Contemporary Indigenous Movements in Latin America
ANSO 342
Winter Quarter, 2005
TTh 1:00-2:30 (5s)
GDH 309B

Instructor: Michelle Day
E-mail: mday@knox.edu
Office Phone: 341-7311
Office Hours: W 1:30-3:00, and by appointment
Office Location: GDH 309C

Course Description: This course will examine contemporary political, cultural, and environmental movements involving indigenous peoples in Latin America. The course will discuss and contrast multiple strategies being undertaken by indigenous groups such as the Zapatista revolt in Chiapas, Pan-Mayan cultural activism being pursued by Maya intellectuals in Guatemala, indigenous activism surrounding environmental issues and intellectual property rights in Latin America. The course will conclude with a discussion of the so-called “Rigoberta Menchú controversy” and the implications this and other current political issues have for future indigenous movements.

Some questions under discussion will include: What forms of indigenous activism have been the most successful in promoting/preserving indigenous rights, and which have not? What does it mean to be “indigenous” in Latin America? How have political movements framed in cultural and ethnic terms differed from other political movements in the region? How have neoliberal economic policies and globalization affected indigenous groups in Latin America, and how have they responded?

Course Requirements: This is a 300-level course and will be run in a seminar format. Grading will be based on two principle criteria: Student Participation in the Seminar (50%) and a Final Paper (50%).

STUDENT PARTICIPATION GRADE: In terms of your participation grade, students are expected to attend all classes and come prepared to discuss the reading. Students are required to bring minimally three discussion questions to each class based on the class reading. These questions will serve as the basis for classroom discussion and they will be graded. They must be typed and turned in at the end of each class to receive credit.

FINAL PAPER GRADE: Students are also to write a 12-15 page paper on a topic of direct relevance to this course. Each student will also be required to make a short presentation (15 minutes) on their paper topic during the final full week of classes.

Students are expected to fully cite all sources (including web sites) for all writing assignments. Any cases of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be referred to the Student Honor Board.
Required Texts:


Optional Texts (will be on reserve):


Weekly Reading Assignments

Week One: Introduction

Tuesday, January 4: No class

Thursday, January 6: Introduction to Class and Requirements

Week Two: The Emergence of Indigenous Activism in Latin America

Tuesday, January 11: History/Introduction to the Texts

Thursday, January 13: Case Study: A Post-Modern Indigenous Revolt? The Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico
* Film: A Place Called Chiapas *
Lynn Stephen. 2002. Chapters 4 and 5 of Zapata Lives! Histories and Cultural Politics in Southern Mexico. (pp. 91-145) [ON RESERVE]

Week Three: Methods of Activism

Tuesday, January 18: Discussion - The Zapatistas

Thursday, January 20: Comparative Case Studies

Week Four: Indigenous Activism and the Environment
* TUESDAY, JANUARY 25th: DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PAPER TOPIC DUE *

Tuesday, January 25: Environmentalism and Indigenous Groups
- Read the Following Selections from Green Guerrillas:
  - “Introduction” by Helen Collinson (pp. 1-5)
  - “Capitalism and Ecological Crisis” by Elisabeth Dore (pp. 8-19)
  - “Social Pressure for Environmental Reform in Latin America” by David Kaimowitz (pp. 20-32)
  - “Native Peoples and Sustainable Development” by Al Gedicks (pp. 34-39)
  - “‘The Land of Our Ancestor’s Bones’: Wichí People’s struggle in the Argentine Chaco” by Aidan Rankin (pp. 40-46)
  - “How Sustainable were pre-Columbian civilizations?” by Elizabeth Dore (pp. 47-50)
  - “Debating ‘indigenous’ agriculture development: Indian organizations in the Central Andes of Ecuador” by Anthony Bebbington (pp. 51-60).

Thursday, January 27: Case Study – The Kayapó
Week Five: Environmental Activism and (Intellectual) Property Rights

Tuesday, February 1: Case Study – Biopiracy/Bioprospecting in Chiapas, Mexico

Thursday, February 3: Case Study – Ecotourism and Cultural Tourism
* Homework Assignment*: Prior to class, play the “Ecotourism Game” at: http://www.eduweb.com/ecotourism/eco1.html
You must run through at least two different scenarios, and write about the results for class.

(Other readings to be announced).

Week Six: Pan-Maya Cultural Activism in Guatemala
* TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8 – ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE *

Tuesday, February 8

Thursday, February 10

Week Seven: Pan-Maya Cultural Activism in Guatemala

Tuesday, February 15

Thursday, February 17
Week Eight: Case Study: The “Rigoberta Menchú Controversy”

Tuesday, February 22: Introduction to the Debate and its Implications
   Optional: If you have never read the books by Rigoberta Menchú or David Stoll, you should also peruse them at the Knox Library prior to class

Thursday, February 24: Fallout
   Selections from The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy

Week Nine: Student Paper Presentations

Tuesday, March 1: Student Paper Presentations
   Continue Reading Selections from The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy

Thursday, March 3: Student Paper Presentations
   Continue Reading Selections from The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy

Week Ten: Conclusions

Tuesday, March 8: Rigoberta Menchú’s Legacy and Future Indigenous Activism
   Selections from The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy

* Final Papers Due: Saturday, March 12 at 5 p.m. *