

Economic Anthropology: Consumption, market and culture

Instructor: Unnur Dís Skaptadóttir

Description of the course

In the course the economic aspects of society and culture are examined. Globalization has created new field of research for economic anthropologists in their analysis of the relationship between the economic issues, society and meanings given to products in everyday life. The course will examine earlier field of research in economic anthropology about gift exchange, trade and production among peasants and new research on consumption patterns and trade in present times, on fair trade and global mass production of goods. Concepts such as work, leisure time and markets are examined from anthropological perspectives. The economic crisis of communities, especially in Iceland, will further more be examined.

Course evaluation:

Participation in class 30%

- a) General participation in class
- b) Students will raise discussions and questions based on the readings. They will summarize the articles and then draw out two questions for discussion. Students will sign up for this in the first day of class which articles they want to be responsible for.

Group assignment 20%

Students, two or three together, will work on assignment in which they use the obtained knowledge to analyse some economic aspect of their daily lives. Students will present the assignment to their fellow students in class with power point presentation. They must bring something to show to the class, an object, a picture etc. In the presentation they have to refer to some of the course reading.

Examination 50%

Examination in the last class based on all the readings in the course

Reading Material

Richard R. Wilk og Lisa C. Cliggett, 2007. *Economies and Cultures: Foundations of Economic Anthropology*. Cambridge, MA: Westview press.

Other readings will be provided as pdf documents.

Schedule

25. April - Introduction, general discussion about the course and evaluations

Students sign up for groups and on a list for discussion leaders

What is Economic Anthropology?

27. April - Theories and historical overview

Wilk and Cliggett, chapter 1, 2 and 3

Stuart Plattner (1989) Economic Behavior in Markets' *Economic Anthropology*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

28. April - Society, power, politics and the economic. Influence of Durkheim and Marx

Wilk and Cliggett, Chapter 4

Plattner, Stuart (1989) Marxism. In Stuart Plattner (ritstj.) *Economic Anthropology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press

5. April - Economic Globalization - consumption and production

Nash, June. 2007. Consuming Interests: Water, Rum and Coca-Cola from Ritual Propitiation to Corporate Expropriation in Highland Chiapas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 22(4), 621-639.

Jackson, Peter. 2004. Local consumption in a globalizing world. *Royal Geographical Society*, 29, 165-178

Rothstein, Frances Abrahamer. 2005. Challenging Consumption Theory: Production and Consumption in Central Mexico. *Critique of Anthropology*, 25(3), 279-306.

Goldín, Liliana 2012. From Despair to Resistance: Maya Workers in the Maquilas of Guatemala. *Anthropology of Work Review*, 33(1): 25-32.

9. April - Migration and migrant workers / work, division of labor and identities

Núñez-madrado Cristina 2007. Living 'Here and There': New Migration of Translocal Workers from Veracruz to the southeastern United States. *Anthropology of Work Review XXVIII* (3):1-6

Cohen, Jeffrey H. 2011. Migration, Remittances and Household Strategies. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40:103-14

Skaptadóttir, Unnur Dís and Wojtynska, Anna (2008) Labour Migrants Negotiating Places and Engagements. In Bærenholdt J. O. and Granås B. (eds.) *Mobility and Place. Enacting Northern European Periphery*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Krishnamurthy, Mathangi. 2004. Resources and Rebels: A Study of Identity Management in Indian Call Centers. *Anthropology of Work Review*, 25(3-4), 9-18.

Ramamurthy, Priti. 2003. Material Consumers, Fabricating Subjects: Perplexity, Global Connectivity Discourses, and Transnational Feminist Research. *Cultural Anthropology*, 18(4), 524-550.

11. April Ethical consumption

Carrier, James G. 2007. Ethical Consumption. *Anthropology Today*, 23(4), 1-2.

Besky, Sarah. 2008. Can a Plantation be Fair? Paradoxes and Possibilities in Fair Trade Darjeeling Tea Certification. *Anthropology of Work Review*, 29(1), 1-9.

Fridell, Mara, Ian Hudson and Mark Hudson. 2008. With Friends Like These: The Corporate Response to Fair Trade Coffee. *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 40(1), 8-34.

Moberg, Mark. 2005. Fair Trade and Eastern Caribbean Banana Farmers: Rhetoric and Reality in the Anti-Globalization Movement. *Human Organization*, 64(1), 4-15.

Clarke, Nick, Clive Barnett, Paul Cloke and Alice Malpass. 2007. The Political Rationalities of Fair-Trade Consumption in the United Kingdom. *Politics Society*, 35(4), 583-607.

12. April

Presentation of group work

16. April

Gifts and debt

Wilk and Cliggett chapter 5 and 6

Strathern, Marilyn. 2012. Gifts money cannot buy. *Social Anthropology* 20(4):397-410.

Graeber, David. 2012. On social currencies and human economies: some notes on the violence of equivalence. *Social Anthropology* 20(4): 411-428.

Rice, James G. 2007. Icelandic Charity Donations: Reciprocity Reconsidered. *Ethnology* 46(1): 1-20.

18.05 Final examination