

**POWER AND VIOLENCE: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS**  
ANTHROPOLOGY 156  
SUMMER SESSION 2008

Instructor: Laura John  
Meeting time: M, T, Th: 8.45-11.15am  
Office hours: TBA and by appointment  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

How do relations of power work among people and groups? How do those with greater access to power condition and constrain the activities and choices of those without such access? What happens when encounters among people and groups become violent? This course addresses these questions through readings by classic and contemporary social theorists and anthropologists and then seeks to apply their ideas to two cases: the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 (and the ways it was remembered in the 1970s) and medical (and racial) profiling during a cholera epidemic in Venezuela in 1992 and 1993. Students will write a final paper based on a different case study of their choosing (developed in consultation with the instructor).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

(Available at the Brandeis University bookstore and on reserve in the library)

*The Ghost Dance: Ethnohistory and Revitalization*, Alice Beck Kehoe  
*Stories in the Time of Cholera: Racial Profiling During a Medical Nightmare*, Charles Briggs

Other readings will be available on Latte

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Attendance and participation	- 20%
Weekly response papers (2-3 pgs ea)	- 10% each
Final paper (10-12 pgs)	- 30%

**\* If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me.**

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

(Dates correspond to the first class of the week; readings for that week should be done by then, unless I tell you otherwise in class)

**WEEK ONE (July 7): General introduction; some theories of power**

Karl Marx, "The Communist Manifesto"

Marshal Berman, "Marx and Modernism"

Max Weber, selections from *The Theory of Economic and Social Organization*

Benedict Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture"

**WEEK TWO (July 14): Theories of power continued**

Michel Foucault, "Panopticism"

Antonio Gramsci, selections from *The Prison Notebooks*

Donald Kurtz, "Hegemony and Anthropology: Gramsci, Exegeses, Reinterpretations"  
Thomas Frank and Matt Weiland, "The Rebel Consumer"

**WEEK THREE (July 21): Anthropological applications**

Eric Wolf, "Facing Power"  
John and Jean Comaroff, "Hegemony and Ideology"  
Ann Stoler, "Perceptions of Protest"  
Susan Gal, "Between Speech and Silence"  
Lila Abu-Lughod, "The Romance of Resistance"

**WEEK FOUR (July 28): Case studies**

Alice Beck Kehoe, *The Ghost Dance*  
reading TBA  
film: *In Whose Honor?*

**WEEK FIVE (August 4): Case studies**

Paul Farmer, "On Suffering and Structural Violence"  
Charles Briggs, *Stories in the Time of Cholera*  
film: TBA