ANTH 239 “African Modernities”

Discusison Question, Ferguson

**“ Introduction: Global Shadows—Africa and the World”**

1. What argument does Ferguson make about anthropologists and the role they have played and should play in discussions about “Africa”?
2. Why is Ferguson interested in how “Africa” is *constructed* and *imagined* in discourse and practice?
3. Ferguson writes that, “In most accounts, scholarly as well as popular, Africa is understood in relentlessly negative terms.” What does he have to say about such negativity?
4. Ferguson writes of “weak,” “collapsed,” and “predatory” states. In place of formal state institutions, there emerge alternative social forms and institutions. What are some of the alternative social forms and institutions that Ferguson calls our attention to, which have such significant presence throughout Africa?
5. What point is Ferguson getting at in the paragraph on page 21 “Perhaps this is why . . . “

**Globalizing Africa? Observations from an Inconvenient Continent**

1. Explain what Ferguson means when he says that with respect to globalization, " when it comes to globalization, Africa just doesn't fit the story line. It is an inconvenient case" (p.26).
2. What insight does Ferguson have on three elements usually identified as central aspects of "globalization":

►The question of culture (and the related question of alternative modernities)

►The issue of "flows" of private capital (especially foreign direct investment)

►The transformation of governance and the changing role of the nation-state

1. How do transnational wild-life conservation projects often exemplify the points that Ferguson has made?