

The Anthropology of Development
Anthropology 3501.10
Fall 2014

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3.45-5.00 pm
Funger Hall 221 (Tuesdays) & Corcoran Hall 106 (Thursdays)

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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 1-3 pm

This course examines the theoretical and practical implications of the process of development as a planned intervention into social action. Our readings and discussions are centered on the following questions about development and the role it plays in contemporary life, both among Northern aid-giving states and Southern targets of development.

- *What is the relationship between development practices and state building?*
- *What are the historical origins of these practices?*
- *What are the theoretical assumptions embedded within development?*
- *What role do market forces have within development and how do these reflect assumptions about human motivation, interests, and action?*
- *What constitutes 'sustainable' development?*

At the end of this course you should be able to:

- *Understand the historical basis of contemporary international development;*
- *Articulate how development practices have changed over time;*
- *Explain the key concepts and assumptions that constitute an anthropological approach to development, and how these may differ from the assumptions of development practitioners and other disciplines;*
- *Understand key terms including neoliberalism, discourse, agency, governmentality, sustainability, and modernity;*
- *Reflect on the meanings of sustainability in the context of development interventions, and*
- *Demonstrate an awareness of key debates within anthropology about the efficacy of various development approaches including state, NGO and missionary-directed projects.*

Our discussions and readings are organized around three themes:

1. The history of development as an idea, ideology, and practice linked to and informed by the political project of the nation-state, the nation-state's emergence as the

globally predominant form of political organization, and widely-held assumptions about historical progress that are rooted in colonialism.

2. The rhetoric and practice of micro-credit as an innovative form of development, and how this relates to neoliberal concepts of self-development.
3. The meaning and implications of a growing emphasis on sustainability within development. We will study what constitutes sustainable development, how this term is used among development practitioners, and the extent to which it challenges the dominant discursive assumptions within development.

Required Texts:

- Bornstein, Erica. *The Spirit of Development: Protestant NGOs, Morality, and Economics in Zimbabwe*. Stanford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 9780804753364
- Crate, Susan Alexandra. *Cows, Kin, and Globalization: An Ethnography of Sustainability*. Alta Mira Press, 2006. ISBN: 9780759107403
- Crewe, Emma and Elizabeth Harrison, *Whose Development? An Ethnography of Aid*. New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN: 9781856496063
- Ferguson, James. *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development", Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. University of Minnesota Press, 1994. ISBN: 9780816624379
- Rahman, Aminur. *Women and Microcredit in Rural Bangladesh: An Anthropological Study of Grameen Bank Lending*. Westview Press, 2001. ISBN: 9780813339306
- Schertz, China. *Having People, Having Heart: Charity, Sustainable Development, and Problems of Dependence in Central Uganda*. University of Chicago, 2014. ISBN: 9780226119670.
- Scott, James. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press, 1998. ISBN: 9780300078152.
- Vivianco, Luis. *Green Encounters: Shaping and Contesting Environmentalism in Costa Rica*. New York: Berghahn Press, 2006. ISBN: 9781845455040.

In addition, the following articles are available on Blackboard:

- Elyachar, Julia. *Markets of Dispossession: Economic Development, NGOs, and the State in Cairo*. Duke University Press, 2005 [excerpts].

- Escobar, Arturo. "The Invention of Development". *Current History* 98 (November 1999), 382-386.
- Kholas, Ashild. "Degradation Discourse and Green Governmentality in the Xilinguole Grasslands of Inner Mongolia." *Development & Change* 45:2 (2014), 308-328.
- Luke, Timothy. "Environmentality as Green Governmentality" in Eric Darier (ed.), *Discourses of the Environment*. Blackwell Publishers, 1999, 121-151.
- Rostow, W.W. "The Stages of Economic Growth". *The Economic History Review*. 12:1 (1959), 1-16.
- Varman, Roohit & Janeen Costa. "Embedded Markets, Communities, and the Invisible Hand of Social Norms". *Journal of Macro-marketing* 28 (2008), 141-158.
- Yeh, Emily. "Green Governmentality and Pastoralism in Western China: 'Converting Pastures to Grasslands.'" *Nomadic Peoples* 9:1/2 (2005), 9-30

Evaluation Criteria

Your grade for this course will be based on two take-home essay examinations, a development review, and participation, preparation & attendance. Each of the exam essays will count for 25%. For each essay, you will receive the guiding question one week in advance, along with a grading rubric. Each of these essays will be 5-7 double-spaced pages. A paper submitted one academic day after the due date loses one grade. A paper submitted two academic days after the due date loses two grades. No papers will be accepted after this date.

Paper due dates: September 25th and November 13th

Your final assignment is an anthropologically focused review of a development question, issue or theme in one society. This final paper will be approximately seven pages, be based on at least five outside anthropological sources, and specifically address the following:

1. What has been done in this place in the name of the development issue you have chosen?
2. How has what has been done shifted over time?
3. What is the current state of this development issue in this place?

Time-Line & Due Dates:

1. Initial Topic: October 23rd
2. Focused Review Question: November 11th
3. Final Paper: Official Examination Date

Paper extensions: in order to accommodate your needs, I make sure you have a full week to write each essay. Short of a documented medical emergency, no paper extensions are possible.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The GW Code of Academic Integrity states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM: Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300: The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance for personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include crisis and emergency mental health consultations, confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals:

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices>

SECURITY: In case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

Course Outline

Part I: The Discourse of Development

Week I: What do we mean by the word, ‘development’?

8/26: Walter Rostow, “The Stages of Economic Growth”; Arturo Escobar, “The Invention of Development” [Blackboard]

8/28: Crewe & Harrison, 1-24.

Week II: Development and the Nation-State

9/2: James Scott, *Seeing like a State*, Part I (1-84)

9/4: Scott, *Seeing like a State*, Part II (85-146)

Week III: Development and the Social Engineering of Life

9/9: Scott, *Seeing like a State*, Part IV & Conclusion (307-358)

9/11: Crewe & Harrison, *Whose Development?* 25-112

Week IV: Development thru Self-Development: The Grameen Bank Model

9/16: "Sixteen Decisions" (Grameen Bank documentary)

9/18: Rahman, *Women and Microcredit in Rural Bangladesh* (all). GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Stephen Lubkemann.

Week V: Culture & Development

9/23: Crewe & Harrison, *Whose Development?* 113-154

9/25: **NO CLASS; work on paper**

Week VI: Development as a Political Project

9/30: Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, 1-134

10/2: Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, 135-193

Week VII: Development as an Apolitical Project?

10/7: Ferguson, 194-227

10/9: Ferguson, 251-288

Week VIII: The Cultural Roots of Market Action

10/14: Elyachar, *Markets of Dispossession*, Introduction (Blackboard)

10/16: Varman & Costa, "Markets, Communities, and the Invisible Hand of Social Norms" (Blackboard)

Part II: Sustainability and Development

Week IX: Cultivating Development

10/21: Bornstein, *The Spirit of Development*, Chapters 1-3

10/23: Bornstein, Chapters 4-6

Week X: Charity and Sustainability

10/28: Schertz, *Having People, Having Heart*, Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-97)

10/30: Schertz, *Having People, Having Heart*, Chapters 5-Conclusion (pp. 99-141)

Week XI: Unpacking Sustainability

11/4: Susan Crate, *Cows, Kin, and Globalization*, Chapters 1 & 2

11/6: *Crate, Cows, Kin and Globalization*, Chapters 3 & 4

Week XII: Environmentalism, Development, & Indigenous Peoples

11/11: *Crate*, Chapters 5, 7 & Epilogue

11/13: **NO CLASS; Paper II due**

Week XIII: Green Governmentality and Sustainability

11/18: Timothy Luke, "Environmentality as Green Governmentality" in Eric Darier (ed.), *Discourses of the Environment* [Blackboard]

11/20: Emily Yeh, "Green Governmentality and Pastoralism in Western China: 'Converting Pastures to Grasslands.'" [Blackboard]

Week XIV: Conservation, Development, or both?

11/25: Luis Vivianco, *Green Encounters*, Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-104)

11/27: Thanksgiving Break

Week XV: Conservation & Development, continued

12/2: Vivianco, *Green Encounters*, Chapters 5-8 (pp. 105-190)

12/4: Final Thoughts.

Week XIII: Cows, Kin & Globalization, Chapters 5, 7 & Epilogue

Viliui Sakha communities have adapted to material insecurities caused by the Soviet Union collapse. How? Through what Crate calls a 'cows and kin' system that has required residents to reconstitute the thick local production knowledge of their elders, relearn local ecological knowledge and utilize kin links – in other words, to turn to *metis* in the wake of the failure of *techne*, to use Scott's terms.

BUT: These are not independent subsistence communities.

1. In what ways are residents fundamentally tied to the state and global market structures?
2. What constitutes 'the state' in the post-SU era? How many layers does this have?
3. During the Soviet era, particularly after WW II, how were residents of this river basin directly affected by state efforts to extract diamonds?
4. What were the direct and indirect effects on local communities as a result of the construction of the Viliui Hydro Station (GES)?
5. What were the specific effects on residents of the Chona Valley and on the Sholonginskii reindeer herders?
6. How has the post-Soviet government addressed environmental questions in this region? What happened to SAPI? How does Vlad Putin fit into this story?
7. Describe the story of the Viliui Committee, which was an authentically-local NGO that emerged in 1989 and focused on environmental concerns.
8. What does this NGO story illustrate about the limits of such organizations?
9. Near the end of Chapter 5, Crate asserts that local BGOs succeed when they link a "strong urban base" with ties to international NGOs (214). She expands this to include "local leadership" and both knowledge about and "power to enforce" local legislation (217). Based on what Bornstein and Schertz argued, what say you?
10. Chapter 7 of this book discusses a focus group project conducted by Crate and her husband on the topic of sustainability. How do participants define the concept of 'sustainability'?
11. How do middle-aged, elderly, and youth participants in these focus groups differ in their opinions, if they do so?
12. What are the most pressing development issues in these communities from the perspective of members to whom Crate speaks?

FINAL FEW WEEKS OF CLASS

11/20: Luis Vivanco, *Green Encounters*, Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-80)

11/25: 7: Luis Vivanco, *Green Encounters*, Chapters 4-6 (pp. 81- 152)

11/27: Thanksgiving Break

12/2: Vivianco, *Green Encounters*, Part III (pp. 153-190)

12/4: Timothy Luke, "Environmentality as Green Governmentality" in Eric Darier (ed.), *Discourses of the Environment* [Blackboard]

FINAL PAPER DUE: December 16th at 4 pm; please submit a printed copy to 2110 G Street NW or Suite 601, 1957 E Street NW.