



SOAN 333: Environmental Anthropology

Spring 2021

Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton College

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“We are stuck with the problem of living despite economic and ecological ruination. Neither tales of progress nor of ruin tell us how to think about collaborative survival. It is time to pay attention to mushroom picking. Not that this will save us—but it might open our imaginations.”

Anna Tsing Loh

COURSE GOALS

Broadly speaking, this course evaluates the different ways by which anthropologists understand, document and evaluate human/nature relationships. Key questions explored include: How do people adapt to different environmental conditions? What environmental variables are critical to human adaptation and resilience? What are the socio-cultural and environmental conditions for sustainably managing local and global natural resources? How do human populations react to environmental change? How is the study of human/nature relationships impacted by ideological tendencies and methodological biases? And what are the social causes behind environmental degradation?

The course will explore these questions via a combination of three approaches:

- 1) An examination of the intellectual genealogy of environmental and evolutionary thought in anthropology via an analysis of classic ethnographic works and a discussion of their influence and legacy.
- 2) An examination of contemporary research approaches in environmental and ecological anthropology via an exploration of different theoretical tendencies and methodologies implemented in a variety of environmental and socio-cultural settings.
- 3) An examination of case studies from around the world that apply clear anthropological frameworks and methodologies to evaluate environmental problems, inform environmental policy, or solve challenges that emerge in the implementation of conservation and sustainable development initiatives.

In addition to themes explored in class students will have the opportunity to further delve into individual interests through an in-depth research project that will culminate in an environmental anthropology portfolio composed of an annotated bibliography and a conceptual poster of an approved theme. This project will allow students to experience the involved process of investigating an idea in the literature without the “emotional pressure” of culminating the term with a research paper. In other words the course is designed to help you develop an idea that can be incorporated into a comps project, graduate school proposal, research internship idea, or post-graduation project.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As part of Carleton's assessment initiative, the SOAN Department of has identified six Student Learning Outcomes for SOAN majors. In this course you will learn four of these outcomes:

- Formulate appropriate sociological and/or anthropological research questions about socio-cultural phenomena.
- Select appropriate sociological and/or anthropological research methods to study socio-cultural phenomena.
- Apply sociological and anthropological theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena.
- Draw upon your understanding of historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena to engage the world.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade during the term will be assessed through a combination of participatory activities, written products and a short exam. Instructions, rationale and objectives for each assignment will be clearly outlined for you during class and posted on Moodle for reference. In all cases do not hesitate to contact me if you have any question regarding instructions or expectations.

More specifically your final grade will be divided into five sections:

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| • Attendance & Participation | 15% |
| • Reflection Essays (4 total / 5% each) | 20% |
| • Documentary Reflection | 15% |
| • Annotations (15) | 30% |
| • Final Project | 20% |

Annotated Bibliography: This project consists of developing a research portfolio consisting of 15 annotated citations (on an approved theme in environmental anthropology) and a short introductory section or research statement (less than 2 pages) that describes your research process throughout the term. Annotated citations will be due in small groups throughout the term which will be graded and contain feedback that you are expected to address by the time you turn in your final portfolio. In general, each citation will consist of a two-three page (single spaced) critical analysis. The analysis should provide a brief summary of the article (not a copy of abstract), the author's main hypotheses, an explanation of methodologies and data used to prove their argument, and a critique of the author's argument and conclusions as it related to your research theme. You will receive detailed written instructions on how to do the annotations as well as a sample annotation.

Most of your annotations should come from academic sources in anthropology or related disciplines (but mostly anthropology) that you will locate within academic journals and books. Please note that at least one of your annotations should come from an academic source in ***another language or from a non-American/European research institution***. This requirement is meant to help you realize that the production of knowledge occurs in different languages and along various intellectual traditions. A good researcher should always consider that there are valuable resources to be found beyond the dominant areas of knowledge production. You are also welcome to annotate at least one relevant work (maximum 5) stemming from an "unconventional" source such as works of art, radio shows, public sources,

etc. I will provide guidelines on how to annotated these kinds of sources once they have been chosen.

Your Final Portfolio should include:

- 1) Research Statement or Introductory section to your portfolio (less than 2 pages single spaced). This section describes your research process throughout the term, and includes a summary of what your major conclusions (or findings) were at the end of the term. In other words I am interested in what issues you uncovered. Finally this section should have a statement on why an anthropological perspective is particularly useful in addressing your theme.
- 2) 15 annotations (corrected if I gave you comments that need to be incorporated). Make sure you separate each annotation with a page break (that way I can clearly see where each annotation begins).
- 3) Include Special Annotations: Remember that one annotation should be of an unconventional source and one annotation in a foreign language or research institution.
- 4) PLEASE NOTE: There is no need to include the actual articles you read!

Participation: You are expected to come prepared to contribute insightfully to class discussion during every meeting time. For this portion of your grade I am looking for quality not quantity and will give you written feedback during the term to let you know how you are doing with participation. *If you are shy or are having problems finding a space to contribute* do come see me as I strive to create a positive discussion environment in class and the more I know about you and your concerns with class dynamics the more I can help you in the process.

Attendance: You are expected to come to all our meeting times even in the event of a guest lecture. Please note that if you have more than **two** unexcused absences you will forfeit your participation grade. However, if you have a legitimate excuse please let me know and we can discuss alternative assignments.

LATE AND MAKE-UP POLICY

Please note that I am very strict about due dates. Unless you have a legitimate excuse for turning in an assignment late or missing an exam I will either not accept the assignment or deducts points from your grade. Although I am certainly sympathetic to emergencies I do ask you to try to let me know what is happening before the assignment or exam comes around in order to avoid misunderstandings.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to adhere to Carleton's code of academic honesty. Even in the event of participating in team projects, your final report should still reflect your own work and other people's ideas should always be credited. If you have any questions regarding this policy please visit <http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/> or come speak to me. Failure to follow Carleton's expectation will result in a failing grade and formal action with the administration.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE & COMPASSIONATE CLASSROOM

My primary goal as an educator and scholar is to foster a joy for learning and prepare students for their future professional paths. Although joyful, the process is not necessarily always fun or easy. To me learning is a convoluted process that is difficult, as it requires us to push our intellectual limits, take risks, and face our -- and other's -- legacies straight on. The "reward" that results from this process is not always readily apparent or may take years to manifest.

I also believe that learning should not be painful or hurtful to those involved in the process. I can assure you that I make a conscious effort to consider the possible consequences or impacts of what happens in my courses. The problem is that even though I try to avoid these situations it is very difficult for anyone to be error-free. Trying to accommodate or predict the reactions of a diverse and ever-changing group of individuals that venture to take my classes is impossible and overwhelming at times.

For these reasons, a belief in the academic process and a commitment to creating a compassionate learning space, I avoid an explicit policy of providing trigger warnings in my courses. I will give some background of the readings and will certainly give a heads up when certain kinds of difficult material approaches but I will not give trigger warnings. In a nutshell, the fundamental reason is that what might *to you* merit an obvious trigger warning may not be for others and vice versa. For example, a common occurrence in my courses is that issues of sexual violence depicted in a North American context will elicit multiple requests for trigger warning, yet material that discusses extreme cases of violence and genocide in regions of the world that we refer to as the Global South are consumed by most with a dry analytical stance and almost no consideration or acknowledgement of the emotional implications this may have to others in the room (including the instructor or visitor).

This is a very delicate issue and there is no magic bullet. What I ask you is to engage in this journey with me and trust me (and this may mean giving me or your peers multiple chances). I will definitely address issues that are brought to my attention in a constructive manner. I do my best to teach and model the manner in which difficult material can be engaged with in the classroom, but more importantly please know that *I am willing to learn with you; but this can only happen in a companionate and honest environment.* I hope you are willing to learn with me as well!

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATIONS

I hope you will all come see me during office hours to discuss the course, ideas for other projects, or career plans. Interacting with students is one of the aspects that I most enjoy about my job so please **DO NOT BE SHY** and take advantage of office hour! If you cannot make office hours let me know and we can always schedule an alternative time.

EMAIL

Regarding email please note that I will try to answer emails within a 24 hr. period but that I reserve the right to not answer emails during the weekend (late Sundays are often the exception but do not expect it). I also do not text students so please do not try because I will probably miss them. Finally, although I encourage you to contact me via email with questions, if

the question requires a long answer I may ask you to come see me personally so I can give you a proper response.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you need any help dealing with the requirement of the course please let me know so I can direct you to the multitude of resources available to you at Carleton. Although I will be posting relevant resources to individual assignments come see me if you are having trouble taking notes, studying for the exam, writing up assignments, stress, etc. I will be more than delighted to help direct you and work with you on what you need.

In case you are interested in exploring your options on your own, a comprehensive list of resources can be found here: <https://www.carleton.edu/student/support/>

LIBRARY

Worth mentioning is our fabulous library staff, in particular Kristin Partlo (the social sciences reference librarian). If you have any questions or need help finding resources for the class, she is a great resource. I expect you to meet with her at least once during the term. Please email her at kpartlo@carleton.edu to set up an appointment.

COURSE READINGS

Readings will be posted in Moodle a week or more in advance. Since the course will be modeled according to student interests and progress I may switch the theme or author depending on how the class is going. You are expected to complete the assigned readings by class time and come prepared to actively participate in class discussions. Please note that some weeks have heavier readings loads than others, for this reason I suggest you pay attention to what I say the week before (i.e. if it is a dense reading or not) and plan accordingly.

TIP: It is very easy for a professor to know if you did not complete readings assigned. Since this is a small class please come prepared and do not expose yourself to the uncomfortable situation of having to explain in front of everyone why you did not prepare for class. HOWEVER, if you have an issue come up and simply could not prepare, let me know before class so we can devise a plan.

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Readings will be posted in Moodle. You are expected to complete the assigned readings by class time and come prepared to participate in class discussions. Please note that some weeks have heavier readings loads than others, for this reason I suggest you pay attention to reading guidelines discussed in class. I will also provide a list of additional readings each week for those of you interested more in a particular subject matter, they are not required but I encourage you to explore them. The following is a list of readings used and referenced in the class, but note that I often change readings depending on student interest so pay attention to what is posted on Moodle every week.

- Acheson, James and Roy Gardner
2010 The Evolution of Conservation Rules and Norms in the Maine Lobster Industry. *Ocean & Coastal Management* 53:524-534.
- Ardoin, Nicole
2014 Exploring Sense of Place and the Environmental Behavior at an Ecoregional Scale in Three Sites. *Human Ecology* 42:425-441.
- Becker, Dustin and Elinor Ostrom
1995 Human Ecology and Resource Sustainability: The Importance of Institutional Diversity. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 26:113-133.
- Berkes, Fikret and Dyanna Jolly
2001 Adapting to Climate Change: Social-ecological Resilience in a Canadian Western Arctic Community. *Conservation Ecology* 5(2): 18.
- Bird Bliege, Rebecca with Eric Alden Smith and Douglas Bird
2012 The Hunting Handicap: Costly Signaling in Human Foraging Strategies. *In Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. Jon McGee and Richard Warms editors. 5th edition. Pp. 379-395. San Marcos: Mc Graw Hill.
- Brosius, Peter
2006 Endangered Forest, Endangered People: Environmentalist representations of Indigenous Knowledge *In The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living*, eds. Nora Haenn and Rickard Wilk, 376-385. New York: New York University Press.
- Chagnon, Napoleon
1988 Life Histories, Blood Revenge, and Warfare in a Tribal Population. *Science* 239: 985-992
- Clark, Alison
2011 Multimodal Map Making with Young Children: Exploring Ethnographic and Participatory Methods. *Qualitative Research* 11(3): 311-330.
- Durham, William
1991 Cultural Mediation: The Evolution of Adult Lactose Absorption. *In Coevolution: Genes, Culture and Human Diversity*. Pp. 226-285. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Fairhead, James and Melissa Leach
2008 False Forest History, Complicit Social Analysis: Rethinking Some West African Environmental Narratives. *In Environmental Anthropology: A Historical Reader*. Michael Dove and Carol Carpenter editors. Pp. 102-117. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Finney, Carolyn
2014. Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Frake, Charle
2008 Pleasant Places, Past Times, and Sheltered Identity in Rural East Anglia. *In Environmental*

Anthropology: A Historical Reader. Michael Dove and Carol Carpenter editors. Pp. 435-456. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Hames, Raymond and William Vickers. eds
1983 Adaptive Responses of Native Amazonians. New York: Academic Press.

Harris, Marvin
1992 The Cultural Ecology of India's Sacred Cattle. *Current Anthropology* 33: 261-276.

Irvine, Dominique
1989 Succession Management and Resource Distribution in an Amazonian Rainforest. *In* Resource Management in Amazonia: Indigenous and Folk Strategies. Darell Posey and William Balée, editor. Pp. 223-37. Advances in Economic Botany Series. New York: New York Botanical Gardens.

Kofinas, Gary et al
2010. Resilience of Athabascan Subsistence Systems to Interior Alaska's Changing Climate. *Canadian Journal of Forest Resources* 40:1347:1359.

Kohn, Eduardo
2013. How Forest Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human. Berkley CA: University of California Press.

Lansing, Stephen
1991 Priests and Programmer: Technologies of Power on the Engineered Landscape of Bali. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Luzar, Jeffrey and Jose Fragoso
2013 Shamanism, Christianity and Culture Change in Amazonia. *Human Ecology* 41(2):299-311.

Malinowski, Bronislaw
2008 The Essentials of the Kula. *In* Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History. Jon McGee and Richard Warms editors. 4th edition. Pp. 163-179. San Marcos: Mc Graw Hill.

Mann, Charles
2002 1492. *The Atlantic Monthly Magazine*. March 2002 pp. 1-20.
(<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/03/1491/2445/>)

Netting, Robert
1981 Balancing on an Alp: Ecological Change and Continuity in a Swiss Mountain Community. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

1986 Cultural Ecology. 2nd Edition. Long Grove: Waveland Press.

Rappaport, Roy
1984 Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a New Guinea People. 2nd edition. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Steward, Julian

2008 The Patrilinear band. *In Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. Jon McGee and Richard Warms editors. 4th edition. Pp. 248-264. San Marcos: Mc Graw Hill.

Tsing, Anna

2015. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton NJ: Prince University Press.

Tsing, Ann *et al* eds.

2017. *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Monsters of the Anthropocene*. Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press.

White, Leslie

2008 Energy and the Evolution of Culture. *In Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. Jon McGee and Richard Warms editors. 4th edition. Pp. 229-248. San Marcos: Mc Graw Hill.

Wrangham R. and D. Peterson

1997 *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence*. New York: Mariner Books.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	LECTURE THEME& ASSIGNMENTS	READINGS
Week 1 Tue Mar 30	Introduction: After decades of research, why are human/nature relationships portrayed in problematic and oversimplified ways?	Discussion of film on Ache society in Paraguay and Darwin's legacy
Thu April 1	<i>The Origin of Species: A Persistent Legacy to the Human Species</i>	Darwin (Origin of Species)
Week 2 Tue April 6	<i>The Kula Ring</i> : Functionalism and its legacy to environmental analysis <i>The Concept of Culture</i> : Geertz as a starting point	Malinowski (The Kula Ring) Geertz (Interpretation of Cultures)
Thu April 8	<i>White and Steward's Legacy</i> : Early contributions in environmental anthropology	White (Energy) Steward (Patrilinear Bands)
Week 3 Tue April 13	<i>Neo-Functionalism</i> : Using environmental analysis to make sense of foreign systems <i>From Pigs to Alps</i> : Understanding the differences between ecological anthropology, human ecology and cultural ecology. ASSIGNMENT : Explore environmental anthropology journals for research project ideas. Turn in a research question and identify one article (include abstract) Key Journals to Consider : Human Ecology, Human Organization, Environment and Society, Annual Review of Anthropology, etc.	Harris (The Sacred Cow) Netting (Ecological Perspectives)
Thu April 15	<i>From Pigs to Alps</i> : Understanding the differences between ecological anthropology, human ecology and cultural ecology.	Netting (Balancing on an Alp) Rappaport (Pigs for the Ancestors)
Week 4 Tue April 20	<i>The Influence of Sociobiology</i> : Human Behavioral Ecology ASSIGNMENT : One annotated citation due. See example provided.	Bird (Hunting Signals) Chagnon (Amazon Warfare) Wrangham (Demonic Males)
Thu April 22	ASSIGNMENT : For a team and choose a nature documentary (from selection given). Watch and discuss the concept of culture as it appears in the film. Link with authors.	
Week 5 Tue April 27	<i>Coevolution</i> : Interactions of genes and culture	Wrangham (Demonic Males) Durham (The case of Cannibalism)

Thu April 29	<i>Resource Management Studies: The socio-cultural, environmental and economic intricacies of living of local resources (wildlife management)</i> <u>ASSIGNMENT:</u> two annotated citations due	Ocampo-Raeder (Peccary Hunting) Vickers & Hames (Protein Debates) Luzar and Fragoso (Shamans & Peccaries)
<u>Week 6</u> Tue May 4	<i>Resource Management Studies: The socio-cultural, environmental and economic intricacies of living of local resources (agriculture)</i> <u>ASSIGNMENT:</u> Make office hours appointment to discuss final project progress	Irvine (Swidden Systems and Succession Management) Perrault (Why Chacras Persist)
Thu May 6	<i>Anthropogenic Ecosystems: Contesting the pristine myth</i>	Mann (1492) Leech (African Landscapes)
<u>Week 7</u> Tue May 11	<i>Resilience and Vulnerability: What does it take to make a coupled human-nature system survive change?</i> <u>ASSIGNMENT:</u> three annotated citations due	Berkes (Resilience) Kofinas (Athabaskan Resilience)
Thu May 13	<i>Environmental Anthropology in the Applied Realm: Conservation critiques, documenting human impacts, and providing context.</i>	Brosius (Indigeneity and Environmentalism) Finney (White Spaces)
<u>Week 8</u> Tue May 18	<i>Common Property Theory: Managing shared resources sustainably</i> <u>ASSIGNMENT:</u> three annotated citations due plus draft of research statement.	Becker & Ostrom (Common Property Theory) Acheson & Gardner (Lobster Rules)
Thu May 20	<i>Methodologies in Environmental Anthropology</i> <i>*Workshop research project with the class</i>	Bernard (Qualitative vs Quantitative approaches) Clark (Children Mapping)
<u>Week 9</u> Tue May 25	<i>Environmental Justice: Race, Class and Justice in Environmental Thought in Anthropology</i>	Visitor Readings TBA
Thu May 27	<i>Environmental Justice continued...</i> <u>ASSIGNMENT:</u> three annotated citations due	
<u>Week 10</u> Tue June 1	Multispecies Approaches	Tsing (Mushroom at the End of the World)
<u>Week 11</u> Mon June 8	***Annotated Bibliography Portfolio DUE @ 5PM*** (Uploaded to Moodle folder)	