ANTH 380

Book Review Guidelines

Your review must be typed and double-spaced. Length is not necessarily indicative of quality, although I’d say it would be difficult to do a credible job in less than 5 pages. If you cite the book verbatim then please insert the citation in quotation marks and place the page number in parentheses afterward. If the quote exceeds five lines (though there's usually no reason why it should) then it must be single spaced and left indented. For further information see: http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf

I never deduct points specifically for mechanical reasons, i.e., for grammar, punctuation, and spelling; nonetheless, I would hope you’d take pride in the quality of your writing and a large part of that should involve proofreading before you hand it in. Doesn’t your word processing software have a spellchecker???

Although you need to convince me that you actually read the books, I don’t want excessive regurgitation of ethnographic details provided by the authors. What I hope to see is a comparative review done by you of these books. In your review you should try to address the following:

- Provide a brief overview of the society/culture described in the book – culture, sociopolitical organization (including kinship and family), subsistence patterns and economics, etc.
- Describe how the author studied this society? What kinds of techniques does he/she use?
- What kinds of major conclusions or assertions does the author make in the book?
- Does the book relate to any of the topics we’ve discussed in this class? If so, how?
- What is your opinion of the book? Was it informative? Did you feel that you got a good understanding of the society and culture as a result of reading it?

Each of these reviews is potentially worth 25 points. Believe me those 50 points make a lot of difference at the end of the semester. As with other written work (e.g., short answers and essays) I will judge them on a relative basis. This means that I do not hold them up to my own standard but rather to that of the best of your peers – i.e., what grade you receive depends primarily upon how your review stacks up against the others in the class.

As a reminder, the books are as follows:

For the Midterm:

For the Final:

Further Relevant Details

- The comparative review of Chagnon’s book on the Yanomamo and Lee’s book on the Ju/’hoansi are due in class on the day of the midterm, October 17.
- Late reviews for the Midterm will be penalized 10 points for each day they are late. I will not accept ANY late book reviews – i.e., nothing after the Final Exam.
- You may not wait and review the books by Chagnon and Lee at the end of the semester. If you do not turn the review in at Midterm then forget about it.