Adelino Lorens; and Jackson Phillip. 2009. Yams and their traditional cultivation
on Pohnpei. In Ethnobotany of Pohnpei: plants, people, and island culture, pp. 40–62,
Michael J. Balick (comp., ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.

September 24: From whence the “Micronesians”? Evidence and arguments in
Pacific prehistory.

Required reading:
Carucci, Laurence M.; and Lin Poyer. 2002. Prehistory: introduction to the archaeology of
Micronesia. In Oceania: An introduction to the cultures and identities of Pacific Islanders,
Kirch, Patrick V. 2000. Micronesia: In the sea of little islands. Chapter 6 of On the road of the
winds: An archaeological history of the Pacific Islands before European contact, pp. 165–
Kirch, Patrick V. 2010. Peopling the the Pacific: A holistic anthropological perspective. Annual

Recommended:
November.
exploration and colonisation of the Pacific, pp. 117–132. Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press.
Rainbird, Paul. 1994. Prehistory in the northwest tropical Pacific: The Caroline, Mariana, and
Terrell, John, Kevin M. Kelly, and Paul Rainbird. 2001. Foregone conclusions? In search of

October 1: *** First book review essay due ***
student presentations of book reviews.
October 8: Micronesian languages — Family and historical relations

Required reading:


Recommended:


Micronesian languages — Cultural and political issues

Required reading:


Recommended:


October 15: The visual art of Micronesia — slide presentation

Required reading:


**Recommended:**


**October 22:**

**Performance art of Micronesia**

Film: *Songs of Polowat* (Stonewolf and Todo Mauleg Productions, 1994, 30 min.)

**Required reading:**


**Indigenous navigation**

Film: *Sacred Vessels* (Vicente Diaz and Christina DeLisle, 1997, 30 min.)

**Required reading:**


**Recommended:**


**October 29:**  **Micronesian navigation and spirituality**  
Film:  *Spirits of the Voyage* (Eric Metzgar, Triton Films, 1996, 88 min.)

**Religion in Micronesia**  
Film:  *When Spirits Roamed* (Micronesian Seminar Productions, 2012, 60 min.)

**Required reading:**


**Recommended:**


**November 5:**  **Second book review essay due***
Student presentations of book reviews

**November 12:**  **Micronesian kinship and social organization: overview**

**Required reading:**

**Matrilineal kinship: The view from Chuuk**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended:**

review relevant sections on social organization in Alkire: An introduction to the peoples and cultures of Micronesia

**November 19:** **Constructed kinship: Child adoption in Micronesia**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended:**


**Inter-island exchanges and relationships**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended:**


**November 26**

**Gender roles in Micronesia**

Film: *The Silent Keepers* (Sincro Productions, 1994, 55 min.)

**Required reading:**


**Food and feasts in Micronesia — The symbolism and politics of eating**

**Required reading:**


Pollock, Nancy. 1992. *These roots remain: Food habits in islands of the Central and Eastern Pacific since Western contact.* (read only Chapter 2, Food classification, pp. 22–42; Chapter 6, Feasts and ceremonial presentations, pp. 105-127.) Laie, HI: The Institute for Polynesian Studies

**Recommended:**


December 3: Indigenous political systems and island chiefs

Required reading:


Recommended:


re-read relevant sections of Alkire: Peoples and cultures of Micronesia

Chiefs today: Role of traditional leaders in modern island democracies

Required reading:


Recommended:

December 10: *** Third book review essay due ***
student presentations of book reviews and course wrap-up