

Ethnography and Public Policy: The Massachusetts Legislature

(Revised)

John Brigham, Political Science 397A/697A

Fall 2008 TTh 11:15-12:30

I. Ethnography... Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: The Balinese Cockfight" (11 pgs); Sandoval-Sanchez, "West Side Story" (JC39folder/westSideStory.html) See also <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-9176406688314843125&q=rita+moreno+america&total=23&start=0&num=10&so=0&type=search&plindex=3>. Rec: Katz, "Ethnographic Method;" Lisa Weeden, "Memo for NSF."

II. Representation... Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, Intro. & Ch. 2. Rec: LaRaja, Ray, "Candidate Emergence in State Legislative Elections: Does Public Funding Make a Difference?" APSA Paper, 2007, Chicago; Disch, "Rethinking Re-presentation;" Legislature, Reapportionment, Deviation..." , Harvard Law Review (1969), <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0017-811X%28196906%2982%3A8%3C1779%3ALRDFSP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-1>; www.plato.stanford.edu/entries/political-representation/

III. Ethnographic Difference: The Regions of Massachusetts ... *The Perfect Storm* (the book); Pitkin, *Representation* (Ch. 3-4); Bouton, *Foul Ball* Rec: Lao-Montes, "Puerto Rican-ness," *The Perfect Storm* (the movie); Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "In the Mirror" plus something on Brazilians in MA. [The Berkshires; Springfield and Holyoke; Cambridge and the Suburbs; Central Mass and the Blackstone Valley; The Southeast and Cape Cod; The Northeast; Boston]

IV. Elections, Appointment and Influence... Dennis Thompson, "Just Elections"; LaRaja, "Candidate Emergence;" Pitkin, *Representation* (Ch. 5); Davidson review of Richard Fenno, *Home Style*; Rec: Carol Hardy-Fanta, "Latinos in Mass." [Rather than focusing on campaigns in the traditional sense and polls the focus will be on centers of power...family planning for Ellen Story, environmental activism for Rebecca Lisi, the bar for Jennifer Boyle's father, etc. These "places" will parallel the divide between elections and the places where we live.]

V. The State House and Legislation (Rules and Procedures, The Leadership, The Budget, Districting)... Pitkin, *Representation* (Ch. 6-7); <http://www.mass.gov/legis>; [nesl.edu/research; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Massachusetts_ General_Court](http://nesl.edu/research/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts_General_Court); *The Departed* (the Movie); The Australian Parliament (www.aph.gov.au). Rec: Anne Galloway, "Design in the Parliament of Things"; Kim Dovey, Chapter on Parliament.

VI. Landscapes and Power... Pitkin, *Representation* (Ch. 8); Yanow, "Reading Organization-Scapes." Rec: Edward W. Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," in W.J.T. Mitchell, Ed, *Landcape and Power* (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1994); Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York, 1995). [Possibly consider other institutions here The SJC, The Governor, Administration]

VII. Political Geography. Pitkin, *Representation* (Ch. 9); Brigham, "All the Way to the Supreme Court;" Oldenberg, *Great Good Place* Rec: Davila, *Barrio Dreams* (1st half); Michael Taussig, "The Beach (A Fantasy)," in Mitchell. [The place of governing and the levels of government: Municipal, Federal, International]

VIII. Work, Liberation and Joy. Pitkin, *Representation* (Ch. 10); G. William Domhoff; Rec: Davila, *Barrio Dreams* (2nd half); DeTocqueville, *Democracy in America*. [Education, Achievement, and Honor]

Organization and Grading:

Our classes are meant to feel somewhere between a seminar and a good conversation. We will come together to consider the questions scholars ask...what is the nature of power, how is culture carried on, what qualities do institutions have. Our materials will come from the academy, the state and also public life.

Each student will choose a district. Districts will be distributed in regions with roughly comparable cultures. Each student will be graded on participation, particularly representation of their districts in class, three papers and a final. The first "paper" should be a district map representing the district office and major economic and cultural dimensions of the district. It is due by the 1st week in Oct. The second paper is due the first class in November. In it you should describe a center of political power in your district. The last paper should be based on observation of your legislator in the district. It is due the Thursday after Thanksgiving. There will be a comprehensive final exam. The last two papers should be five pages and they should include a bibliography.

Every class period will begin with events/news of both the Districts and the Legislature. At least as we begin all news will be seen in these terms. That is we will look at the Governor or the EPA from the perspective of districts and the legislature.

Books Available for Purchase at the Textbook Annex:

Massachusetts, Rough Guide, Lonely Planet, or?

J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families* NY: Knopf, 1985.

Sebastian Junger *The Perfect Storm* (Harper Collins, 1999) (ISBN 0-06-097747-7) \$12

Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Univ. of California Press, 1972) (ISBN: 978-0-520-02156-3) \$23

Something about art, image and landscape; something like *Barrio Dreams*

Information: You will be expected to read either the *Boston Globe*, a local paper or watch 1/2 hour of news every day. You are expected to be good at finding information on the web as well as through the library's resources.

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Lillian Hellman, *Scoundrel Time* (1976).

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* On Reserve.

¹ With thanks to Alec Ewald from whose dissertation parts of this bibliography were taken.

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Appendix

Ethnographic Regions of the Bay State (<http://www.mass.gov/legis/sendis03.htm>)

The Berkshires

Alice's Restaurant, Arlo Guthrie

Springfield and Holyoke

Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*.

Cambridge and the Suburbs

Central Mass and the Blackstone Valley.

"As I stepped onto the platform at Worcester to deliver my Five Lectures upon Psychoanalysis it seemed like the realization of some incredible day-dream: psychoanalysis was no longer a product of delusion, it had become a valuable part of reality." Sigmund Freud

The Southeast and Cape Cod

I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions.

Lillian Hellman, *letter to House Un-American Activities Committee, May 19, 1952*

The Northeast

The Perfect Storm

Boston

"We weren't in America. We were in Boston." Kevin Weeks, when asked how the power, reach, and connections of the brothers Bulger could have been covered up, or ignored, in America.