

070.366 – Speculative Anthropology

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Fall 2016, Thursdays 1:30-3:50 PM, Mergenthaler 426

Office hours, Tuesdays 1:30-3:50 PM, Mergenthaler 454

Anthropology has always been a speculative enterprise, an attempt to think beyond some familiar idea of the human. We explore this speculative dimension by looking at intersections between anthropology and environmental politics, contemporary art, science fiction, and philosophy. Working with texts, media, and our own experimental ventures, we will examine the creative and imaginative nature of anthropology.

Texts. There are five books to purchase for the course (by Oreskes and Conway, Kirksey, Haraway, Messeri, and Le Guin), and which will be available at the campus bookstore. All other course readings will be made available to you via Blackboard.

Requirements (and % of overall grade). This class is a seminar; attendance at all class sessions is required, as is active participation in classroom discussion (10%). By the crack of dawn each Thursday, you will post a brief 3-4 sentence reaction to the week's reading, broaching a topic for discussion (20%). You will write four response papers (2 pp single-spaced) over the course of the semester (15% each). Lastly, working in pairs, you will lead us all through a classroom exercise in speculative anthropology, on a topic and of a nature of your own devising (10%). All written assignments will be due in my mailbox in Mergenthaler 466 no later than 4:00 PM on the concerned day.

Policies – (1) *Email.* You will receive periodic notices and instructions concerning coursework on your JHU email account; you are responsible for ensuring receipt of these messages.

(2) *Attendance.* Unexcused absences from class will compromise your grade, so please ensure that your name is recorded during each session on the class attendance sheet.

(3) *Electronic devices.* Use of such devices is distracting and disallowed during class sessions. If this expectation will pose any significant problems for you, please talk to me about this individually.

(4) *Disability.* Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class should obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services.

(5) *Assignments.* Late assignments will be marked down 10% per day.

(6) *Academic integrity.* The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.

Weekly Schedule [Note: classes will also include short films and other sensory media and materials]

1. Beyond	September 1	Introduction
	September 8	Natasha Myers, "Conversations on Plant Sensing: Notes from the Field," 2015 Eduardo Kohn, "How Dogs Dream: Amazonian Natures and the Politics of Transspecies Engagement," 2007 Tim Ingold, "Anthropology Beyond Humanity," 2013

		Vincent Crapanzano, "Imaginative Horizons," 2004
	September 15	Ilana Feldman & Miriam Ticktin, eds, <i>In the Name of Humanity: The Government of Threat and Care</i> , 2010, selections
	September 19	First paper due
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2. Politics	September 22	Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway, <i>The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future</i> , 2014 Bruno Latour, "Waiting for Gaia: Composing the Common World Through Arts and Politics," 2011
	September 29	Eben Kirksey, <i>Emergent Ecologies</i> , 2015, selections
	October 6	Marisol de la Cadena, <i>Earth Beings: Ecologies of Practice Across Andean Worlds</i> , 2015, selections
	October 10	Second paper due
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3. Art	October 13	Donna Haraway, <i>Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene</i> , 2016, selections
	October 27	Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin, eds, <i>Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments, and Epistemologies</i> , 2015, selections
	November 3	Thomas Yarrow, <i>A Room Full of Buildings: Life and Work in an Architectural Practice</i> , manuscript, selections
	November 7	Third paper due
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4. Fiction	November 10	Lisa Messeri, <i>Placing Outer Space: An Earthly Ethnography of Other Worlds</i> , 2016, selections
	November 17	No class (AAA Annual Meetings)
	December 1	Ursula K. Le Guin, <i>Changing Planes</i> , 2003 Beth Baker-Cristales, "Poeisis of Possibility: the Ethnographic Sensibilities of Ursula K. Le Guin," 2012
	December 8	Stuart McLean, <i>Fictionalizing Anthropology: Encounters and Fabulations (Human and Other)</i> , manuscript, selections
	December 12	Fourth paper due