

**Teaching about the Nuer – from James Howe’s MIT Course: Anthropology 21A.100,  
Introduction to Anthropology, Fall 2004**

The following teaching material (reading list, lecture notes, and assignment) on the Nuer was downloaded from the MIT OpenCourseWare site of the undergraduate Anthropology course, 21A.100 Introduction to Anthropology, Fall 2004, <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/CourseHome/index.htm>. The course was developed and taught by James Howe, [http://web.mit.edu/anthropology/faculty\\_staff/howe/index.html](http://web.mit.edu/anthropology/faculty_staff/howe/index.html).

Please note the terms of use: <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/Global/terms-of-use.htm>

This course featured an extensive [reading list](#), [lecture notes](#) and detailed [course assignments](#). The sessions, notes and assignment on the Nuer are excerpted below. Professor Howe’s lecture notes and Nuer assignment are posted on UnderstandingSudan.org for archival purposes.

*Original Course Description:*

This class introduces students to the methods and perspectives of cultural anthropology. Readings emphasize case studies in very different settings (a nuclear weapons laboratory, a cattle-herding society of the Sudan, and a Jewish elder center in Los Angeles). Although some of the results and conclusions of anthropology will be discussed, emphasis will be on appreciating cultural difference and its implications, studying cultures and societies through long-term fieldwork, and most of all, learning to think analytically about other people's lives and our own.

The section on the Nuer comes in sessions 18-22 in this course. The lecture notes for those sessions were taken during class by Emily Kagan for OCW.

Session	Topic	MIT OpenCourseWare URL	UnderstandingSudan.org URL
18	Film: <i>The Nuer</i>		
19	<u>The Nuer of the Sudan (PDF)</u>	<a href="http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/D691052F-56E4-417E-B058-C8D62CDE9347/0/lecture_13_2.pdf">http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/D691052F-56E4-417E-B058-C8D62CDE9347/0/lecture_13_2.pdf</a>	<a href="http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf.HoweNuerlecture-1.pdf">http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf.HoweNuerlecture-1.pdf</a>
20	Film: <i>Strange Practices</i>		
21	<u>Making Sense of the Nuer (PDF)</u>	<a href="http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/FD08B2DD-53C5-4395-89E9-91069BA94617/0/lecture_14_2.pdf">http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/FD08B2DD-53C5-4395-89E9-91069BA94617/0/lecture_14_2.pdf</a>	<a href="http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf.HoweNuerlecture-2.pdf">http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf.HoweNuerlecture-2.pdf</a>
22	<u>Making More Sense of the Nuer (PDF)</u>	<a href="http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/F014B20E-5A61-41CC-8190-979182D92A48/0/lecture_15_2.pdf">http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/F014B20E-5A61-41CC-8190-979182D92A48/0/lecture_15_2.pdf</a>	<a href="http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf.HoweNuerlecture-3.pdf">http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf.HoweNuerlecture-3.pdf</a>
	<u>Final Nuer Assignment</u>	<a href="http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/F9025D24-CC2B-46A8-BF00-1C71F9391EDF/0/final_assignment.pdf">http://ocw.mit.edu/NR/rdonlyres/Anthropology/21A-100Fall-2004/F9025D24-CC2B-46A8-BF00-1C71F9391EDF/0/final_assignment.pdf</a>	<a href="http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf-Howe-Nuer-final_assignment.pdf">http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/sudan/MITProf-Howe-Nuer-final_assignment.pdf</a>

Readings for those sessions included:

18. Film: *The Nuer*.

Gardner and Harris for The Film Study Center at Harvard University. *The Nuer* (1971, 73 min.) (Available at <http://www.der.org/films/the-nuer.html>)

*Readings*

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940, pp. 7-50.

Hutchinson, Sharon. "Prologue," and "Orientation." In *Nuer Dilemmas: Coping with Money, War, and the State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. ISBN: 0520202848.

Delaney, Carol. *Investigating Culture: An Experiential Introduction to Anthropology*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2004, chapter 7. ISBN: 0631222375

19. The Nuer of the Sudan

Hutchinson, Sharon. *Nuer Dilemmas: Coping with Money, War, and the State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996, chapter 2-3. ISBN: 0520202848.

20. Film: *Strange Practices* [sic – This perhaps should be *Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard: Strange Beliefs*, part of the *Strangers Abroad* series Produced by Princeton, NJ, Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1990.

[http://www.films.com/id/3463/Sir\\_Edward\\_Evans-Pritchard\\_Strange\\_Beliefs.htm](http://www.films.com/id/3463/Sir_Edward_Evans-Pritchard_Strange_Beliefs.htm)

21. Making Sense of the Nuer

Hutchinson, Sharon. *Nuer Dilemmas: Coping with Money, War, and the State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996, chapter 4 to p. 209. ISBN: 0520202848.

Delaney, Carol. *Investigating Culture: An Experiential Introduction to Anthropology*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2004, chapter 5. ISBN: 0631222375

22. Making More Sense of the Nuer

Delaney, Carol. *Investigating Culture: An Experiential Introduction to Anthropology*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2004, chapter 9. ISBN: 0631222375

\*\*\*\*\*

Course Copyright Information

<http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/Global/terms-of-use.htm>

:

Creative Commons Deed

You are free:

- to copy, distribute, display, and perform the work
- to make derivative works

Under the following conditions:

1. Attribution. You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor.
  2. Noncommercial. You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
  3. Share Alike. If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under a license identical to this one.
- For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work.
  - Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder.