

## ANTH/LAS 251: LATIN AMERICAN CULTURES

Professor Peter Wogan

Spring 2001

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an introduction to major aspects of Latin American cultures: namely, ethnic, national, and transnational identities, religion, healing, politics, gender, media representations, and language. The course is divided into major conceptual and ethnographic units, which are described in more detail below (each unit title is in boldfaced, capital letters). Special emphasis will be placed on the experience of indigenous groups in the following countries: Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Mexico. In addition, a required service-learning component involves working as ESL/literacy tutors of Bush Elementary school students; this service will be integrated with academic questions and class materials. Although certain topics are considered from an interdisciplinary perspective, the primary emphasis is on anthropological questions. This is the introductory, required course for the LAS major and meets the area course requirement for Anthropology majors.

### REQUIRED TEXTS (available in bookstore):

1) Copy packet; 2) Kane, Joe, *Savages*.

### GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Unit II (Relativism) Test: 19%

Unit III (Shamanism) Paper (6+ pages): 19%

Unit IV (Graffiti) Quiz: 10%

Service-Learning Project: 21%

Final Paper: 21% (Due May 8, or earlier.)

Class participation: 10%.

Note: In fairness to other students, a penalty will be applied to late papers.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Tel: (370)-6032; Email: pwogan@willamette.edu; Office Hours: Mon. 12-3; Fri. 10:30-11:30am; by appointment (Office #: Smullin 203)

### **I: INTRODUCTION: LANGUAGE, EDUCATION, AND IDENTITY**

Questions: How is language related to identity? What other aspects are involved in Latin American identities (i.e., ethnicity, race)? How do these issues affect bilingual education?

Focus: Mexican-Americans, Service-Learning.

{Tue, Jan 16} 1ST CLASS: INTRODUCTION

REMINDERS ABOUT CLASS READINGS:

- 1) Please read articles in the order listed below, with roman numerals;
- 3) Unless otherwise noted, all articles are found in the copy packet; articles are in alphabetical order (by author's last name) and new articles start after a colored divider page;
- 4) TAKE NOTES on all readings, class discussions (including ones without lecture), AND VIDEOS.

--In many cases, to guide your reading and note-taking, reading questions will be provided on the syllabus or in a preceding class. If no specific questions are provided, please read for the main points of the article and how these points relate to other issues covered in the class.

--Come to class with the hard copy of the article or book due that day, as well as your notes, ready for discussion.

{Thur, Jan 18} LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY: CODESWITCHING{Tue, Jan 23} ETHNIC IDENTITY

i) Merrill, Tim, "Area Handbook." Read simply for background on Mexico;

ii) Candelaria, Nash, "The Day the Cisco Kid Shot John Wayne";

Questions to consider while reading this story:

--What characteristics do Candelaria and his friends use to determine who is a gringo, Mexican, Indian, etc.? For example, what is the role of language? race? other?

--How does this compare with the Merrill reading (above) on Mexican ethnicity?

--Other comments?

iii) Rodriguez, Richard, "Searching for Roots in a Changing World";

iv) Davis, Marilyn, "Mexican Voices."

Q: What similarities (themes) and differences do you see in the above readings?

--How might such backgrounds possibly affect the way you teach the Bush students? For example, if you had a student who was like someone in one of these oral histories, how might that affect the way you teach that child?

--Other?

{Thur, Jan 25} BILINGUAL EDUCATION**II: CULTURAL RELATIVISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Questions: How can universal human rights be established in light of cultural relativism? Do cultures have the right to self preservation? How can competing interests and rights be reconciled in development situations? What is the role of the media in ecological and indigenous politics?

Focus: Ecuadorian Amazon, U.S. oil companies.  
Assignment: Unit Test.

{Tue, Jan 30} INTRODUCING THE AMAZON CASE

- i) Schultz and Lavenda, "Ethnocentrism";
- ii) Kane, Joe, *Savages* (book), Chapter 1-10.

Reading questions for Kane book: As you read this book, don't worry about details like names and dates, but consider these questions:

- 1) Do groups such as the Waorani have a universal human right to cultural sovereignty? Are such rights at odds with the belief in cultural relativism?
- 2) Is change (integration into Ecuadorian nation and capitalism/modern world) inevitable for the H, and, if so, should they make some sort of compromise arrangement with the oil company?
- 3) What obstacles do the W face that prevent them from stopping the drilling?
- 4) Other comments?

{Thur, Feb 1} UNIVERSAL RIGHTS AND CULTURAL RELATIVISM

EMAIL DISCUSSION; see directions, given out last class.

- i) Finish Kane book.

{Tue, Feb 6} PROTEST POLITICS: COMPARATIVE CASE, BRAZIL, I

- i) Journal on service-learning.

{Thur, Feb 8} SERVICE-LEARNING

{Tue, Feb 13} PROTEST POLITICS: COMPARATIVE CASE, BRAZIL, II

{Thur, Feb 15} TEST

### **III: SHAMANISM, SPIRITISM, AND CURING RITUALS**

Questions: How can we explain apparently miraculous cures, such as a Brazilian man who goes into trance, becomes possessed by the spirit of a dead German doctor, and then operates on (real) people without using any anesthetic (and spitting on the knife, taken from someone in the crowd), and people get cured and never get an infection? After considering several explanations, we focus in on the role of metaphors in the curing rituals, turning our focus to Peruvian shamans, and the way their metaphors encode a spritual worldview, as well as social relations.

Focus: Brazil, Peru, Ecuador.

Assignment: Short paper.

{Tue, Feb 20} BRAZILIAN SPIRIT MEDIUMS

i) Wilson, Roderick, "Seeing They See Not."

{Thur, Feb 22} ANOTHER LOOK AT THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

i) Blakeslee, Sandra, "Placebos Prove So Powerful";

ii) Dreger, Alice, "Guilt Trips and the Art of Blaming Mom";

iii) Lévi-Strauss, Claude, "Effectiveness of Symbols."

Q: --How can the above articles be used to explain Dr. Fritz's surgeries?

--How (if at all) do the separate articles interrelate or have theories that might complement each other?

{Tue, Feb 27} PERUVIAN SHAMANISM

i) Joralemon, Donald, "Eduardo Calderón."

Q: What are the major metaphors used in Eduardo's curing?

ii) Service-Learning journal.

{Thur, Mar 1} ECUADORIAN WITCHCRAFT

Read the following articles, and think about them in relation to paper assignment:

i) Sharon, Douglas, "Wizard of the Four Winds": a) Quechua, Shamanism and Mesas; b) Mesa Artifacts.

ii) Joralemon, Donald. Choose either: a) Chapter 9, Víctor Flores; or, b) Chapter 10, Nilo Placencia.

{Tue, Mar 6} PAPER DUE

{Thur, Mar 8} LIBRARY SESSION

CLASS MEETS TODAY IN THE LIBRARY.

i) Come to class with a tentative topic for final paper.

{Tue, Mar 13} SERVICE-LEARNING

{Thur, Mar 15} PAPER SOURCE DUE

i) Summary of Academic Source for Final Paper.

{Mar 20/22: No class, spring break}

#### IV: NATION, COMMUNITY, RESISTANCE

Questions: How are national (and other) identities conceived of and resisted? How have youth and women fit into and resisted such national identities?

Focus: Ecuador, Chile, U.S.; graffiti and weaving.

Assignment: Open-Note Quiz. Hence, PLEASE TAKE CAREFUL NOTES DURING CLASS THIS UNIT.

{Tue, Mar 27} ECUADORIAN GRAFFITI

i) Quito graffiti (see handout).

Thur, Mar 29: NO CLASS TODAY, since I'll be away at a conference; work on service-learning paper.)

{Tue, Apr 3} CHICANO GRAFFITI

i) Phillips, Susan, Wallbangin' (in copy pack). Q: How does this L.A. graffiti compare with the Quito graffiti, especially in terms of creating a community and individual or group identity?

{Thur, Apr 5} SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT DUE

i) SERVICE-LEARNING PAPER DUE. (Please be prepared to briefly summarize your project for the class, i.e., especially the content part on Latin American culture.)

--Bring your s-l journal, with all entries, including the last two (unchecked) ones.

{Tue, Apr 10} GENDER AND THE NATION

- i) Stevens, Evelyn, "Marianismo" [in copy pack]
- ii) Poole, Stafford, "Virgin of Guadalupe" [handout]
- i) Rodriguez, "Our Lady of Guadalupe" [handout].

Q: How does this reading illustrate the Marianismo complex described in Poole and, especially, Stevens (above readings)?

Thur, Apr 12} GENDER, NATION, AND RESISTANCE

- i) Maloof, Judy, "Chilean Women and Human Rights." [handout] Q: What are the sources--and limitations--of the power of these Chilean women (arpilleristas) who started protesting the Pinochet regime (p129+)?

{Tue, Apr 17} GRAFFITI/GENDER QUIZ

This quiz will be in-class, open-note, and will only cover material from this unit--readings, videos, class discussions, etc. Questions will not be given out in advance. Format will be a combination of essay and short answer.

### V: FINAL PAPER

Focus: Finishing up with final research paper.

Assignment: final paper.

{Thur, Apr 19} SPECIAL SCHEDULE: INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS

\*\*\*NO CLASS DURING REGULAR TIME. INSTEAD, MEET FOR YOUR OWN 1-ON-1 APPOINTMENT IN MY OFFICE:

- 1) Meet in Smullin 203, my office.
- 2) Show up 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment (according to sign-up for times last week), just in case the student before you finishes early.
- 3) Bring the hard copy of both your final paper "theory" and the case study.
- 4) Be prepared to discuss your final paper. Any questions or problems?

{Tue, Apr 24} ROUGH DRAFTS

) Read the two articles (theory and case study) from a student volunteer's paper [articles to be handed out last class]. How does the case confirm or disconfirm this theory? What would you suggest putting in this paper?

{Thur, Apr 26} ROUGH DRAFTS

- i) Bring a typed copy of your rough draft (i.e., the first two pages).

{Tue, May 1} ROUGH DRAFTS

Instructions given in last class.

FINAL PAPER =DUE MAY 8, 7PM, SMULLIN 203

--The final paper replaces final exam, but paper=due at same time as when final exam would have been scheduled. --You can hand in the paper before May 8, if you wish.