California Indians
Anth 131CA

John R. Johnson
Adjunct Professor of Anthropology
Email: j johnson@sbnature2.org
Mondays & Wednesdays 12:30-1:45—HSSB 1173
Office Hours: Mon. 2:00 - 4:30 p.m., HSSB 2041
or by appt. at SB Museum of Natural History.
Telephone: 682-4711, ext. 139 (SBMNH)
http://www.anth.ucsb.edu/classes/anth131ca

Course Objectives

• Impart a basic knowledge of the variety of cultural patterns within California
• Provide an introduction to the anthropological literature and principal research questions pertaining to California Indians
• Impart an understanding of the California Indian experience since the coming of Europeans

California Indians

19th Century 21st Century

Course Description

• This course explores the diversity of California Indians societies, comparing patterns of economy, material culture, social organization, and ideology.
• Origins are traced based on the distributions of native languages, archaeological evidence, and genetic data.
• The changes wrought by colonization and subsequent nineteenth and twentieth century histories are explored through ethnohistoric sources.
• The course will emphasize indigenous peoples of central and southern California.

Course Texts

• Natural World of the California Indians
• California Indians and Their Environment
• Indians, Missionaries, and Merchants
• The Enduring Struggle
• Anth 131CA Course Reader (SB Printer.com in I. V.)

Course Requirements

• Regular attendance
• Homework as assigned
• Extra credit opportunities
• Field Trip, April 21
• Research Paper proposal due May 5
• Mid-Term Exam, May 7 (25% of grade)
• Research paper workshop with instructor
• Research paper, min. 8 pp., due June 2 (35% of grade)
• Final Exam, June 10, Noon-3 p.m. (40 % of grade)
Research Paper

- Select a topic pertaining to California Indians that is of special interest to you.
- Choose a minimum of four California Indian groups, geographically separated.
- Prepare short proposal (paragraph or two), due no later than Monday, May 5.
- Compare and contrast the aspect of culture that you are studying among your selected California Indian societies.
- Attend one of the workshops in May scheduled by instructor.
- Base your paper on references recommended by professor, including the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) Collection of World Cultures.
- Write up the results of your research, due no later than Monday, June 2.

Definition of the Word “Tribe”

- Society or Culture
- Sociopolitical Definition: a small-scale corporate group
- Legal Definition: a Federally recognized American Indian tribe

California Culture Area

- Culture Areas of North America
- Language Families

California Indian Cultural Characteristics

- High population density compared to other regions
- High linguistic diversity
- "Tribelet" political organization
- Hunter-gatherer and fishing economies prevailed, acorns were a staple
- Material culture included bead money economies, basketry