



ANTH 345: Maya Ethnography

Wells College

Fall 2013

Wednesdays 1:30 – 4:20 in Mac 121

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Maya are one of the most studied culture groups in anthropology. It's impossible to cover everything anthropologists have considered important in just one semester. Therefore, this class will focus on contemporary Maya (as opposed to the ancients). Among the contemporary Maya we will examine a few topics that your average Wells student might find of interest, namely gender roles and gender hierarchy, violence and war, cultural survival and maintaining indigenous identity.

By the end of the semester you should have developed your scholarship and thinking in the following areas:

- 1) Engaging in professional anthropological discourse, both verbally and through writing.
 - a. Participate in class discussions
 - b. Write scholarly assignments, citing scholars and using anthropological concepts and professional discourse.
 - c. Recognize important scholars in Maya studies.
- 2) Understanding and identifying timely and enduring issues in anthropology.
 - a. Identify the importance of and discuss issues such as women's status, what is identity, changing gender roles, what are the effects of genocide, cultural survival, affects of tourism on indigenous peoples, among others.
- 3) Using the anthropological perspective.
 - a. Express values found in Maya culture.
 - b. Identify holism in anthropological works.
- 4) Understanding social systems and systems of meaning that perpetuate social inequalities.
 - a. Identify ideologies that perpetuate social inequalities.
 - b. Identify historical conditions that lead to current social conditions.
 - c. Point out examples of oppression within various social systems.
- 5) Developing an appreciation of diverse lifeways.
 - a. Discuss the limits and strengths of cultural relativism.
 - b. Understand Maya ideologies.
- 6) Articulate the need for social justice.

- a. Identify the characteristics and explain consequences of social injustices, such as gender inequity, genocide, racism and threats to Maya culture.
- 7) Suggesting paths to improve social inequalities.
- a. Including avenues such as scholarly representation, legal complications of human rights, etc.

Required Texts:

In order to do well in class you'll need to read. It helps to buy the books. I understand the library has purchased copies of these texts (except those that comprise the Globe readings). You are welcome to use those copies. However, I'm assigning a lot of reading. Did I mention, it helps to buy the books? That way you can read them wherever you and the book find yourself together.

Fink, Leon 2003	The Maya of Morganton: work and Community in the Nuevo New South. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Green, Linda 1999	Fear as a Way of Life: Mayan Widows in rural Guatemala. New York: Columbia University Press.
McClusky, Laura 2001	"Here, Our Culture Is Hard": Stories of Domestic Violence from a Mayan Community in Belize. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Montejo, Victor 1999	Voices from Exile: Violence and Survival in Modern Maya History. Norman: Oklahoma University Press.
Sanford, Victoria 2003	Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

There will also be a lot of readings on the Globe. When looking at the listing of readings in the "Tentative Class Schedule," you should be ready to discuss the readings that are listed under a particular day on that day.

Course Requirements:

READ! I understand that making time can be difficult. But you need to read in order to understand. This means you need to make time, and make priorities. The priorities you chose will impact your grade in this class. I do not hold different standards for different students. No extra points for reading...but the accumulation of points will be really hard if you don't read. I guarantee.

Reflection papers: Four times over the course of the semester you are required to hand in a 3-5 page reflection paper. You should write these after we have all read the material and after we've discussed it as a class. These are due the next time we meet as a class – no extensions. Reflection papers are a

chance for you to reflect on the material AND on our discussion. Your reflection paper should contain the following:

- In text reference to and proper citation of specific readings, films, lecture material, etc.
- Reference to specifics of our discussion (try to keep straight who says what)
- Mention of any major points from the readings we left out of discussion
- Discussion of what you have learned, and what you think the class learned.
- Discussion of agreement or disagreement with major points of discussion.
- NOTE: If you choose to include personal references/experiences, be sure you analyze them according to class material, at least on the level of compare and contrast

You are required to hand in four reflection papers over the course of the semester. $4 \times 25 = 100$ points. These are due the class after the discussion. **I will NOT accept these electronically.**

Discussion Leader: Twice over the course of the semester, you and one other person are in charge of starting discussion. You can either work singly or as a team. By **5PM** on the **Monday** before the session you lead discussion you should hand in an outline of the topics you think we should talk about and a few questions that you think will get us talking. They should however, be thorough. This is meant to be a guide, you can certainly stray from this when discussion actually happens. These outlines and discussion questions are worth 50 points each = 100 points total.

Final Paper Proposal: This is a one-two page essay that begins to explore the topic of your final paper. This is a chance for me to approve your paper topic for your final paper. You must resubmit this proposal if I do not approve the topic. 25 points.

Final/Term paper: This is a 7-10 page paper that deals with one of the recurring topics we discuss over the course of the semester. Think of this as a cumulative exam answering a question or essay prompt of your creation. This is a formal paper using AAA format for citing sources and preparing a bibliography. 100 points. This will be due when our final is scheduled. **I will NOT accept this electronically.** (We'll discuss appropriate topics off and on over the course of the semester.)

Pop Quizzes: Occasionally, I might give a pop quiz. These will be worth 20 points each. Be ready.

Grading:

I don't know how many points will be available over the course of the semester, because I don't know how many pop quizzes I'll give. Therefore, I will use the standard grading system of percentages. That is, if you get 90% of the points available, then you are in the A range; 80% and you are in the B range, 70% and you are in the C range, 60% and you are in D range. Less than 60% is an F. You should be able to easily keep track of how you are doing in this class.

Statement on Plagiarism:

I don't have to remind you about the Wells honor code. I'm going to take for granted that you know about the code, what it implies and what consequences result if you do not abide by it.

However, I do want to warn you specifically about plagiarism. If I suspect something you hand in to me is plagiarized, I will report you to community court. If I am able to prove that you did indeed plagiarize, I reserve the right to fail you for the course. Please note: I do not fail plagiarists only for the work s/he plagiarized, I fail them for the **entire course**.

Therefore, be sure you cite the scholars whose ideas and information you use. You must use the American Anthropologists style guide (a modified version of the Chicago Guide). I have a few copies of the AAA guide – ask me and I'll give you one. It's also available on-line at the AAA website. (Note: Be sure you have found the anthropologists' AAA, not the motorists' AAA. To my knowledge the motorists' AAA does not have a style guide. Anthropologists are a little bit more persnickety on this than your average motorist.)

Disability Accommodations:

Wells College makes reasonable accommodations for qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a learning disability, a chronic illness, physical or mental health disability that may have some impact on your work for this class and for which you may need accommodations, please notify the Office of Student Achievement, located in the Learning Commons, Long Library by calling x3432 or emailing studentachievement@wells.edu. Also, be sure to let me know ASAP if you will need accommodations.

Tentative Class Schedule:

Week1: Sept 4	Introductions: What is this class about? What to expect. Class guidelines and ground rules. Images of Maya.
Week 2: Sept 11	Maya History READ: J. Eric Thompson : The Meaning of Maize for the Maya, @6 pages George Stuart : The Age of Splendor, 37-89 Robert Carlsen and Martin Prechtel : The Flowering of the Dead, 47-70. In-class film: The Popul Vuh
Week 3: Sept 18	Doing Fieldwork among the Maya; Maya in Belize; Maya Gender Relations READ: Laura McClusky : Intro. Chpt. 1, 2, and 3, 1-138 Christine Eber : Courtship and Marriage, Learning to Be a Wife, Learning to be a Mother, 31-49
Week 4: Sept 25	Social Problems among Maya in Belize; Fieldwork Then and Now; Education is the Key READ: Laura McClusky : Chpt. 4, 5, 6, Summary and Epilogue, 138-271

Laura McClusky: Ending Violence, Changing Lives, 293-322
Victor Montejo: Leadership and Maya Intellectuality, 158-169
Christine Eber: School, 13-19

- Week 5: Oct 2
Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans; The Civil War and the Genocide
In-class FILM: *When Mountains Tremble*
READ: **Elizabeth Oglesby:** Myrna Mack, 254-259
Victor Montejo: Toward A Maya History of Guatemala, 26 – 41
The Advent of Violence in the Kuchumatan Highlands, 42- 59
Victoria Sanford: Intro, 13-30
Victoria Sanford: Chpt 1, “The Bones Don’t Lie,”30-40
- Week 6: Oct 9
Military Maneuvers in the US and Guatemala
READ: **Victoria Sanford:** Chpt. 6, 147-180
Victor Montejo: Military Control of the Highlands, 60 - 81
Lesley Gill: Chpt. 3, Foot Soldiers of the US Empire, 59-90
Lesley Gill: Chpt. 4, Pathways to Power, 90 – 110
SOA Watch: Notorious Graduates
Tentative In-class film: School of Assassins
- Week 7: Oct 16
The Anthropology of Witnessing; Anthropology and Human Rights
READ: **Victoria Sanford:** Chpts 3, 4, and 5, 76-147
Victoria Sanford: Chpt. 7, 180-211
- Week 8: Oct 23
Fear and Healing
In class FILM: *Discovering Dominga*
READ: **Clark Taylor:** The Gray of Frozen Grief, 154-172
Linda Green: Living in a State of Fear, 105-129
Linda Green: Chpt 3 and 5
Victoria Sanford: Chpts. 8, and 9, 211-247
- Week 9: Oct 30
Refugees in Mexico; Re-weaving the Past; Religion
READ: **Linda Green:** Chpt. 7
Victor Montejo: Life in the Refugee Camps, 133- 143
Victor Montejo: Returning Home, 220-237
Clark Taylor: Reweaving the Pieces, 29-48
Clark Taylor: Clash of Patterns, 70-88
- Week 10: Nov 6
Cultural Survival; Weaving Identity; Tourism
READ: **Irma Otzoy:** Maya Clothing and Identity, 141-156

Linda Green: Chpt. 6

Walter E. Little: Guatemala as a Living History Museum, 35-63

Walter E. Little: Marketing Maya Culture in Santa Catarina Palopo, 227-260

Victor Montejo: Strategies of Cultural Survival

Week 11: Nov 13 *no class – CS&E*

Week 12: Nov 20 Maya Immigration to the US: Maya of Morganton
READ: **Leon Fink:** Intro and Chpts 1-4
Christine Eber: Suffering, 153-159; Exodus, 175-185

Week 13: Dec 4 More on Maya Community
READ: **Leon Fink:** Chpts 5 - 7

Week 14: Dec 11 Wrap-Up: What was this class about?
Dec 12 We Follow a Wednesday schedule on this day....I plan on thinking
of it as a catch-up day

Thursday December May 12 Last Day of Classes

Bibliography for Readings:

Brown, Denise Fay

1999 Maya and Tourists in the Maya World. *Human Organization* 58(3): 295-304

Eber, Christine

2011 various excerpts from. The Journey of a Tzozil Woman of Chiapas, Mexico. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Gill, Lesley

2004 The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.

Little, Walter E.

2004a Guatemala as Living History Museum. *In* Mayas in the Marketplace: Tourism, Globalization, and Cultural Identity. Austin: University of Texas Press.

2004b Marketing Maya Culture in Santa Catarina Palopo. *In* Mayas in the Marketplace: Tourism, Globalization, and Cultural Identity. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Montejo, Victor

2005a Leadership and Maya Intellectuality *In* Maya Intellectual Renaissance: Identity, Representation and Leadership. Austin: University of Texas Press.

2005b Maya Ways of Knowing: Modern Maya and the Elders. *In* Maya Intellectual Renaissance: Identity, Representation and Leadership. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Ogelsby, Elizabeth

1995 Myrna Mack. *In* Fieldwork Under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Survival. Carolyn Nodstrom and Antonius C.G.M. Robben, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Otzoy, Irma
2001 Maya Clothing and Identity. *In* Maya Cultural Activism in Guatemala. Edward Fischer and R. McKenna Brown, eds. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Rosenbaum, Brenda
1993 The Quest for Prestige and Power. *In* With Our Heads Bowed: The Dynamics of Gender in a Maya Community. Albany: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies.
- Stuart, George E.
1977 The Age of Splendor. *In* The Mysterious Maya. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society.
- Taylor, Clark
1998a Reweaving the Pieces. *In* Return of the Guatemala's Refugees: Reweaving the Torn. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
1998b Clash of Patterns. *In* Return of the Guatemala's Refugees: Reweaving the Torn. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
1998c The Frozen Gray of Grief. *In* Return of the Guatemala's Refugees: Reweaving the Torn. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Thompson, J. Eric
2003 The Meaning of Maize for Maya. *In* The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics. Gilbert Joseph and Timothy Henderson, eds. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Verillo, Erika and Duncan Earle
1993 The Guatemalan Refugee Crafts Project. *In* Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans. Albany: State University of New York Press.