

Communication 791C – Modernity and Inequalities
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Professor Paula Chakravartty
Fall 2007
Thursdays, 5:00-8:00 pm
Machmer W-21

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Phone: (413) 545-634
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3 and Thursdays 3-5

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar explores the lived experience of plural modernities in the context of growing global inequalities. In topical debates about the impact of globalization it is accepted both by advocates and critics of neoliberalism that growing spatial, material and existential disparities are transforming the political horizons of democracy and development. The intensification of inequalities between rural and urban areas, between migrants and citizens, formal and informal workers are compounded by differences in race, caste, ethnicity and gender. At the same time, ethnographic researchers have emphasized the need to pay attention to cultural difference in studying the varied experiences of development, modernization, and struggles over citizenship and social transformation. This seminar will cover a number of interdisciplinary perspectives on new inequalities as well as a range of empirical ethnographic studies set in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In addition to weekly readings, students will be expected to write a substantive literature review OR an original research paper related to the materials covered in class. The class is open to graduate students in communication as well as graduate students in other fields with strong interests in an ethnographic approach to development, international political economy and postcolonial theory.

TEXTS:

Baviskar, Amita (2005) *In the Belly of the River: Tribal Conflicts over Development in the Narmada Valley*. Oxford University Press.

Brown, Wendy (2006) *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*. Princeton University Press.

Ferguson, James (2006) *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Held, David and Ayse Kaya (Eds.) (2006) *Global Inequality: A Comprehensive Introduction*. London: Polity Press.

Ong, Aihwa (2006) *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Nyamnjoh, Francis B. (2005) *Africa's Media: Democracy and the Politics of Belonging*. Zed Press.

Paley, Julia (2001) *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorship Chile*. University of California Press.

*Sorj, Bernardo (2007) *Latin America's Elusive Democracies*. Rio: Centro Edelstein de Pesquisas Sociais.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt (2004) *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton University Press.

Radcliffe, Sarah A (2006) *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World: Geographies, Actors, and Paradigms*. Routledge.

World Bank (2006) *World Development Report 2006: Equity And Development* World Bank Publications.

Books for this class are available at **Amherst Books at 8 Main Street, Amherst**
Phone: 413 256 1547
Email: books@amherstbook.com

*ALL ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE ON WebCT Spark site at:

<https://spark.oit.umass.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>

Using WebCT Vista

You are required to use the WebCT Vista program to check for announcements, download readings, access background materials, submit all your written assignments for the class and check your grades. Detailed instructions on using WebCT Vista are included in a separate handout. It is your responsibility to learn how to use WebCT and you can consult the OIT helpdesk for any questions you might have about the program.

<http://www.oit.umass.edu/webct/campus-vista/students/index.html>

SEMINAR REQUIRMENTS

The requirements for this seminar are class participation, class presentations and a final paper in the form of a substantive literature review of a thematic or empirical area OR a research paper related directly to the themes covered in the course. You should start thinking about which option you would like to pursue early in the semester and base it on your general knowledge/background of the materials covered in the seminar and where you are in terms of your own course-work and research plans.

Class participation will count towards 10% of your final grade and will be based on your weekly email memos to the class list, as well as in-class participation and discussions. An additional 20% of your grade will be based on leading class discussion during the course of the semester. An additional handout will explain in greater detail the expectations for class presentations.

The largest component of your final grade will be based on your final paper project, which will count towards 70% of your overall grade. You are expected to begin narrowing down ideas for a general area/topic by October 4th (Week 5). You are required by this date to have met with me in person outside of seminar, to discuss potential paper topics and begin planning your paper outline. A 2-3 page outline plus a bibliography of your paper will be due on October 25th, (Week 8). You will receive comments and feedback on your paper outlines and you are expected to begin work on your papers by November. You are encouraged to discuss the progress of your paper throughout this period and the seminar will be cancelled December 6th (Week 13), in order to have extra office hours to discuss your drafts in progress. You will present your paper in the last day of class on December 13th, and it will be due on Thursday, December 20th.

Please note that *I do not accept late papers or incompletes* unless there is documented proof of a medical or family emergency. Please plan the use of time to research and write your papers well in advance and feel free to discuss any challenges or questions you have along the way with me during office hours an in seminar.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Week 1: Thursday, September 6th

Introduction to the Seminar

WEEK 2: Thursday September 13

Overview of the Inequalities of Globalization

Held, David and Ayse Kaya (Eds.) (2006) *Global Inequality: A Comprehensive Introduction*. London: Polity Press

WEEK 3: Thursday, September 20th

The Contradictions of Plural Modernities: State Power and Citizenship

Radcliffe, Sarah A (2006) *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World: Geographies, Actors, and Paradigms*. Routledge.

*Mitchell, Timothy selections

WEEK 4: Thursday, September 27th

The Political Limits of Neo-Liberalism: The Chilean Paradigm

Paley, Julia (2001) *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorship Chile*. University of California Press.

WEEK 5: Thursday, October 4th

Contesting Rural Development: Studying Indigenous Peoples' Movements in India

Baviskar, Amita (2005) *In the Belly of the River: Tribal Conflicts over Development in the Narmada Valley*. Oxford University Press.

REQUIRED TO MEET BEFORE SEMINAR TO DISCUSS IDEAS FOR FINAL PAPER

WEEK 6: Thursday, October 11th

Theorizing New Sites of Global Connection: Environmental Politics in Indonesia

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt (2004) *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton University Press.

WEEK 7: Thursday, October 18th

The Post-Washington Consensus

World Bank (2006) *World Development Report 2006: Equity And Development* .
Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.

WEEK 8: Thursday, October 25th

The Paradoxes of the State-Civil Society Relationship in Latin America

*Sorj, Bernardo (2007) *Latin America's Elusive Democracies* . Rio: Centro Edelstein de
Pesquisas Socais.

PAPER PROPOSAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

WEEK 9: Thursday, November 1st

Africa and the Neo-Liberal World Order: Rethinking Disconnections

Ferguson, James (2006) *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Durham:
Duke University Press.

WEEK 10: Thursday, November 8th

Media, Modernization and Belonging

Nyamnjoh, Francis B. (2005) *Africa's Media: Democracy and the Politics of Belonging*.
Zed Press.

*Chakravartty, Paula and Yuezhi Zhao (2007) "Introduction: Toward a Transcultural
Political Economy of Global Communication" in Paula Chakravartty & Yuezhi Zhao
(Eds.) *Global Communication: Toward a Transcultural Political Economy*. Boulder:
Rowman & Littlefield: pp. 1-35.

WEEK 11: Thursday, November 15th

Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Neo-Liberal Order

Ong, Aihwa (2006) *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and
Sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Thursday, November 22nd

THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 12: Thursday, November 29th
Political Transformation , Identity and Empire

Brown, Wendy (2006) *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*.
Princeton University Press

WEEK 13: Thursday, December 6th

SEMINAR CANCELLED—OFFICE HOUR MEETINGS TO DISCUSS PAPER
PROGRESS

LAST SEMINAR: Thursday, December 13th

PAPER PRESENTATIONS