

Anthropology 2P03E

Peoples of the Pacific

Fall Term, 2005
Thursday, 7 - 10 pm

PC - 155
Dr. Bill Rodman
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Objectives of the Course



Anthropology 2P3E is a course designed to introduce students to the peoples of the islands of the Pacific - their history, traditions and current ways of life, and their responses to contact, colonialism and cultural change. We will concentrate equally upon the past and the present in Oceania. Some lectures and readings focus upon the ways of life and thought that Pacific peoples represent to outsiders and to themselves as "customary". However, *kastom* and rapid change coexist in the Pacific today, and we will spend much of the course discussing how Pacific islanders are adapting to life in the first years of the new millennium. Specific topics relating to the "new" Pacific that we will examine include the roots of dependency and underdevelopment in Pacific island societies, the status of women in Oceania today, tourism in "the last paradise" and Pacific island traditions in an era of globalization.

We will discuss many varieties of anthropological experience in the South Pacific and also Pacific islanders' reactions to outsiders who come to study their ways of life. By the end of the course, I hope you will have a better understanding of life in Pacific island societies. I also hope you will have gained deeper insight into anthropology as a way of life - the reasons why anthropologists do what they do, how they conduct fieldwork, what they hope to achieve, how they reach their conclusions, and the many and subtle ways in which the process of fieldwork transforms both their lives and the lives of the people they study.

The Scope of the Course

2P3E will focus on Pacific islanders who live in Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia, a part of the world that is often called "Oceania" or "The Island Pacific". The course does not cover Japan or the countries on the Pacific rim, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia or Australia.

Prerequisites

This course is "Open" and requires no prerequisites. However, before you decide to take 2P03E, I must underline the obvious: this is a *second* year course in anthropology that will be taught on a more advanced level than that of our introductory courses. In order to

proceed at a reasonable pace, I must assume that members of the class have an understanding of basic concepts in social and cultural anthropology.

Required Readings

This course has two required texts:

Rodman, W.

2005 **Readings on Pacific Island Societies**. Available from the Bookstore.

I developed this collection of readings on Pacific societies especially for students taking 2P03E. The articles in the reader relate directly to the content of lectures and come from a wide variety of sources.

You should acquire the required text as soon as possible. Not only is it important to begin reading the assigned articles; the text also contains maps of the Pacific that we will be using intensively in the first few weeks of class. Your first task in 2P03E is to become familiar with the names and locations of the main island groups in Oceania.

Ward, Martha

2005 **Nest in the Wind: Adventures in Anthropology on a Tropical Island. Second Edition**. Long Grove, ILL: Waveland Press

Martha Ward's evocative and engaging ethnography will give you a sense of what it is like to be an anthropologist conducting fieldwork on a small Pacific island. **Nest in the Wind** also is an issue-oriented anthropological ethnography: from Ward's book, you will gain a sense of the total way of life in one Pacific society (Pohnpei, in Micronesia). The last four chapters of the book, based on Ward's fieldwork in 2003, are especially relevant to issues that we will discuss in the second half of 2P03E: here, Ward focuses her attention on social problems and problems of identity that Pohnpeians share with many peoples throughout the island Pacific.

As a visual supplement to Ward's ethnography, you should take a look at A. Zuccarelli's web site, entitled **Pohnpei - Between Time and Tide**:

<http://www.pohnpeiheaven.com/index.htm>

Mode of Evaluation

Your grade for the course will be based on the results of two exams and an essay:

1. Mid-Term, October 13th	25% of your grade
2. Essay, due November 3th	35% " " "
3. Final Exam, Date Set By the University	40% " " "

The in-class mid-term and the university-set final exam both will consist of questions that

are designed test your understanding of course materials presented in lectures, films and those parts of the required readings that relate to class discussion. The midterm will be an hour in length, and the final will be two hours in length. Both exams will consist of essay-type questions. The assigned essay will be approximately 8 typewritten pages in length and will ask you to think more deeply about some of the issues we will discuss in class.

More information on the course requirements will be made available as we proceed through the term.

Basic Rules: Academic Ethics and Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on a transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

If you have any questions at all regarding plagiarism in relation to academic essays and exams, please feel free to ask me or your marker/advisor.

Office Hours

My office is in Chester New Hall, Room 502, ex. 23909. During Fall Term, I will hold office hours at the following times:

Tuesday - 12 - 1:30 pm
Thursday - 5 - 6:20 pm

I also am available at other times by appointment. If you need to get in touch with me when I am not in my office, please leave a note in my mailbox in the Anthropology Office on the fifth floor of Chester New Hall; remember to include in your note a telephone number where I can reach you. Perhaps the best way to get in touch with me quickly is via email. My email address is:

rodman@mcmaster.ca

Anthropology 2P03E

Schedule of Topics, Readings and Films

First Week: September 8th

An Island World: Unity Within Diversity in Oceania_____

Topics: Introduction to the course
 A Visual Introduction to the Pacific
 Global Warming and Climate Change: Causes and Consequences
 Environment and The Fate of Pacific Islanders in the New Millennium

Readings:

Please Study the Maps of the Pacific in the Coursepack

Begin reading *Nest in the Wind*

David Stanley, from the "Introduction" to **Moon Handbooks South Pacific**

Neil Levy, from the "Introduction" to **Micronesia Handbook**

Also: see the short article on "Oceania and Global Warming" on Jane Resture's Oceania web page: http://www.janesoceania.com/oceania_global_warming/index.htm

Film: **Rising Waters: Global Warming and the Fate of the Pacific Islands**

Second Week: September 15th

In Search of Islands: The Peopling of the Pacific

Topics: *Whodunit?* The Origins of Pacific Peoples
How Did They Do It?: Theories of Pacific Exploration
Why Did They Do It? The Rediscovery of the Pacific
 Voyaging

Readings:

Greg Denning, "Encompassing the Sea of Islands"

K.R. Howe - "Current Ideas: When and Where?"

Visit and Explore the **Polynesian Voyaging Society Website:**

<http://www.pvs-hawaii.com/index.html>

To gain more insight into Polynesian voyaging, play the interactive wayfinding game at <http://www.pbs.org/wayfinders/game.html#>. Can you navigate your way from Hawai'i all the way to Tahiti?

Film: **The Wayfinders**

Third Week: September 22nd

The Point of Contact: Strangers in Paradise

Topics: European Exploration of the Pacific: Cross-Cultural Encounters

The Search for the Noble Savage

The Death of Captain Cook

Colonization of the Pacific and the Beginnings of Colonialism

Readings:

Tony Horwitz, "The Last Island" and "A Bad Day at Black Rock"

Bernard Smith, "Constructing Pacific Peoples "

Visit and Explore:

The Micronesian Seminar photo exhibits entitled: "What the First Europeans Saw" and "Life 100 Years Ago"

<http://www.micsem.org/photos/europeans/01.htm>

http://www.micsem.org/photos/life_100/intro.htm

Fourth Week: September 29th

A Plague of Cannibals: Death, Disease and the European Imagination of the "Primitive"

Topics: An Epidemic in the New Guinea Highlands

Fore as Cannibals/The White Cannibals

Carleton Gajdusek Wins A Nobel Prize

Kuru, CJD, and “Mad Cow” Disease: Alternative Explanations
 “The Cannibal Smile”: Consuming Cannibalism

Readings:

B. Connelly and R. Anderson, "What is Beyond?"
 Richard Rhodes, “Kuru”

Film: **First Contact**

Fifth Week: October 6th

Fieldwork in Two Pacific Societies: Pohnpei and Vanuatu

Topics:

Conducting Fieldwork: “Surviving” and Living Well
 The Work of Anthropologists: Applied Perspectives
 The Politics of Pigs and Place in Vanuatu

Readings:

Lissant Bolton, “Ambae: On Being a Person of the Place”
 Bill Rodman: “The Scales of Time: A Quest for Meaning”
 “Pigs and Politics in Ambae, Vanuatu/Pigs and Politics: A Game of Strategy”
 Martha Ward, sections of **Nest in the Wind** concerning her fieldwork on Pohnpei

Sixth Week: October 13th

Mid-Term Exam, first hour of class

After the break, I plan to continue our discussion for fieldwork in Vanuatu and Pohnpei for the remainder of the class.

No readings for this week.

Seventh Week: October 20th

Big Men of Small Lands: Understanding Leadership in Pacific Societies

Topics:

Major Features of Leadership in Melanesia and Polynesia
 The Making of “Big Men” and “Chiefs”
 Evolutionary “Brakes” in Melanesia vs. the Evolutionary Potential of Polynesian
 Chiefdoms
 Big Men, Chiefs, and Development

Readings:

“Some Major Features of Leadership in Melanesia”

Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi, “The Last Big Man: Development and Men’s Discontents in the Papua New Guinea Highlands...” **Oceania** 68 (2), 1997: 107-122. **available online** at

http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3654/is_199712/ai_n8765223

Also in Mills Undergraduate Reserve and in the journal, **Oceania**, in the stacks.

Film: **Black Harvest**

Eighth Week: October 27th

The Transformations of Tradition in the Postmodern Pacific

Topics:

Transformations of Tradition Within Anthropology

The Quest for the Authentic and The Invention of Tradition

Observing Tradition: The Case of the Wala Kalja Club

“Everything Old is New Again”: Cultural Renewal and the Shaping of Identity

Readings: Finish Martha Ward, **Nest in the Wind**

Film: **Changing Ground**

Ninth Week: November 3rd

"Sun, Sex, Sights, Savings and Servility": Tourism in "Paradise"

NB: Essay due in class today

Topics:

The Case in Favor of International Tourism

The Costs of Tourism: What We've Learned

Tourist Identities, Host Identities

The Tourist Trap: Solutions?

Readings:

Konai Helu-Thaman, "Beyond Hula, Hotels and Handicrafts..."
 Eric Silverman, "Cannibalizing, Commodifying or Creating Culture?"

Film: **Cannibal Tours**

Tenth Week: November 10th

The New Pacific: Alcohol, Drugs and Development

Topics: Weekend Warriors on Truk (Micronesia)
 The Colonial Hangover
 Chill Pill: The Marketing of Kava in North America
 The Problems with Kava as Drug of Choice

Readings:

Tom Harrison, "Kava negatives the legs..." (from **Savage Civilization**)
 Martha Ward, "You Cannot Hate with Kava in You" (in **Nest in the Wind**)
 Mac Marshall, "Men, Women and Booze"
 "Alcohol and Kava: Some Points of Comparison"

Eleventh Week: November 17th

Landscapes of Desire and Despair: Law, Order, and Killing Time

Readings:

Paul Roscoe, "Crime and 'Tribal' Warfare in Contemporary Papua New Guinea"
 Jean Mitchell, "Killing Time" in a Postcolonial Town

Film: **Kilem Taem**

Twelfth Week: November 24th:

Issues and Problems in the New Pacific: Heath, Women's Rights, and Development

Readings:

Martha Ward, "Our World Itself is an Island" (in **Nest in the Wind**)
 Ellen Shell, "New World Syndrome"
 Sharon Tiffany, "Women in Oceania"

Thirteenth Week, December 1st,

The Island Pacific: Some Concluding Possibilities

“...the sea is our pathway to each other and to everyone else, the sea is our endless saga, the sea is our most powerful metaphor, the ocean is in us.” Epeli Hau’ofa
Readings:

Cargo Cults, Identity and Development
Frum, Aid to Dependency
Toward Self-Reliance
The Future of Pacific Societies in the 21st Century

Readings:
Charles Montgomery, “Tanna, a Conflagration of Belief”
Stephen Leavitt, “Cargo Beliefs and Religious Experience”
Epeli Hau’ofa, “The Ocean in Us”
Jim Hess, “Wave and Reflection...”