

Amazonian knowledge.  
 Anthro 218/312  
 Cobb 119  
 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha  
 Winter 1999  
 Tuesdays and Thursdays 3.00-4.20

Office Hours: Mondays 1.30-3-00 with sign-up sheet, Haskell 202

This course discusses, on Amazonian ethnographic grounds, a major current debate, namely the appropriation of local knowledge. Following a general introduction to Amazonian Ethnology, it particularly deals with the nature of shamanism and knowledge, the process of generating and acquiring knowledge among some Amazonian societies, and then proceeds to discuss issues around intellectual rights in its relation to biological and knowledge prospection.

The course will rely on lectures and seminars. Seminars will follow the so-called 'Melbourne method', which will be fully explained in class. It involves a rotational framing, answering and criticism of issues by three groups (into which the class will be divided at the second session). Questions and answers should be in printed form and signed. Answers may be around two to three pages long. There will be no final paper required and evaluation will rely on informed participation in class as well as on the written material along the course.

#### Week 1 Introduction

Lecture: Amazonian ethnology: current trends.

Division into three groups.

Seminar -Film projection. Three questions will be brought by group A, dealing with Descola 1994. Cobb 203

Week 2 Reading: Descola 1994 chapter 3 and Conclusion.

Lecture- Nature and Culture.

Seminar- Group B answers questions: critique of questions and answers by group C.  
Group C also poses three questions on the reading for the next week.

Week 3 Reading: Crocker 1985 parts 2 and 3 (chapters 4 to 12)

Lecture. Elements of Je ethnography

Seminar: Group A answers questions, critique by group B; group B poses three questions on the readings for the next seminar

Week 4 Reading: Viveiros de Castro 1992 chapters 8,9, 10

Lecture: Tupi or not tupi.

Seminar: Group C answers, critique by A. A poses three questions on the reading for the next seminar.

Week 5 Reading: Chr. Hugh-Jones  
Lecture. Cosmology and everyday life in the Vaupes  
Seminar: Group B answers, critique by C. C poses 3 questions

Week 6 Reading: Peter Gow 1991  
Lecture- The Piro's new clothes  
Seminar- Group A answers, critique by B. B poses question to be responded to on week 7

Week 7 Readings: Taussig chapters 17 to 29. Taylor  
Lecture: Shamans as translators.  
Seminar- Group C answers, critique by A. A poses questions for 11/13

Week 8 Readings: Correa 1998 and the Convention for Biological Diversity e.g. in Shiva 1994  
Lecture: What is going on with local knowledge? The Convention for Biological Diversity and TRIPS.  
B answers, critique by C. C poses questions

Week 9 Readings: Kloppenburg and Salick; M. Brown  
Lecture- Intellectual Rights and Indigenous People  
Seminar: A answers, critique by B. B poses questions.

Week 10 Readings: Gurdial S. Nijar  
Lecture: Intellectual Property Rights and Indigenous People  
Seminar: C answers, critique by A.

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- Coombe, R.J. 1993 'The Properties of Culture and the Politics of Possessing Identity: Native Claims in the Cultural Appropriation Controversy'. *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence* vol.VI n.2: 249-285.
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- Crocker, Jon Chr. 1985 *Vital Souls. Bororo Cosmology, Natural Symbolism and Shamanism*. Arizona University Press.
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