

Bialecki, Jon (UCSD) - Anthropology, Religion, Politics

ANSC 100: Anthropology, Religion, Politics

Spring 2011, T-TH 11:00 am -12:20 pm, SEQ 147

Jon Bialecki, Lecturer

Course description:

It is no secret that one of the greatest failures of predictive social science was the 'secularization hypothesis,' which envisioned a general waning in the strength and intensity of religious communities. Rather, both in the United States and abroad, the events of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has been unquestionably shaped by a plurality of divergent and recombinatory religious forms whose social and political effects do not seem to be in any way receding; instead, in many areas of the world, the political and religious appear to have become conflated - and in many areas they seem to have collapsed into the same field. Reading social and critical theory alongside ethnographic depictions, this course asks what light anthropology can cast on this phenomenon; it also asks whether there is anything to encourage our rethinking the definitions of and boundaries between the terms 'religion' and 'politics.'

Grading:

Grades will be based (in addition to class participation) on three assignments:

In-class participation and WebCT postings:

Class participants will be expected, over the course of the quarter, to both participate in class discussions on a regular basis, and to make a minimum of seven postings regarding the readings on WebCT. While you are allowed to make as many postings as you like, and they will be counted for your grade, you can only post once per article/book when it comes to meeting the seven posting minimum requirement. Postings should be roughly a paragraph in length, and must be posted to WebCT page before the day's class discussion to receive credit.

Final:

During finals week, students will be given a take home, open book exam; it will be no longer than five pages, single space.

Paper/Midterm:

Students may opt for either a take-home, open book exam, or for a ten to twelve page research paper. Regardless of whether the paper or the midterm is elected, the paper/midterm will be due in class on May 24th. While both paper or midterm will fulfill the course requirements, those who opt for papers may be awarded extra credit in the case of exceptional submissions. If you elect for the paper, you are strongly encouraged to discuss possible ideas with the course instructor early in the quarter.

During the last two weeks (May 31st to June 2nd), students who elected to write papers will also be allowed to make very short ten to fifteen minute presentations regarding their paper topics for extra credit.

Required texts:

There are seven recommended texts

1. Hirokazu Miyazaki, *The Method of Hope: Anthropology, Philosophy, and Fijian Knowledge*. Stanford University Press, 2006
2. Susan Friend Harding, *The book of Jerry Falwell: fundamentalist language and politics*. Princeton University Press, 2001
3. Daromir Rudnyckyj, *Spiritual Economies: Islam, Globalization, and the Afterlife of Development*. Cornell University Press, 2010
4. Kevin Lewis O'Neill, *City of God: Christian Citizenship in Postwar Guatemala*. University of California Press, 2009
5. Saba Mahmood, *Politics of piety: the Islamic revival and the feminist subject*. Princeton University Press, 2005
6. Ruth Marshall, *Political spiritualities: the Pentecostal revolution in Nigeria*. University of Chicago Press, 2009
7. Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, *The impossibility of religious freedom*. Princeton University Press, 2005.

All other additional required and recommended text will be available as PDF files at the course's WebCT portal (webctweb.ucsd.edu).