

## POLYNESIA: GREAT ANTHROPOLOGICAL DEBATES

Anthropology 240, Spring 2005

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Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-2:55 PM

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Riley House 206



Anthropologists working with Polynesian cultures have generated some of the discipline's most provocative and productive debates. Major topics such as identity, agency, and performance have been investigated, argued about, and continually rethought through Polynesian ethnography. In this class, students will read and participate in some of these debates including: arguments over Captain Cook's "divine" status for Hawaiians; interpretations of sexuality, power, and violence in Samoa; long-distance voyaging and settlement; ritual cannibalism; and ethnographic representation. All of these topics will be discussed with reference to their contributions to anthropological understandings beyond Polynesia itself.



*Texts:* There are four books for purchase. Articles are available online at <http://library.bowdoin.edu>; all readings will be on reserve at the library and at Riley House.

**Flenley**, John, and Paul Bahn. 2003. *Enigmas of Easter Island*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

**Mead**, Margaret. 2001 [1930]. *Coming of Age in Samoa*. New York: Perennial Classics.  
**Obeyesekere**, Gananath. 1997 [1992]. *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.  
**Silva**, Noenoe K. 2004. *Aloha Betrayed*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.  
 [There will also be a choice of novels to read at the end of the semester—see below]

*Grading:* Grading will be done on the following basis:

- 35%: Final project (a research proposal, due on last day of class)
- 20%: Contemporary politics projects (February 15)
- 20%: Reading reports (May 3 and 5)
- 15%: Geopolitical quiz (February 3)
- 10% Class participation

The scale is: 93-100=A; 90-92=A-; 88-89=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; 65-69=D; below 65=F

Policies: Plagiarism in any assignment will result in automatic failure. Three points will be deducted from the final grade each day for late assignments. The class participation grade is based not only on attendance, but also on being prepared and participating in class discussions.

### *Reading Schedule*

#### **JANUARY**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
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25	Introduction to the Class	
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27	Oceania	Kirch, "Introduction"
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#### **FEBRUARY**

1	Polynesia	Kirch and Green, "Polynesia as a Phylogenetic Unit"
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3	<b><u>Debate 1: The Settlement of</u></b> Sea Islands," "Appendix")	Heyerdahl, <i>Kon-Tiki</i> selections ("A Theory," "To the South")
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	<b><u>Rapa Nui (Easter Island)</u></b> <u>Plus: Geopolitical Quiz</u>	Bahn and Flenley, Introduction and chapter 1
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8	Easter Island, continued	Bahn and Flenley, Parts 1, 2, and 3
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10	Easter Island, continued before class]	[No reading, but please play the Polynesian Voyager game
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Guest Lecturer: Leslie Shaw

15 Contemporary politics projects: presentations

17 No class during the day, but at 6:00 P.M. we will have the OCEANIA FILM FESTIVAL

22 **Debate 2: Cannibalism in Fiji** Arens, "The Mythical World of Anthropophagy" and "The Mythical World of Anthropology"

Obeyesekere, "Cannibal feasts in nineteenth-century Fiji"

24 Cannibalism in Fiji, continued Sahlins, "Artificially Maintained Controversies: Global Warming and Fijian Cannibalism"

### MARCH

1 Special class on Fiji coups: in-class reading of Raymond Pillai

3 Fijian kava session

8 **Debate 3: Captain Cook in Hawai'i** Sahlins, "Captain James Cook: Or The Dying God"

10 Captain Cook, continued Obeyesekere, chapters 1-6

29 Captain Cook, continued Obeyesekere, chapters 7-8  
Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think* selections ("Preface," "Introduction," "Cook after Death,"

"Historical Fiction, Makeshift Ethnography")

Borofsky, "Cook, Lono, Obeyesekere, and Sahlins"

### APRIL

5 **Debate 4: Hawaiian Sovereignty** Silva, chapters TBA

7 Hawaiian Sovereignty, continued Silva, chapters TBA  
Linnekin, "Defining Tradition: Variations on the Hawaiian Identity"

12 Hawaiian Sovereignty, continued Hartwell, "Louis Robert 'Moon' Kauakahi: Mele/Music"  
Kauanui, "Off-Island Hawaiians 'Making' Ourselves at 'Home'"

14 Video: "Act of War"

19 **Debate 5: Sex and Samoa** Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*

21 Sex and Samoa, continued Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa* excerpts (pp. 113-278)

26 Sex and Samoa, continued Shore, "Paradox Regained"

Shankman, "The History of Samoan Sexual Conduct and the Mead-Freeman Controversy"

28 Special class on Samoa

Guest Lecturer: Ilana Gershon

**MAY**

3 Reading Reports, Groups 1 & 2 (Alan Duff's *Once Were Warriors*, W.S. Merwin's *The Folding Cliffs*)

5 Reading Reports, Groups 3 & 4 (Sia Figiel's *Where We Once Belonged*, John Pule's *Burn My Head in Heaven*)

10 Video: *Paradise Bent*

Final projects due today

Images on page 1 from Kauai Fine Arts, <http://www.brunias.com/cat-cleveley.html> (accessed November 3, 2004)

Upload: 11/15/2004