

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, EDUCATION AND COMMERCE
ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN NATIVE PEOPLES

Winter 1996
Time: Thursday, 1830-2120
Location: B202

Instructor: Laurie Nock
Phone: Office 539-2830
Home 539-7348
Office: C215

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

A number of assignments based on course readings will be expected during this course. 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 5
INDIAN ACT	10	Week 7
DANCING WITH A GHOST	20	Week 9
SUNDOGS	20	Week 10
POISON STRONGER THAN LOVE	20	Week 12
Research report/presentation	20	Week 14

Grading System

Grade	Interpretation
9	
8	Excellent

7	
6	Good

5	
4	Pass

3	
2	
1	Fail

TEXTS

THE INDIAN ACT, 1989.

Maracle, Lee 1992 SUNDOGS. Theytus Books Ltd.

Shkilnyk, Anastasia M, 1985 A POISON STRONGER THAN LOVE: THE DESTRUCTION OF AN OJIBWA COMMUNITY. New Haven: Yale University Press.

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).

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, EDUCATION AND COMMERCE
ANTHROPOLOGY 2550 (G3)

CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN NATIVE PEOPLES

Winter 1996

Instructor: Laurie Neek

SCHEDULE
of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

- Week 1 Introduction
Stereotypes
- Weeks 2-3 Ethnographic overview
- Week 4 The quest for economic resources
York Chapters 5
- Week 5 Treaties
ASSIGNMENT ON TREATIES DUE (10%)
- Week 6 Land claims
York Chapter 5
- Weeks 7-8 Indian Act; Economic and political underdevelopment
York Chapter 3
ASSIGNMENT ON INDIAN ACT DUE WEEK 7 (10%)
- Week 9 Education
York Chapters 2 and 8
ASSIGNMENT ON DANCING WITH A GHOST DUE (20%)
- Week 10 Legal systems: Canadian and traditional
York Chapter 6
ASSIGNMENT ON SUNDOGS DUE (20%)
- Week 11 Social problems
York Chapters 1, 4, 7, 8, 10
- Week 12 Mobilization and resistance
York Chapter 9
ASSIGNMENT ON POISON STRONGER THAN LOVE DUE (20%)
- Week 13
- Week 14 Group presentations: contemporary issue
ESSAY DUE (20%)

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550
ASSIGNMENT ON TREATIES

Value: 10%

Due: Week 5

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 7

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. 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 been changed, and attempt to explain the meaning of these modifications.

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

ASSIGNMENT: DANCING WITH A GHOST

Due: Week 10

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%

ASSIGNMENT: SUNDOGS

Due: Week 10

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

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

Due: Week 12

ASSIGNMENT: POISON STRONGER THAN LOVE

Some of the principle causes of the destruction of the Grassy Narrows Ojibwa community were:

- alcohol
- relocation
- disruption of trapping
- discovery of pollution
- the imposition of Canadian government administration

Describe the effects of these factors on ideology (religion or spirituality, ideas of good and bad, right and wrong), social organization, political life and the economic system of the community. Which would appear to be the most significant source of change?

ANTHROPOLOGY 2550

Value: 20%

Due: Week 14

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