

Fall 9-1-2000

NAS 303.01: Ecological Perspectives of Native Americans

Richmond C. Clow

University of Montana - Missoula, clowl@mso.umt.edu

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Clow, Richmond C., "NAS 303.01: Ecological Perspectives of Native Americans" (2000). *Syllabi*. 5139.
<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/5139>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

Ecological Perspectives of Native Americans

NAS 303 (Section 1)

Wilderness and Civilization

Gallagher 205

Fall 2000

R. Clow

Office Hours, 11-12 T-TH

This is a one-semester course on cultural ecology designed to acquaint the student with tribal environmental ethics. To do so, we will have to understand Native American tribal views of the physical environment in which they lived and currently live and how their views are tied to acts of production. The course will focus on tribal philosophical views of the land; tribal use of the land, including tribal use of fire, tribal concepts of hunting, tribal horticulture, and tribal rights to continue using resources from the physical environment. The format of the class will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Therefore it is important that students have their readings completed.

Lecture Topics

September 19 - October 5

All individuals have relationships with their physical landscape. As a result, we will discuss environmental concepts that are applicable to all cultures. This format will enable us to emphasize that different cultures have different, not wrong relationships with the landscape. Understanding the functional dependency between different environmental variables will help us to understand starvation, as well as ideas of territoriality and tenure, which will be the focus of the end of the week. An important goal of these lectures will be establishing a cross-cultural framework to understand the relationship between people, culture, and landscape.

Readings: Hugh Brody, Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier.

Examination: Essay exam will be given.

October 10 - October 19

We will continue to apply environmental concepts to tribal relationships with their landscapes. Though hunting will be a common discussion topic, the ideas we discuss will be applicable to other tribal cultures including those that farm or fish for a livelihood. During the course of these lectures, we will refer to tribal literature as our authority. Students will also be required to bring pieces of tribal literature to class to share with others. A good source to find stories is An Ethnographic Bibliography of North America. Another is Handbook of North American Indians. Both series can be found in the library.

Page 2

Readings: Keith Basso, Wisdom Sits in Places.

Ellen B. Basso, "The Enemy of Every Tribe: "Bushman"
Images in Northern Athapaskan Narratives," On Reserve.
Examination: Essay exam will be given.

October 24 - November 9

Disease and cultural disease theory are part of everyone's relationship to the landscape. Understanding how and why disease afflicts tribal communities must be understood by understanding tribal culture. We will be examining another concepts, the game masters and keepers and their tie to disease and successful hunting.

Readings: Calvin Martin, Keeper of the Game.

James Mooney, "The Origin of Disease and Medicine."
This reading is on reserve at Reserve Reading Room,
Mansfield Library.

November 14 - November 21

All cultures alter their landscapes. Survival and Stability are the reasons that this occurs. To understand how and why tribal cultures altered their landscapes requires our attention. To do so, we must understand the use of fire and efficiency.

Readings: Nancy M. Williams and Eugene S. Hunn, Resource Manager:
North American and Australian Hunter-Gathers. On
Reserve.

Garret Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons." On
Reserve.

Fikert Berkes, "Common-Property Resource Management and
Cree Indian Fisheries in Subarctic Canada." On Reserve.

November 28 - December 14

Often the way that cultures alter their landscape creates conflict between tribal cultures and non-tribal cultures. When this occurs, a condition known as cultural environmental conflict occurs. It is important to remember then, that environmental conflict is not just a resource conflict stimulated by scarcity, but philosophical conflicts.

Readings: George Wenzel, Animal Rights, Human Rights.

Kim Bartlett, "A New Ethic or an End to a Way of Life,"
On Reserve.

Attendance:

Attendance is not required for this class. Students will be

responsible for all materials presented in class including visual materials.

Grading:

The student's grade will be based upon the examinations (take home essays) and the research paper. The essays will be worth two thirds of the student's grade. Examinations will be scheduled as sections of the class are completed.

The last one third of the student's grade will be earned by writing a scholarly paper and to meet this requirement, citations must be included. One part of this paper will be a story, a story from tribal literature that will be the authority for understanding a specific tribe's environmental ethic in your paper. Include the story as an appendix to your research paper. Since acts of production do not occur in a vacuum, after you have found a story, then place the story in a landscape that the tribal culture that produced the story used. You may need to include some detail about the tribal culture that used that landscape as well as detail about the landscape itself. The third part of your paper will require you to explain and to analyze the environmental ethic found in the story, this will require an explanation of the specific tribal environmental beliefs. The fourth part of your paper will be an analysis of the environmental ethic, which you must identify, and how it relates to an act of production in the specific tribal culture. Ideas from class will provide with clues for examining materials and improving your discussion of tribal environmental ethics in your paper.

The goal will be to understand tribal environmental ethics and tribal behavior associated with their understanding of their ethics beliefs in acts of production. Proper citations must be used. Topic sentences are necessary. The theme and thesis must be clearly stated. Tags, transitions from one paragraph to the next, must be used. This paper will allow the student to understand, in a specific setting, how tribal use their physical environment and their beliefs about their physical environments.