

**21A.100**  
**Written Assignment 5**  
**WHAT ARE THEY ARGUING ABOUT?**

**assignment due in class Tues 11/30/04**

For this assignment you are to choose one of four controversial topics in anthropology:

1. the reality and nature of cannibalism
2. food prohibitions in Leviticus against pork and other flesh
3. warfare among the Yanomami of Venezuela and Brazil
4. whether the explorer Captain Cook was killed because the Hawaiians mistook him for a god.

We have prepared a set of readings for each of these topics, which will be available on Stellar. The readings on each topic represent at least two opposed approaches or points of view, some of them taken from debates between prominent anthropologists. Issue no.4, which is required for anthropology majors, is the most demanding, and you should not choose it unless you feel confident about taking it on.

Choose one of the four selections and write an essay of four to five pages discussing and making sense of the issue. Consider what is at stake, why the issue matters (if it does), and the nature of the arguments. You need not cover everything involved if you have enough to say about one aspect of the argument. You may do extra research, but you are encouraged to spend your time on the selected readings instead. (Be very careful concerning sources on the internet, many of which are polemical and even obsessed and whacky.) You may come down on one side or the other, but you don't have to.

Keep in mind that the Nuer paper will be due a few days after this one, but you may consult your section leader about possible extensions.