SA4860 Amerindian Socialities in Anthropological Perspective

Waorani women celebrating their victory in court.
Photograph by Dolores Ochoa / AP. In New York Times, May 15th, 2019 (source google images)

TIME. Tuesdays and Thursdays?? 11.00-13.00?? PLACE:

This course is designed to introduce students to the anthropological and ethnological literature on the peoples of the lowlands of South America. The course focuses on modes of constituting sociality, covering the following topics; relatedness, gender, kinship, personhood, the body; death, curing, shamanism, cosmology, mythology, social, economic and political organization, ecumene and Amerindian engagement with colonialism. The regional focus will be predominantly on Amazonia, including studies conducted in Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and the Guianas.

As a whole the course aims to introduce you to the anthropological literature on the peoples who inhabit the lowlands of South America. It will also help you set about researching your own interests.

This course will: (1) provide an understanding of core debates shaping the anthropological and ethnological understanding of Lowland South America; (2) provide an introduction to the literature on Amerindians of the lowland areas of South America through a focus on modes of constituting sociality.

Assessment: - 3,000 word Research Essay – topic to be decided in consultation with course teacher through supervision.

Due DATE 13 April, 12pm.
Preliminaries

For an indigenous perspective, read ‘The Falling Sky’ – at once autobiographical account of a Yanomamí leader’s journey into shamanism and political activism, ecological manifesto and instigating cosmopolitical critique.


In addition, read anthropologists’ accounts of their field experiences. As well as introducing the anthropological literature on Amerindians in lowland South America, these will give you a feel for particular peoples, their histories, ethos, philosophies and ways of being, and the environments in which they dwell.

Levi-Strauss, C. Tristes Tropiques
Clastres, P. Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians
Siskind, J. To Hunt in the Morning
Wagley, C. Welcome of Tears
Lizot, J. Tales of the Yanomami
Descola, P. The Spears of Twilight
Campbell, A Getting to Know Waïwai

Please read the chapters or articles marked with a star (*) BEFORE the relevant session.

1. Introduction: Histories, Peoples, Languages (Week 1, of 23 September)


Links – https://ailla.utexas.org/

2. Environments. (Week 1, of 23 September)


3. **Bodies, Persons, Memory**  (Week 2, of 30 September)


4. **Gender, Knowledge, Agency**  (Week 2, of 30 September)


Mezzenzana, Francesca (2018) Difference Revised: Gender and Transformation among the Amazonian Runa, *Ethnos,* 83:5, 909-929,
5. Shamanism, Curing, Power  Week of 2 March 2020


6. Death, Eschatology, Alterity  Week of 2 March 2020


7. Alterity, Ontology, Socio-Cosmology  Week of 8 March 2020


8. Kinship, Relatedness, Alterity  Week of 8 March 2020


**INTERVAL- Spring Break (16-29 March)**

9. Cosmopolitics and Contemporary Colonialism  Week of 30 March


10. Revision/open session for questions and debates Week of 30 March

As well as the main readings for each class, students on the course should also endeavour to familiarize themselves with at least two specific ethnographic cases. Choose among the following books (or consult the course leader):

**Ethnographies and Monographs**


Siskind, J. *To Hunt in the Morning*

