
ANTHROPOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Fall, 2002

DR. RICHARD WILK

Anthropology E490/690

T, Th 9:30-10:45

Wilk's Office: 130 Student Building, phone 855-2555, email: WILKR

Office Hours: MW 11-12 AM or

Make and Appointment through Connie Adams at 855-1041

Class Schedule: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wanthro/490sced.htm>

Assignment 1: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wanthro/490as1.htm>

The vast majority of the world's people live in poverty, and lack access to many basic resources, services and rights. They face problems and challenges that are difficult for most Americans to understand. It is even harder for us to find ways of helping these people solve their economic, social and political problems. This course is about the ways that anthropology can contribute to both understanding basic human problems and to finding solutions for them. This is the broadest sense of the term "*development*" that you will hear so often in class. We will follow three steps in finding our way towards an effective engagement between anthropology and the pressing problems of the world.

Defining the problems of "underdevelopment." In this section of the course we will read some case studies, and discuss the nature of poverty. We will try to define for ourselves what we mean by "development," how cultural - relativism and applied anthropology can be reconciled, and what ethical issues need to be considered in pursuing development anthropology.

Finding a theoretical and anthropological context. Here we will discuss the theories and knowledge that inform development work. We will look at the history of development theory, with special attention to the political context and content of each model. We will also look at anthropological models of culture change, critiques of the concept of development, and the growth of the sub-discipline that is now recognizable as "development anthropology."

Critical application of knowledge to real problems. The last third of the semester will be spent in a practical case study using a simulation exercise in the book "*The Big Catch*." After this we will follow your individual interests into sub-areas of development anthropology in which you will become a 'resident expert.' (e.g. land tenure, appropriate technology, water resources, war and conflict, law, gender and development, education, tourism).

Applied Development Anthropology has already generated a whole library of reports, papers, journals and technical documents. It is a large and flourishing field that now employs almost as many anthropologists as teaching - institutions. We can't cover everything - or even a large fraction - in a single semester. Instead we will follow two strategies: what I would liken to call "opportunistic foraging" and "patch feeding." The first two thirds of the course will roam widely over the open plains of information, stopping briefly to forage on particularly important spots. The last part of the course will allow each student to find and exploit a patch of particularly tasty resources in more depth. Hopefully we will all get some of the advantages of both generalist and specialist strategies, and nobody will be intellectually starved or overfed.

Course Format and Requirements

The first and last thirds of the course will consist mostly of discussion of the readings and short in-class presentations

by students, relating to their own research and writing. Class discussions will sometimes be quite structured - working on a particular list of questions or readings - but other times we will range more freely. Students will often be assigned a particular paper or reading to summarize as part of the class discussion.

The middle third of the semester will look more like a normal lecture class, though discussion will always be part of the process. Lectures will have only a tenuous relationship to some of your reading during this part of the class; it is your responsibility to draw the links between what you hear from me, and what you read in the books and reader.

In the last section of the class, students take the lead in our simulation study, and then in presenting the results of their own research into a sub-area of applied anthropology.

Grades in the class will be based on the following:

Undergraduates:

2 5-page essays on topics to be assigned.

2 5-page, or 1 10-page research paper. You will have choices about this. You can work in the class community-based action research project and write one paper, or you can write two shorter papers based on library research.

1 or 2 classroom presentations based on papers (depends on the size of the class).

Participation in classroom discussion - which means keeping up with the reading.

Graduates:

2 5-page essays on topics to be assigned.

2 10-page, or 1 20-page research paper, as above.

2 classroom presentations based on papers.

Participation in classroom discussion - which means keeping up with the reading.

The percentage breakdown goes like this:

Classroom participation.....	10%
Oral presentations.....	30%
Papers.....	60%

Texts

What can I tell you? There is just no other way to get information and understand the scope of development anthropology. You have to read, read and read. I have winnowed through literally hundreds of books and articles trying to find the fewest that say the most in the best way....but we still end up with a long list.

There are five required texts, and a thin Xeroxed reader - which is on reserve in the geography library in the basement of the Student building.

Rapley, John 2002 *Understanding Development*. Lynne Rienner.

Escobar, A. 1994 *Encountering Development*. Princeton University Press.

Klitgaard, R. 1990 *Tropical Gangsters*. Basic Books.

Chapin, M. and B. Threlkeld 2001 *Indigenous Landscapes*. Native Lands.

Robertson, A. F. 1995 *The Big Catch*. Westview Press.

A short view of the professional world:

This website provides free access to scores of new job vacancies in the Environment and International Development sector for all levels of professionals: www.DevNetJobs.org

The Fine Print

I am a practicing applied anthropologist - this course covers a topic with which I have a deep relationship and a personal interest. If there are things that you want to know more about that we do not cover in class, please feel free to come in and see me. I will probably tell you more than you want to know about it. I am always happy to talk over your interests and work with you, though given my schedule I may have to make an appointment. I encourage all students in the class to use email to communicate with me on all class matters.

University rules require me to append the following warning: all cases of cheating and dishonesty or plagiarism will be treated according to the rules laid out in the academic handbook and the College Bulletin. I require each of you to attend class and to turn in your own independent work in order to pass this course. You are always encouraged to consult with each other and discuss your work, but unless I specify a group project, all written work must be entirely your own product. Plagiarism is the copying of others' work without attribution and clear references; it will be punished with a failing grade in the class at the minimum.

Incompletes have sometimes been a problem in this class because of the heavy work and reading load and a tight schedule. My general policy is to discourage all incompletes except in cases of medical disability or family crisis. The fact that you have work for other classes is not a reason to ask for an incomplete in this one. If you do want an incomplete, you must ask for it in advance. Late papers will lose the equivalent of one full grade (10points out of a hundred) for every week they are overdue. If you let me know in advance I will strive to reschedule an oral presentation that you miss, but only within reasonable limits.

[RETURN TO COURSE PAGE](#) | [RETURN TO WILK'S HOME PAGE](#)