

ECONOMY, NATURE, AND CULTURE Anthro 348-001C, Fall 2011

Instructor: Pete Brown

Introduction

This course explores the relation between economy, nature, society, and culture. Using a comparative and historical perspective we will examine economic institutions and behavior, the effect of and the impact on the environment, and the central role of culture in a variety of settings ranging from small scale preindustrial societies to the WTO and global capital. Different theoretical traditions are discussed. Topics include production, distribution, consumption, economic development, over population, sustainability, hegemony, and globalization. Examples are taken from around the world -- from the Amazon basin to *cafetales* in Guatemala, and from different periods of time -- from the origin of agriculture to contemporary "food" and environmental problems in the world.

Textbooks

Lyon, Sarah, *Coffee and Community*

Readings: available through e-reserve at Polk Library

Grades

Your final grade will be based on the following:

7 short (5 pages, double-spaced) reaction papers -- details to be discussed in class, and class participation.

Course Outline

Week 1 Introduction. The economy is embedded in society and culture.

Read: Wilks and Cliggett, esp. pp. 31-40 (E); Traven, *Assembly Line* (E); Weatherford, *Cocaine and the Economic Deterioration of Boliva* (E) **9/13**

Week 2 Theoretical Traditions. The problem is defined by the theory.

Read: Wilks and Cliggett, all (E); Wolf, *Introduction* (E) **9/15**

Week 3 Getting something to Eat: The social provisioning of society.

Read: Science, *Food for Thought* (E); Diamond, *Guns, Germs, Steel* (E); Cashdan, *Hunters and Gatherers* (E); Reed, [Cultivating the Tropical Forest](#).

Week 4 Food Transmogrified: Industrial Food Production

Read: [Industrial Agriculture](#); Roberts, *End of Food 3* (note: the e-reserve has chapters 2 and 3 in one reading); Shiva, *Hijacking global food supply*; Shiva, *Stolen Harvest under the Sea* (E).

Video: *Food Inc.*

Week 5 Food Transmogrified cont.: Industrial Eating

Read: week 5 cont.; Roberts, End of Food 2

Video: *Supersize Me*

Week 6 The capitalist economy.

Read: Marx, The Fetishism of Commodities... (E); Ventura, [Someone is Stealing Your Life](#) (E); Klein, No Logo: The Discarded Factory (E)

Video: *Capitalism: A Love Story*

Week 7 Distribution: The socially organized exchange of goods and services.

Read: Counts, Too Many Bananas... (E); Plattner, Markets and Marketplaces (EA)

Week 8 Distribution cont. The cultural construction of goods.

Read: Ferguson, The Bovine Mystic (E); Weiner, Stability in Banana Leaves (E); Schepers-Hughes, The Global Traffic in Human Organs (E).

Week 9 Consumption. The social economy of consumption.

Read: Acheson, Management of Common Property Resources (EA); Robbins, Problem of population growth (E).

Week 10 The Culture of Consumption

Read: Bourdieu, excerpts from Distinction (E); Klein, No Logo: Branded World (E)

Week 11 Coffee and Community: Peasant Production in Guatemala

Read: Lyon, 1-4

Week 12 Coffee and Community: Fair Trade for whom?

Read: Lyon, 5-8

Week 13 Hunger, Poverty, and Development in a Globalized World.

Read: Moore-Lappé and Collins, excerpts from World Hunger (E); Ferguson, De-moralizing Economies (E); Shiva, Monocultures of the Mind (E)

Week 14 Alternative Economies.

Read: Graeber, The Globalization Movement and the New New Left (E).