

**Anthropology 2212F**  
***CULTURES OF THE PACIFIC***  
September 2017

Ver. 2.2



Cell phone tower, Star Mountains (PNG)



Mobile phone vendors, Port Moresby (PNG)

Instructor: Dan Jorgensen  
Lectures: T 12:30 – 1:30, W 12:30 – 2:30  
Place: P&AB 34  
Office: SSC 3314  
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**INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this course is to introduce you to the peoples and cultures of the Pacific, and to the anthropology practiced there – all within a dozen weeks. For many of you this course will be your first sustained exposure to *ethnography* – one of anthropology’s distinctive contributions to the social sciences. Ethnography refers to systematic descriptions and analyses of ways of life in particular settings. Our coverage will include the people and cultures of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia, starting with the prehistory and settlement of the Pacific islands, and continuing to the present day.

My strategy tracks developments in Pacific ethnography that rethink how we usually perceive remote places and peoples. As the Tongan anthropologist Epeli Hau’ofa pointed out, the ocean that we see as a barrier has in fact been a highway, and anthropologists have increasingly come to understand the importance of the role of connections between communities in Pacific societies. More recently, it has become clear that understanding local

histories also depends on taking connections between outsiders and local people into account. This will guide the organization of topics in the course, which will not only address features of local cultures and communities, but also their engagements with transnational resource development, conservation efforts, Christian evangelism, and tourism. In the process we will also consider emerging issues in the present.

In the latter part of the course we will focus on two recent ethnographies that touch upon these themes as well: *Engaging with Strangers* and *The Meaning of Whitemen*. These books are good, not just because of their descriptions of local life, but because of the arguments they make about the relation between local communities and the world at large.

Finally, you will notice that I have included a number of my own pieces on the course outline, and I do so for two reasons. The first is that universities are institutions devoted to both teaching and research, and my aim here is to bring my research into the classroom in as direct a way as possible. In addition, however, the historical experience of the Telefolmin people among whom I work exemplifies many of the issues we will be considering in class: tracking these issues through the Telefol context builds a sense of continuity to show how the various pieces of the picture fit together to form a whole.

### **COURSE PREREQUISITES**

No prerequisites

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Provide an overview of Pacific cultures and their salient features, and place individual ethnographic accounts in larger regional context.
- Identify key issues in islanders' engagements with outsiders and show their relevance to understanding emergent sociocultural forms.
- Undertake independent library research to develop arguments on current issues in anthropological research in the Pacific.
- Display an understanding of predicaments facing contemporary Pacific people and communities.

### **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined (with links to the full policies) at:

[http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course\\_information/academic\\_policies.html](http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course_information/academic_policies.html)

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS**

Only laptops to take notes are allowed. Please make sure all cell phones and other devices are turned off. No electronic devices of any kind may be used during tests or exams.

## **POLICY ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS**

Please note that it is your responsibility to communicate with me about alternative assignments you have missed due to a justifiable reason as determined by Academic Counseling. For missing assignments less than 10% you do not need to get medical documentation; please make an appointment with me to discuss the reasons, and possible alternatives. For details on late submissions on research essays, see the section discussing the essays below.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

Class attendance (10%)

Meeting to discuss essays - between September 19 and October 11 (5%)

Midterm Exam – October 24 (25%)

Research Essay – November 14 (30%)

Final Examination (30%) – Date TBA

Please note these dates in your calendars. Class attendance is mandatory, and I will keep a record of attendance worth 5% of your mark. My lectures will assume that you have done the appropriate readings beforehand according to the topic sequence shown. If you have questions, ideas, or would just like to chat, I would encourage you to drop in during office hours (or, by making an appointment). Do not be shy about seeking advice or help with the course.

### About meeting to discuss essays

Each of you will be required to make an appointment to meet with me between September 19 and October 11 to discuss possible essay topics. This meeting will take approximately 20 minutes. Failure to schedule and keep such an appointment will reduce your course mark by 5%. My aim here is to begin discussions early and consider various approaches to the topic or topics that interest you. Nothing written is required for these meetings (though it could help).

### Research Essays

Your research essay will sum the outcome of your research on a topic related to the course, *determined in consultation with me*. It must include a clear line of argument, drawing on relevant sources. The paper should be eight to twelve pages in length, double-spaced, inclusive of bibliography. In general, your work will be evaluated on the basis of several factors, including:

- overall coherence (consistency, logical construction)
- grasp of key issues in the context of disciplinary debate
- insight and originality of thought

Further details about papers and format will be available in due course. In the meantime, if you are wondering how anthropological essays are written, a good guide from Harvard's department can be downloaded here:

[http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic1270719.files/anthropology\\_writing\\_guide\\_2010-3.pdf](http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic1270719.files/anthropology_writing_guide_2010-3.pdf)

Essays *must* be submitted electronically on OWL by the due date, with a corresponding hard copy supplied at that time if you wish written comments. All essays will be submitted to Turnitin for checking originality and detecting plagiarism. Late essays will be assessed a penalty of 5% per day late (including weekends); essays more than a week late will not be accepted and will receive a mark of zero. *Please note that this course carries the essay designation, and submitting an essay is a mandatory requirement; if you do not submit an essay, you cannot pass the course.*

### **OWL WEBSITE**

The OWL website for this class will provide electronic access to assigned readings as well as providing announcements over the course of the year. Please be sure to check it periodically for news and information.

### **BOOKS**

There are two required books for this course in the bookstore:

McDougall, Debra (2016) *Engaging with Strangers: Love and Violence in the Rural Solomon Islands*. New York: Berghahn.

Bashkow, Ira (2006). *The Meaning of Whitemen: Race and Modernity in the Orokaiva Cultural World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### **SEQUENCE OF TOPICS AND READINGS**

#### **Sept 12 – 13 Pacific cultures: an overview**

Jorgensen, D. 1994. Pacific peoples in the modern world: a diversity of islands and cultures. In: *The Illustrated History of Humankind: Traditional Peoples Today*, G. Burenhult, gen. ed., pp. 99-120. Sydney/Stockholm/New York: Weldon Owen, Bra Bocker AB, and the American Museum of Natural History.

Sahlins, M. 1963. Poor man, rich man, big man chief: political types in Melanesia and Polynesia. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5(3):285-303.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500001729>

#### **Sept 19 – 20 Hierarchy and egalitarianism in action**

Keating, E. 1998. Honor and stratification in Pohnpei, Micronesia. *American Ethnologist* 25:399-411.

Schieffelin, E. 1983. Anger and shame in the tropical forest. *Ethos* 11:181-191.

Kulick, D. 1993. Speaking as a woman: structure and gender in domestic arguments in a New Guinea village. *Cultural Anthropology* 8:510-541.

FILM: *Ongka's Big Moka*

### **Sept 26 - 27 Natural resources, local people**

Jorgensen, D. 2006. Hinterland history: the Ok Tedi mine and its cultural consequences in Telefolmin. *The Contemporary Pacific* 18(2):233-263.

Filer, C. 2000. How can Western conservationists talk to Melanesian landowners about indigenous knowledge? Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Working Paper No. 27. Canberra: Australian National University.

Hviding, E. 2003. Contested rainforests and projects of desire in Solomon Islands. *International Social Science Journal* 55(4):539-554.

### **OCT 3 - 4 Flows of goods, people and money...**

Bell, J. 2006. Marijuana, guns, crocodiles and submarines: economies of desire in the Purari Delta. *Oceania* 76(3): 220-234.

Dalsgaard, S. 2013. The politics of remittance and the role of returning migrants: localizing capitalism in Manus, Papua New Guinea. *Research in Economic Anthropology* 33:277-302. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S0190-1281\(2013\)0000033013](http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S0190-1281(2013)0000033013)

Keleba, K. and N. Sullivan. 2009. Voices of working street children. In: *Working Street Children of Papua New Guinea: A Public Policy Challenge*, pp. 96-120. Report prepared for the Department of Community Development and UNICEF. Waigani: Department of Community Development.

Martin, K. 2010. The death of the big men: depreciation of elites in New Guinea. *Ethnos* 75(1):1-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00141840903581576>

## **READING WEEK**

### **Oct 17 - 18 Troubles arising**

Wardlow, H. 2002. Headless ghosts and roving women: specters of modernity in Papua New Guinea. *American Ethnologist* 29(1):5-32.

Macintyre, M. 2008. Police and thieves, gunmen and drunks: problems with men and problems with society in Papua New Guinea. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 19(2):179-193.

Sykes, K. 1999. After the 'Raskol' Feast: youths' alienation in New Ireland, Papua New Guinea. *Critique of Anthropology* 19(2):157-174.

Jorgensen, D. 2014. Preying on those close to home: witchcraft violence in a Papua New Guinea village. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 25:267-286.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/taja.12105>

## OCT 24 – MIDTERM EXAM

### Oct 25 New beginnings

Lattas, A. 2006. The utopian promise of government. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 12:129-150.

Eriksen, A. 2009. 'New Life': Pentecostalism as social critique in Vanuatu. *Ethnos* 74(2):175-198. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00141840902940476>

### Oct 31 - Nov 1 Being seen by others

Stasch 2016. Dramas of otherness: "First Contact" tourism in New Guinea. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6(3):7-27. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14318/hau6.3.003>

MacCarthy, M. 2016. Touring 'real life'? Authenticity and village-based tourism in the Trobriand Islands of Papua New Guinea. In: *Touring Pacific Cultures*, K. Alexeyeff and J. Taylor, eds., pp. 333-358. Canberra: ANU Press.

Jorgensen, D. 2007. Clan-finding, clan-making and the politics of identity in a Papua New Guinea mining project. In: *Customary Land Tenure and Registration in Indigenous Australia and Papua New Guinea*, J. Weiner and K. Glaskin, eds., pp. 57-72. Canberra: ANU Press.

### Nov 7 – 8 Connections

Handman, C. 2017. Walking like a Christian: roads, translation, and gendered bodies as religious infrastructure in Papua New Guinea. *American Ethnologist* 44(2):1-13.

Dobrin, L. 2014. Language shift in an "importing culture": the cultural logic of the Arapesh 'roads'. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 199:125-148.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5871/bacad/9780197265765.003.0007>

Jorgensen, D. 2017. Toby and the "Mobile System": apocalypse and salvation in Papua New Guinea's wireless network. In: *The Moral Economy of Mobile Phones: Pacific Island Perspectives*, R. Foster and H. Horst, eds. Canberra: ANU Press. (in press)

## NOV 14 – RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

### Nov 14 – 15 *Engaging with strangers (I)*

McDougall, D. 2016. *Engaging with Strangers* Chapters 1 - 4. Oxford: Berghahn.

**Nov 21 - 22 *Engaging with strangers (II)***

McDougall, D. 2016. *Engaging with Strangers* Chapters 5 - 8. Oxford: Berghahn.

**Nov 28 - 29 *The Meaning of Whitemen (I)***

Bashkow, I. 2006. *The meaning of Whitemen* Chapters 1 - 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**Dec 5 - 6 *The Meaning of Whitemen (II)***

Bashkow, I. 2006. *The meaning of Whitemen* Chapters 4 - 6. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

FILM: *Man without Pigs*

**Dec 6 Review**

**Date TBA - FINAL EXM**