MIDWEST AND SOUTHERN INDIANS
From the Art Institute's exhibition, a 500-year-old wooden figure (half human, half feline), right, and a painting showing a tribe's war trophies — severed limbs and scalps — on poles, far right.

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CALUSA FELINE-HUMAN FIGURE - Cushing Expedition, Key Marco FL 1893

Department Of Anthropology

Rutgers University

Explanation In Anthropology

Robin Fox

Syllabus And Readings

Fall 2006

Anthropology 410 **Explanation in Anthropology - Robin Fox**

Syllabus and readings. Fall 2006 (see course outline on anthro. website) BIO 302 2-3

Challenge refers to Robin Fox, *The Challenge of Anthropology*, Transaction 1994. (available at Douglass bookstore or Amazon – cheaper usually.)
Search refers to Robin Fox, *The Search for Society*, Rutgers U.P. 1989. (copies will be distributed)

"reprint" means I have a reprint of the item or an electronic version ("disk")

This is a 400-level seminar, and your active participation is essential. A background in anthropology is not required; in fact a diversity of backgrounds is an advantage for the course. We shall approach the issue of "explanation" in anthropology, not in an abstract way, but with a series of "case histories" from the instructor's work. Each week everyone will read one or two chapters from *Search* or *Challenge*, or a chapter or article on disk, as indicated. In addition, individuals will prepare brief reports from the "other readings" which are expansions, related topics, criticisms, or downright disagreements with the position taken in the general reading. You should prepare a brief write-up of each of the "other readings" that you tackle, and these will count towards the grade. A short term paper on one of the topics or a related topic will complete the assignment. For this you should use all the "other readings" on the topic, and others that will be discussed individually. I have most of the books and articles assigned and will lend them out or e-mail them to you. "Film" or "Film clip" means brief excerpts from one or more films for illustrative purposes. (See course outline on anthro. web site under 410.)

Week 1. Sept. 11. **Introduction**

Outline of the course; initial assignments. Basic issues in explanation, scientific method, interpretation. Popper versus Kuhn on the development of science. Why is it important to be wrong? Why is there Anthropology? What have anthropologists tried to explain? How has this changed? Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Fox, *Search* Chap. 3 "Darwin and the Donation of Durkheim 1: Liberalism and the Legacy of Locke." Fox, *Search*, Chap. 4. "Darwin and the Donation of Durkheim 2: Bradley and the Benison of Bergson." (These are not assignments – just for your reference, leisure-time reading, and possible term-paper sources.)
Totemism, by way of example, as a subject for explanation: utilitarian, sociological, structural, psychological, evolutionary, etc explanations. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism*. Fox: "Totem and Taboo Reconsidered" in E. R. Leach ed. *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism*. Fox: *The Red Lamp of Incest*, Chap. 3 "The Primal Horde." Chap. 8 "The Matter of Mind." (These again are not assignments – just for your reference.)

Film Clip: *Waiting for Harry* (Australian Aborigines), *Ancient America: The Northwest*

Week 2. Sept. 18. **Food and Eating**

We shall look at how paleo-anthropologists, historians, symbolic anthropologists, ecologists etc. have selected issues for explanation, and how they have tackled them.

Challenge: Chap. 1 "Food and Eating Out."

Eaton, Shostack and Konner, *The Paleolithic Prescription*, Chaps. 3 and 4: "The Discordance Hypothesis": "The Stone Age Diet.".
Jared Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee*, Chap. 11. "Why do we smoke, drink and take dangerous drugs?"
Larry Zuckerman, *The Potato*, either Chap. 4, "Vive la pomme de terre" or Chap. 10 "Potatoes and Population."
Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, Chap. 3 "The Abominations of Leviticus."
Richard Wrangham et el. "Out of the Pan, into the Fire: How Our Ancestors' Evolution Depended on What They Ate." In Frans de Waal (ed.), *Tree of Origin*. (reprint.)
[Or, "The Raw and the Stolen: Cooking and the Ecology of Human Origins." *Current Anthropology*. 40:567-77, 1999 (reprint.) Or "Cooking as a Biological Trait" *Comp. Biochem. & Phys*. Part A 136, 35-46, 2003 (reprint.)]
Lionel Tiger, *The Pursuit of Pleasure*, Chap. 5. "Big Mouth."
W. C. McGrew & A. T. C. Feistner, "Two Nonhuman Primate Models for the Evolution of Human Food Sharing." Chap. 4 in Barkow, Cosmides and Tooby, eds. *The Adapted Mind* (1992)

Film clips: *Tom Jones*, *The Human Animal*

Week 3. Sept. 25 **Sex and Orgasm**

1. What are the outstanding features of human mating systems that demand explanation?

Challenge: Chap. 1 "The Conditions of Sexual Evolution"

Robert Trivers, *Social Evolution*, Chap. 13 "The Evolution of Sex."
Jared Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee*, Chap. 3. "The Evolution of Human Sexuality."

2. What are the competing explanations of the female orgasm? Can they be reconciled?

Challenge: Chap. 2. "The Female Orgasm: Adaptation or Accident?"

Donald Symons, *The Evolution of Human Sexuality*, Chap. 3. "The Female Orgasm: Adaptation or Artifact?"

Melvin Konner, *The Tangled Wing*, Chap. 12 "Lust" pp. 287-96. 0r: *Why the Reckless Survive*, pages 181-85 "Is Orgasm Essential?"
Randy Thornhill et al. "Human Female Orgasm and Male Fluctuating Asymmetry." Animal Behavior, 50: 1601-15, 1995. (reprint.) or "Human Female Copulatory Orgasm: A Human Adaptation or Phylogenetic Holdover?" *Animal Behavior*. 52 853-5, 1996

Film clips: (Woody Allen) *All You Wanted to Know About Sex* (sperm)
(Desmond Morris) *The Human Animal: The Biology of Love* (orgasm)
(Helen Fisher) *Anatomy of Sex* (love)

Week 4. Oct. 2. **Incest: Avoidance and Taboo**

Again, what are the competing explanations for the incest taboo?

Challenge. Chap. 3. "The Evolution of Incest Inhibition."

Robin Fox, *The Red Lamp of Incest*, chap 2. "Between Brother and Sister."
----------, *Kinship and Marriage*, Chap. 2 "The Incest Problem."
Turner and Maryanski, *Incest: Origins of the Taboo*. Chap. 1 "The Golden Age of Promiscuity." Chap.2 "Avoiding Incest."
Joseph Shepher, *Incest: A Biosocial View*, Chap. 6 "Contributions to the Development of the Sociobiological Theory of Incest."
William Arens, *The Original Sin*, Chap. 5 "The Nature of the Solution."
James Twitchell, *Forbidden Partners, Dreadful Pleasures*, (vampires as incest fantasies)

Film clip: *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*
Dracula

Week 5. Oct. 9. **Aggression, Violence and War**

1. What are the roots of human violence and aggression? What is the role of imagination and ritualization? Is aggression a disease or a normal process?

Challenge. Chap. 5. "Aggression Then and Now." Chap. 6. "The Human Nature of Violence."

Search. Chap 6. "The Violent Imagination." Chap. 7. "The Inherent Rules of Violence."

Peter Marsh, *Aggro: The Illusion of Violence* (selections)
Anne Campbell, *Men, Women and Violence.* (selections)

2. Contrasting views on the nature of history, and the causes of war.

Challenge. Chap.8. "Has War a Future? Or Goodnight Eirene."
Challenge, Chap. 7. "Violence, Ideology and Inquisition: Encounter with Seville."
Fox: "Biology, History and Social Organization" *RAND Seminars* (reprint/disk)

Robert Hinde et al. Responses to above in *Encounter* (reprint)
Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Selections – or article in *The National Interest*) (reprint/disk)

Film clip: John Wayne/John Ford (Documentary)
Dead Birds, Waterloo, Gettysburg, Alexander

Week 6. Oct. 16. **Male Bonding .**

Is there a specific need for males to bond? What role do females play? Is it explained by the evolution of hunting and war? How does it manifest itself in literature?

Fox, "Male Bonding in the Epics and Romances." From *The Literary Animal*, Imber and Wilson eds. (2005) (Expanded version on disk.)

Fox, "Sexual Conflict in the Epics." In *Conjectures and Confrontations* (1997)
Lionel Tiger, *Men in Groups* (selections)
Tiger and Fox, *The Imperial Animal*, Chap. 4 "Bond Issue Two: Man to Man."
Robert Trivers, *Social Evolution*, Chap. 9 "Parental Investment and Sexual Selection."
R. Blumenschine and J. Cavallo, "Scavenging and Human Evolution" *Scientific American* 1992 (reprint)

Film clips: *Excalibur, Troy, The Thirteenth Warrior, The Four Feathers, The Full Monty*

Week 7. Oct. 23. **Human Rights.**

Differing views (very!) on the sources and nature of human rights.

Search, Chap. 2 "Inhuman Nature and Unnatural Rights."
Fox "Human Nature and Human Rights" in *The National Interest* 62, Winter 2001-2, or in R. J. Woolsey, ed., *The National Interest on International Law and Order*, and on disk.

Francis Fukuyama "Natural Rights and Human History" and William F. Schultz (Director of Amnesty International) etc., "The Ground and Nature of Human Rights." *National Interest*, 63 (2001-2) or *NionILandHR* (reprints)

Week 8. Oct. 30. **Visiting Husbands on Tory Island**

Why do a fifth of Tory Island (Ireland) husbands and wives not live together?

Challenge Chap. 9 "Principles and Pragmatics on Tory Island."

Fox: *The Tory Islanders: A People of the Celtic Fringe.* Chap. 7 "Family, Marriage and Household."
Meyer Fortes: "The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups." (reprint)

Film clip: *Globetrekker Ireland – Tory Island*

Week 9. Nov. 6. **Complex Societies**

Why do some simple societies move to complex organization? Why do they then always collapse? Do they need an agricultural surplus to develop? The role of seafood. Anasazi and Calusa. (with a glance at Norte Chico.)

Challenge: Chap. 11 "The Origins of Social Complexity."

Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed.* Chap 4 "The Ancient Ones: The Anasazi and their Neighbors."
Darcie McMahon and William Marquardt, *The Calusa and their Legacy.* (Selections)
William Marquadt, "The Emergence and Demise of the Calusa" in Brose, Cowan and Mainfort eds. *Societies in Eclipse* (2001) (reprint)
Michael Mosely, *The Incas and Their Ancestors* (Selections)
Charles Mann, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*, Chap. 6 "Cotton (or Anchovies) and Maize."

Films: The *Mystery of Chaco* Canyon.(Selections)
The Domain of the Calusa. (Selections)
Digging for the Truth: The Real Temple of Doom (Selections.)

Week 10 Nov. 13. **Break.** Use this week to get ahead with reading. There will be a short writing assignment due on Nov. 20.

Week 11. Nov. 20. **Meanings of Myth**

Diverse ways (psychological, structural, social, astronomical etc.) of explaining the origin, function and persistence of myth making. Special attention to the Trickster figure.

Challenge: Chap. 15. "Myth and Mind: With a Note on the Fragmentation of Trickster."

Fox. *Reproduction and Succession*, Chap. 4 "The Virgin and the Godfather."
Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, Chap 11 "The Structural Study of Myth."
Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God* (selections)

Film clip: *Shane, Excalibur, Ferris Bueler's Day Off*

Week 12. Oct. 27. **Mind in Adaptation**

What happens when we think? Why does it happen that way? What is rationality?

Challenge. Chap. 14 "Prejudice and the Unfinished Mind."

Commentaries in *Psychological Enquiry* 3:2 1992 (reprints)

Film clip: *Star Trek* (Plato's Stepchildren) – if available

Week 13. Dec. 4. **Religion and Magic**

Frazer and the explanation of religion/magic. Comparative and cross-cultural methods.

Challenge, Chap. 10. "The Golden Bough and the Descent into Anthropology."

Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (selections)
Using: T. H. Gaster ed. *The New Golden Bough*
Mary Douglas, Sabine MacCormick eds. *The Illustrated Golden Bough*

On the comparative method:
Fox: "Lewis Henry Morgan and the Reason for Anthropology." (disk: introduction to Morgan's *Ancient Society*.)

On the cross-cultural method:
E. B. Tylor, "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions." *JRAI* 1888 (reprint) (the original)
Whiting, Kluckhohn and Anthony, "The Function of Male Initiation Ceremonies at Puberty." In Newcomb and Hartley eds. *Readings in Social Psychology* 1958 (reprint)

Or: Whiting, JWM, "The Effects of Climate on Certain Cultural Practices" in Goodenough ed., *Explorations in Cultural Anthropology* (1964) (reprint)
Whiting and Child, *Child Training and Personality,* Chap. 8 "A Test of Negative Fixation."

Film clip: *The Wicker Man*
Excalibur
Apocalypse Now

Week 14. Dec. 11. **Intuition, Stereotypes and Reason**

A full circle to Totemic and other social categories. Why are totems so often taboo? How do we remember? Why do we dream? The evolution and role of emotions.

Search Chap. 8. "The Passionate Mind: Brain, Dreams, Memory, Evolution and Social Categories."
Fox: *Red Lamp* Chap. 7. "The Matter of Mind."

E. Durkheim and M. Mauss, *Primitive Classification* (R. Needham trans. See his introduction)

Week 15. Dec. 18. **Roundup: The Big Picture**

How does the explanation of the past and present contribute to our assessment of the human future? I'll give the pessimistic view; you prepare the optimistic one.

Search Chap. 10. "Consciousness Out of Context: Evolution, History, Progress and the Post-Post-Industrial Society."

Fox *The Violent Imagination* (selections inc. "The Trial of George Washington" "What the Hunter Saw" "Design Failure: a Post Tutorial Dialogue" "Psalm One Hundred and Fifty One" etc. (Copies will be distributed.)

Fox: *Conjectures and Confrontations* "What the Shaman Saw: Incident at Lascaux circa 15,000 B.P." (reprint)

TOBAGO (Kate's Horse)

Kate Fox
Author of:

The Racing Tribe

Watching the English

The subject of these books is "the hidden rules of behavior" – for the English generally and for English race goers in particular. We might look at them when considering the issue of "rules" as explanations of behavior, and the nature of "institutions."