Anthropology 286  
Topics in Regional Anthropology: Indigenous South America  
Winter 2013  
MWF 10-10:50 am  
Tory 1-90  
Professor Kathleen Lowrey  
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2-2514  
14-13 Tory Building  
Office hours: Fridays 3-4 pm and by appointment  

Objectives  
This course is an introduction to South America’s diverse Amerindian cultures. We begin with the traditional geographical / culture area classifications (Amazon, Andes, Chaco, Pampas, Circum-Caribbean, Pacific Coast). We will learn how anthropologists have shifted from topographical to historical accounts of native cultural diversity in South America. Finally, we will consider the emergence of self-conscious and politically informed treatments of these same themes by South America’s indigenous peoples themselves.  

We will discuss: 1) the long historical inter-relationship between Western & Amerindian society and philosophy; 2) why identity has become an increasingly important category for contemporary indigenous peoples; 3) the special problems that property rights (in both culture and land), urbanization, and environmental degradation present for indigenous peoples in South America today and 4) the relevance of anthropology to South American indigenous peoples.  

The course draws on physical anthropological and archaeological findings; the accounts of the first colonial adventurers, administrators, and missionaries to travel in South America from the 16th century onward; on documents produced by travelers and anthropologists from the 19th century to the present; and, finally, on literature written both by and about the participants in indigenous social and political movements across the twentieth century and up to the contemporary moment.  

By the end of the course, students will obtain a thorough overview of the ecological and cultural diversity of the South American continent. They should be able to label a political map of South America and have a general sense of the social and historical trends shaping its contemporary appearance. Students should be able to name the three largest native language groups in South America, identify their regional distributions, and have at least a passing familiarity with several smaller language groups.  

Participants will become knowledgeable about the inter-relations among race, resources, and technology that have shaped politics and civil society in South America in particular and the Americas more generally. Students will be better able to understand, evaluate, and participate in contemporary discussions of identity politics; intellectual/cultural property and traditional knowledge rights; land and natural resource rights; environmental politics, and indigenous revitalization movements in the Americas and across the globe. They will gain a sense of the cultural richness and historical trajectory of the South American experience, and will be prepared to make informed comparisons about commonalities and differences within the American experience, North and South.  

Evaluation  
There will be a midterm and a final. In week 2 the class will be divided into 4 groups. A 500 word response to the reading is due within one week of each session assigned to your group: for example, if you are in Group 1 you should hand in a response to the Mann reading of January 20th by January 27th. The staggering of the due dates is to allow you to incorporate ideas and perspectives raised in class into your written responses. These response papers will be graded on a 10 point scale: up to 3 points for spelling, grammar, and prose style. Up to 3 points for demonstrating evidence of having completed and understood the reading. Up to 3 points for making an analytical effort that goes beyond summarizing the reading. A final point may be awarded for general excellence.  

Midterm: 25 points (50 m/c questions, worth ½ point each)  
Final: 25 points (as above)  
One-page response papers: 50 points (10 points apiece; 5 during the semester)  
TOTAL: 100 points
Attendance philosophy:
“Ninety percent of life is just showing up” - Woody Allen.

Contact policy: I welcome in-person conversations. I answer email during weekdays, but not in the evening, on weekends, or on holidays. Email is for questions requiring a yes or no answer or to set up appointments to see me in person if you can’t make my office hours.

Required texts:
The following required texts are available for purchase at the campus bookstore:
• Mann, Charles C. (2005) 1491: New revelations of the Americas before Columbus
• Canessa, Andrew (2012) Intimate Indigenieties: Race, Sex, and History in the Small Spaces of Andean Life

Schedule

WEEK ONE
Monday 1/6
Introduction: from topography to history on the “least known continent”
Course overview
Caetano Veloso, “Soy Loco por ti América”
Calle 13, “Latinoamérica”
http://blog.pucp.edu.pe/item/177700/per-kumbarikira-video-protagonizado-por-
menores-kukama-al-rescate-de-su-lengua

Wed 1/8
Will be posted to eclass.

Fri 1/10
Available as an electronic resource through the U of A libraries.

Assignment of groups.

WEEK TWO
Mon 1/13
The first chroniclers: Atlantic Coast and the Andes
Staden, Hans (1557). The True History of His Captivity.

Wed 1/15
Guaman Poma de Ayala, Felipe (1615) Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno
No reading; I will lecture.

Fri 1/17
Available through the electronic resources of the U of A libraries.

Assignment of groups.

WEEK THREE
Mon 1/20
1491 and before: the evidence from archaeology
Mann, Charles C. (2005) 1491. chapters 1, 3, and 4. GROUPS 1 & 2

Wed 1/22
Mann, 1491. chapters 5, 9, and 10. GROUP 3 & 4

Fri 1/24
Available through the electronic resources of the U of A libraries

GROUP 1 *can take until Monday February 3rd to hand response in*

WEEK FOUR
Mon 1/27
Culture and history in colonial South America
Clastres, Pierre (1974) “Society Against the State”
Available at: http://zinelibrary.info/files/societyagainstthestate_0.pdf

GROUP 2

Wed 1/29
Available through the electronic subscriptions of the U of A Libraries. GROUP 3

Friday 1/31
No class.

WEEK FIVE

Neo-imperialism, the colonial mirror, and “Andeanism”

Mon 2/3

Wed 2/5

Fri 2/7

WEEK SIX

Coca, Operation Condor, and the era of dictatorships

Mon 2/10

Wed 2/12
MIDTERM

Fri 2/14

WEEK SEVEN

Winter reading week
Group 4 papers will be due on Wednesday February 26th.


WEEK EIGHT

Evo Morales

Mon 2/24
Cocalero (film)

Wed 2/26
Cocalero continued

Fri 2/28
Discussion: the “leftward turn” from the 1990s to today (Pepe Mujica etc.) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/16/uruguay-jose-mujica-humble-president

WEEK NINE

Race, Sex, and History in the Small Spaces of Andean Life

Mon 3/3
Canessa, Andrew. (2012) Intimate Indigeneities Intro, chapter 1, and chapter 2 GROUP 1

Wed 3/5
II: chapters 4, 5, and 6 GROUP 2

Fri 3/7
II: chapters 7 & 8 and Postscript GROUP 3

WEEK TEN

Demography and politics in Amazonia

Mon 3/10

Carneiro da Cunha interview on “demographic volatility”


WEEK ELEVEN  Case study: the Kayapó

Wed 3/19  The Kayapó: Out of the Forest (film)
Fri 3/21  Finish film, discussion

WEEK TWELVE  The Yanomami Controversy

Wed 3/26  Secrets of the Tribe (film)
Fri 3/28  Finish film, discussion

WEEK THIRTEEN  Thinking continentally, thinking hemispherically

Wed 4/2  Chevron Ecuador case and Alberta’s oil sands
Fri 4/4  The Motorcycle Diaries (film)

WEEK FOURTEEN  Soy loco por ti América
Mon 4/7  The Motorcycle Diaries continued
Wed 4/9  Final exam

Enjoy your summer!