



Anthropology/Sociology 486
Spring 2001

CLASS PERIOD -- T, Th 2:40 - 4:10 PM

PROFESSOR -- Susan Kus

OFFICE -- 105 Clough

Office Hours: M 1, 2; T, Th 1-2:30
or by appointment

COURSE STATEMENT

Frank and honest engagement with the disciplines of Anthropology and Sociology can give one simultaneously a sense of empowerment and a sense of vulnerability*. This "situation" will serve as one key focus of seminar discussions as well as serve as an underpinning for your individual project.

There is one assigned test for this course. The other readings for this course will be chosen by members of the seminar according to their concerns and passions, bringing to the seminar table issues with which they want to wrestle and/or issues about which they want to convey the intensity of their interest.

The intent of this seminar is to allow you to explore and ultimately express, through an individual project, your understanding of Anthropology/Sociology as it relates to yourself. One way to think about the individual project that will serve as the central point of engagement in this course is to think of it in terms of exploring "the personal as political," but doing it with "style." Such personal exploration demands attention to avoid several pitfalls. On one hand, there is the pitfall of "navel gazing" as unto egocentric self-absorption has been labeled by some. On the other hand, there is the pitfall of the imposition of impoverished and depersonalized political and theoretical analysis on the lived experiences of self and others. One way to avoid these pitfalls is to strive for a balance of empowerment and vulnerability by cultivating a "style" of one's own. Clearly, "the personal," "the political," and "a sense of style" will engage our attention for the duration of this seminar. It might be useful to reflect on a remark of Gary Snyder: "Note quote from Snyder, Gary "An ethical life is one that is mindful, mannerly, and has style."#

* I have borrowed this term of "vulnerability" from Behar's work, The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart.

The Practice of the Wild, San Francisco, North Point, 1990, p 21.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

What you are willing to put into this course will play a very determinant part in what you will get out of this course. The seminar format is meant to be conducive to honest discussions (where both your voice and the voices of others from your cohort can be heard) and intense engagement with issues of particular interest and concern to you and your cohort.

You will be asked to complete three take home essays on group readings. These essays will allow you to receive individual feedback on your explorations of these topics as well as receive feedback on writing style and organization.

You will also have the opportunity to work on a semester long individual project some of whose dimensions have been discussed in the previous section. The final project will involve both a written component, as well as a formal presentation to a public audience of interested members of the Rhodes Community (April 17 & 24).

GRADING

Class Participation.....	20%
3 take-home essay assignments @ 10% each	30%
Final Project	50%

REQUIRED READING

Basic Text: Basso, Keith Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1996.

Additional Readings: These will be chosen by members of the class according to their interests in the questions that concern contemporary Anthropology and Sociology.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

- Jan 11 The seminar -- what do you want to get from this "captstone" ("touchstone) experience?
(**Assignment for next meeting** - Read Pron. Guide, Preface and chapters 1 & 2 Wisdom Sits in Places.)
(**Assignment for Jan 18** - Write a 2-4 page concise statement about your present understanding of your decision to have majored in Anth/Soc and the implications this has had for your undergraduate experience.)

- Jan 16 Discussion of first half of Wisdom Sits in Places.
- Jan 18 Thinking about the disciplines and thinking about your decision to have Majored in Anth/Soc.
- Jan 23 Dividing into 2 groups for future reading assignments. Choice of topics for future reading assignments. Initiate discussion on individual project.
(Assignment for Feb 13 -- Group A and Group B assigned readings must be approved)
- Jan 25 Collective wisdom applied to thinking about an individual project.
(Assignment for Feb 6. Finish Wisdom Sits in Places.)
- Jan 30 No formal class meeting -- initial individual consultations on projects.
- Feb 1 No formal class meeting -- initial individual consultations on projects.
- Feb 6 Discussion of second half of Wisdom Sits in Places.
- Feb 8 Continued discussion of Basso, choice of essay topic on Wisdom. . . .
(Assignment due Feb 13 -- 3-5 page essay on Basso)
(Assignment Feb 20 - 2-3 page preliminary project proposal)
- Feb 13 No formal class meeting -- individual consultation on project and proposals. (Group A and Group B must have assigned readings approved by today)
- Feb 15 No formal class meeting -- individual consultation on project and proposals
- Feb 20 Group discussion of individual projects. Group A assigns readings.
(Assignment for Feb 27--complete group A assigned readings)
- Feb 22 Group discussions of individual projects continued.
- Feb 27 Discussion of Group A assigned readings.
- Mar 2 Continued discussion of Group A readings. Choosing an essay topic on Group A assigned readings. Group B assigns readings.
(Assignment due Mar 15--3-5 page essay on Group A's assigned readings.)
(Assignment due Mar 20--complete group B assigned readings.)
- March 6 **RECESS**

March 8 **RECESS**

March 13 Group discussion on the final push toward completing individual projects.

March 15 No formal class meeting -- continue work on final project
 (Assignment for next meeting--finish Group B assigned readings)

March 20 Discussion of Group B assigned readings

March 22 Continued discussion of Group B readings. Choosing an essay topic on Group B assigned readings.
 (Assignment due Mar 27--3-5 page essay on Group B assigned readings)

March 27 No formal class meeting--individual consultation on projects.

March 29 No formal class meeting--individual consultation on projects.

April 3 Project progress--class discussion

April 5 Project progress--class discussion

April 10 To be decided (based on the direction of the course and the interest of the students)

April 12 **EASTER RECESS**

April 17 2:40 - 5 PM Presentation of Final Projects

April 19 NO CLASS (SAA meetings) --?Film viewing

April 24 2:40 - 5 PM Presentation of Final Projects (with reception to follow)

April 26 Some final reflections.

**ON THE TWO FOLLOWING SHEETS YOU WILL FIND
EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS FROM A PREVIOUS
GRADUATING COHORT.**