

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, EDUCATION AND COMMERCE
ANTHROPOLOGY 2550
CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN NATIVE PEOPLES

Instructor: Dr. Laurie Nock

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Office Hours: Mondays 1000-1100 and Tuesdays 1100-1200 or by appointment. Drop-ins welcome.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Aboriginal peoples all over the world have been encapsulated within modern nation-states, and the relationship is usually problematic--especially for the former. The imposition of national (and international) economic systems is accomplished through the appropriation of aboriginal resources (particularly land and labor). Political systems designed to impersonally govern millions of people and relations with other nations of the same scale are imposed on small communities. Social systems developed to sustain inequalities and to allow the interaction of strangers replace systems which assume everyone is related. Ideological systems that envision individual human control over the universe challenge those which stress that we are inextricably linked to all beings past, present, and future and are responsible for all of them and for each other. The control which the nation-state exerts over aboriginal peoples is, ultimately, military, but it is also expressed in its domination of the mass media and of educational systems. Of particular interest is the perspective that legal systems are created to further particular economic and political interests, and within particular cultural frameworks; however, they can also be utilized by those whose interests are opposed and whose culture is different.

Following an initial outline of the culture and society of aboriginal peoples in Canada prior to European occupation, we shall study their experience under Euro-Canadian domination. We shall examine the Treaties (legal documents by which aboriginal land was acquired) and consequent land claims suits, the Indian Act (designed to control and protect Indian reserve lands and residents), the continuous quest for economic resources, and the effects of Canadian educational, religious and legal institutions. Throughout, our attempt will be to make sense of the Native point of view, its logic and rationale; we shall be learning at least as much of the Euro-Canadian point of view and its logic and rationale.

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

One research essay is required, as well as a number of assignments based on course readings. They must be handed in to the instructor in class (where applicable) on the day they are due. Tardiness will result in the loss of 3 out of 9 points. Excessive grammatical or spelling errors may have the same result. All marking uses the stanine system.

ASSIGNMENT	%	DUE DATE
Treaties	10	Week 3
INDIAN ACT	10	Week 5
DANCING WITH A GHOST	20	Week 7
RAVENSONG	20	Week 9
VISIONS VS. DISPOSSESSED	20	Week 11
Research report / presentation	20	Week 13

Grading System

Grade	Interpretation
9	Excellent
8	
7	Good
6	
5	Pass
4	
3	Fail
2	
1	

TEXTS

THE INDIAN ACT, 1989.

Long, David Alan and Olive Patricia Dickason, eds. 1996 VISIONS OF THE HEART: CANADIAN ABORIGINAL ISSUES. Harcourt Brace. (VISIONS)

Maracle, Lee 1993 RAVENSONG. Press Gang Publishers.

Ross, Rupert 1992 DANCING WITH A GHOST: EXPLORING INDIAN REALITY. Reed Books Canada.

York, Geoffrey 1992 THE DISPOSSESSED: LIFE AND DEATH IN NATIVE CANADA. Little, Brown and Company (Canada). (DISPOSSESSED)

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SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK/S

- 1-2 Introduction; Stereotypes, Ethnographic overview
READINGS
VISIONS
1. Olive Patricia Dickason: Toward a Larger View of Canada's History: The Native Factor
8. Mary Jane Norris: Contemporary Demography of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada
- 3 Treaties
ASSIGNMENT ON TREATIES DUE
- 4 The quest for economic resources; Land claims
READINGS
DISPOSSESSED
5. Defence of the North: The Native Economy and Land Claims
- 5-6 Indian Act; Economic and political underdevelopment
READINGS
DISPOSSESSED
3. Inside the Reserves
ASSIGNMENT ON INDIAN ACT DUE WEEK 5
- 7 Schooling and Churching
READINGS
VISIONS
2. Benjamin G. Smillie: The Missionary Vision of the Heart
10. Jean Barman: Aboriginal Education at the Crossroads: The Legacy of Residential Schools and the Way Ahead
DISPOSSESSED
2. From Lytton to Sabaskong Bay: Fighting for the Schools
8. From Manitoba to Massachusetts: The Lost Generation
ASSIGNMENT ON DANCING WITH A GHOST DUE

WEEK/S

8 Legal systems: Canadian and traditional

READINGS

VISIONS

12. Patricia A. Monture-Angus: Lessons in Decolonization: Aboriginal Overrepresentation in Canadian Criminal Justice.

DISPOSSESSED

6. Foreign Justice: Native People and the Law

9-10 Social problems

READINGS

VISIONS

5. Cora J. Voyageur: Contemporary Indian Women
11. Evelyn Peters: Aboriginal People in Urban Areas

DISPOSSESSED

1. Shamattawa: The Gasoline Plague
4. Hobbema: Oil and Suicide
7. Alkali Lake: Resisting Alcohol
8. From Manitoba to Massachusetts: The Lost Generation

ASSIGNMENT ON RAVENSONG DUE WEEK 9

11-12 Mobilization and resistance

READINGS

VISIONS

3. Joseph E. Couture: The Role of Native Elders: Emergent Issues
6. Peter McFarlane: Aboriginal Leadership
9. David Alan Long and Terry Fox: Circles of Healing: Illness, Healing and Health among Aboriginal People in Canada
14. David Alan Long: Trials of the Spirit: The Native Social Movement in Canada

DISPOSSESSED

9. The New Militancy

ASSIGNMENT VISIONS VS. DISPOSSESSED DUE WEEK 11

13 Group presentations: contemporary issue
RESEARCH PAPER DUE

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550
ASSIGNMENT ON TREATIES

Value: 10%

Due: Week 3

Read carefully Treaty 7 and Treaty 8 and the reports accompanying the latter. For each Treaty, answer the following questions.

1. When was it signed? What general area does it encompass?
2. Why does Her Majesty's government want a Treaty?
3. What are the Indians to give up?
4. What does Her Majesty offer in return?
5. What rights do Indians have on the lands they have ceded?
6. What rights do others have on reserved land?
7. What do the Indians promise for the future?
8. What does Her Majesty agree to give in future?
9. What is the structure of Indian government, as expressed in the Treaty?
10. How are the Indians to live in future, as expressed in the Treaty?

What are your comments about and reactions to the Treaties? How do they differ or are they similar?

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 10%

Due: Week 5

ASSIGNMENT: INDIAN ACT

You have received a copy of my synthesis of the pre-1985 Indian Act. Before you undertake this assignment, it is suggested that you read through your 1989 compilation. (It's not as long as it looks; half of it is French. On the other hand, the English half is none too easy!) Make and/or take notes on it as you go. Your assignment is to

1. Using my summary, describe the effects of this legislation on the lives of reserve residents. I would suggest that you make use of the categories I have devised.
2. Compare my summary to the newer compilation. Note sections and articles which have undergone major change or deletion, and attempt to explain the meaning of these modifications.

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

Due: Week 7

ASSIGNMENT: DANCING WITH A GHOST

If you lived in the reality described by Rupert Ross, how would you have experienced Grade (X--your choice)? Take into account factors such as interference, attitudes to time, grading, competition, and curriculum. If you were able to design an educational experience for that grade consistent with this way of thinking, what would it be like?

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

Due: Week 9

ASSIGNMENT: RAVENSONG

Describe non-native society, as seen through the eyes of Marianne and her family.

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

Due: Week 11

VISIONS OF THE HEART VS. THE DISPOSSED

Portrayals of aboriginal reality are not always the same. Reality is shaped by such factors as the observer's and writer's origins, academic training, purposes and audience.

Choosing any two general topics covered in this course, for which readings from both VISIONS OF THE HEART and THE DISPOSSESSED have been assigned, compare and contrast the content, language and effect of the text. Account for differences and similarities in terms of the above factors, and any others you consider important.

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

Due: Week 13

RESEARCH INTO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Many of the problems facing native peoples today are a result of the implementation of Canadian legal statutes and/or the policies or assumptions underlying them.

In your fifteen-minute presentation, you may choose to focus on one contemporary native issue, the experience of one group of native people, or one manifestation of native discontent. Describe it, and its historical development, particularly as it reflects the implementation of Canadian rules. Where possible, indicate how natives have attempted to address these problems. You are required to submit a written version of your report, approximately ten pages in length, complete with bibliography. A brief outline may be useful for fellow students.

Topics of students in the past:

Native experiences in urban areas

Reserve life / urban life

Native education

Canadian native leaders

Wildlife as seen and used by native peoples

Oka 1990

Native peoples and natural resources

Sports and native peoples

Child welfare system and native peoples