Indigenous Peoples and the Ethics of Development, ANTY 326(E) Spring 2021

Class location: Interdisciplinary Science Building Room 110. Meeting time, Mondays 2:00 to 5:00 pm

Instructor: Neyooxet Greymorning

“The hypothetical and theoretical can be debated for a millennia, but until supported by hard data of fact or practice each remain static with nothing proven.”

N. Greymorning 2019

For centuries, Indigenous peoples have been studied, assessed and held to standards, values and moral codes set by non-Indigenous peoples. This course provides an intensive introduction to the impact of development upon Indigenous peoples. The first part of the course will provide an overview of the three main approaches to general normative ethics in the western tradition: consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics. Through selections from major writers in each tradition (Mill, Kant, and Aristotle), students will gain an understanding of the basic concepts that structure these theories (the good, the right, and virtue) and differences among them is the good defined prior to the right, as consequentialism maintains, or is the right prior to the good as deontologists hold? Is the unit of ethical analysis the individual act as deontologists assume, or a rule as espoused by utilitarianism, or the character as virtue ethics maintains? Overall, is ethical behavior a matter of the good consequences produced, the intention from which the action is done, or who one is and how one lives one's life, more generally? The second and main part of the course will apply these different approaches to ethical problems arising in the context of Indigenous peoples and development. As a starting point, Ethics, is a discipline concerned with what is morally good and bad, right and wrong. The term can also be applied to any system or theory of moral values or principles. The field of ethics (or moral philosophy) involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior. Philosophers today usually divide ethical theories into three general subject areas: metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. Within the scope of these conceptual fields, through readings, class lectures and discussions 1) students will come to an understanding of Normative ethics, a branch of ethics that investigates questions that arise when considering how from a moral perspective one ought to act, based on principles of whether an action is right or wrong, or from a Native cultural perspective of whether an action is proper or improper. 2) Students will further examine historical actions, under a rubric of applied ethics, in order to gain an understanding of how various actions of individuals and governments have either conformed or deviated from these principles. 3) Students will explore political, social and economic conditions that challenge Indigenous peoples when confronted by developers and development, such as the North Dakota Pipeline, along with ethical underpinnings that come with development. 4) Class lectures and discussions will also explore questions that pertain to whether developers who position their projects as being “right” for the betterment or good of mankind take into consideration the “rightness” of cultural damage that development has historically caused Indigenous peoples, and whether such projects necessarily encompass the betterment of Indigenous people as being a part of mankind. 5) By the end of the semester students should better understand why Indigenous peoples have stood in protest, as happened in North Dakota, against what is often seen as adhering to blind ideals of development for development’s sake.
Indigenous Peoples and the Ethics of Development

Tentative Class Guideline

Instructor: Neyooxet Greymorning  
Email: neyooxet.greymorning@msu.montana.edu  
Class time: Mon 2:00 to 5:00 pm  
Class Location: Interdisciplinary Science Building room 110  
Office: Social Science Building, room 221  
Office Phone: 243-6381  
Office Hours: Tuesday: 10:00 – 12:00  
Alternate office hours Thurs. by Appointment only 1 - 2:30 pm

I. Required readings for this course will be drawn from the following resources: Tribal Peoples & Development Issues: A Global Overview by John Bodley, Mayfield publishing; Breaking the Iron Bonds, Indian Control of Energy Development by Marjane Amber, University Press of Kansas; Progress Can Kill, How Imposed Development Destroys the Health of Tribal Peoples, a Survival International Publication, Normative Ethics and Metaethics, for the Routledge Handbook to Metaethics, edited by David Plunkett and Tristram McPherson, and Paradigm Wars: Indigenous Peoples’ Resistance to Globalization, Jerry Mander and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Sierra Club Books.

II. The course is designed to acquaint students with issues and related ethical questions of the impact that industrialization and development has had on Indigenous peoples. Because this is an anthropology class, students will be introduced to the topic by reading some of the classical anthropological research and debates that were raised in select time periods and geographic regions.

III. Assessments will be based on assigned readings, lectures, and videos. It is the student’s responsibility to keep up with the assigned readings, lectures and videos if they wish to maximize their best potential for learning and test grades in this course. Students should assume that where lecture material and information from the text cross, such information will most likely show up on exams. Lectures will be presented on the premise that students have taken the initiative to read the assigned material and will bring to class an inquisitiveness and level of participation that will spark discussions.

IV. Graded Assessments:

A. First Reading Assignment Assessment (40 minutes)  
This is to assess whether assignments have been read and will consist of 5 short answers and 5 Identifications  
worth 35 pts. (17.5%)

B. Second Reading Assignment Assessment (60 minutes)  
This will consist of 23 multiple-choice questions (1 pt. ea.) and 9 Identifications (3 points ea.)  
worth 50 pts. (25%)

C. Third Reading Assignment Assessment (35 minutes)  
This will consist of 9 multiple-choice questions, 3 ID questions (2 pts. ea.) and a short answer question (5 points)  
worth 20 pts. (10%)

D. Group Facilitated Discussions (GFD)  
Each group of 3 students will provide a summary and assessment of a video and the assigned section of readings. The objective of the group is to research beyond the assigned material and present students with questions designed to generate discussion on underlying ethical issues, as well as answer questions. It will be the responsibility of all groups and members to obtain and preview the videos they will be leading discussions on a week in advance of their discussion so they will be better prepared to discuss their topics. Each group will have 40-60 minutes for discussions. With all groups I have the option of adding information to the presentation if deemed necessary. The group’s grade could be lowered if this occurs too often.

[D2. Term Summary. Students not assigned to a group facilitated discussion will write a 3-page essay summarizing what was learned from class lectures, videos, readings and discussions. This is worth the same as the GFD]

E. Final Research Paper  
The final research paper must fall between 2,000 - 2,200 words in length and discuss a development issue that pertains to a group/s of Indigenous people and how these people have either been positively or negatively impacted. You must also elaborate what aspect of either metaethics, normative ethics, or applied ethics is relevant to the development issue and how the specific tribe or tribes of Indigenous peoples were ethically impacted. Failure to write on a topic that involves an Indigenous people, an ethical issue and development will result in a failed final paper. The paper must be properly cited/quoted, and referenced, with a properly written and formatted bibliography, or works referenced or cited section of no less than 6 references from six different sources, i.e. books, journals, articles, of which only 2 can be from the internet. Papers not adhering to the word length, bibliography and reference criteria will result in a lower grade. Papers must include 1) an introduction stating the paper's focus and intent, 2) the main body supporting the focus and intent, and 3) concluding summary remarks or comments and must be emailed and received on or before Sunday April 18th before 4 pm.

Any final paper turned in after the due date and time will have 2 points deducted for each day that it is late.

V. Grading: This course can only be taken for a traditional grade, and cannot be taken for a grade of pass/ no pass.  
A = 181 – 200  
B = 161 - 180  
C = 141 - 160  
D = 129 – 140  
F = 0 - 128

Academic Honesty: Under no circumstances should students represent another person's work or ideas as their own. To do this is to plagiarize and it is an intolerable offense in the academic community. Students who plagiarize will fail the assignment, and may fail the course. Students should also be advised that they should not submit the same paper for more than one course. This is a class that deals with Ethics and it is your responsibility to conduct yourself in an ethical manner, which includes doing the work.
Indigenous Peoples and the Ethics of Development

WEEK 1, January 11: Overview and Class Perspective
Around the time of Spanish contact with Indigenous people in the New World Bartolome de las Casas, considered among the first Human Rights activist, argued about the unethical practices of the Spanish toward Indigenous people: Tell me by what right of justice do you hold these Indians in such a cruel and horrible servitude? On what authority have you waged such detestable wars against these people who dealt quietly and peacefully on their own lands? … Why do you keep them so oppressed and exhausted, without giving them enough to eat or curing them of the sicknesses they incur from the excessive labor you give them, and they die, or rather you kill them, in order to extract and acquire gold every day?

As a result of no class on Jan 18, there will be a full class on Jan 11. Students should be prepared to discuss Mark Schroeder’s 2015 article from Routledge press on Normative and Metaethics, along with the ideas of Bartolome de las Casas (read up on him on the Internet).

3:15 – 4:15, Video screening, Cree Hunters of the Mistassini
This first class will view Cree Hunters of the Mistassini which will provide a visual extension of the first two chapter’s readings of Sahlin’s “Notes on the Original Affluent Society,” and Woodburn and Jelliffe’s Children of the Hazda Hunters in order to gain an understanding of how Indians lived during early years of contact. Students should be prepared to discuss the ideas of Bartolome de las Casas (search him out on the Internet) and what you think the reaction of any European country would be, from a philosophical and ethical standpoint, were its citizens treated in the manner that the Spanish were treating Indians in the New World.

Discussion Questions: 1) What was the general attitude of Europeans about Indians when discovered? 2) Historically how were Indigenous peoples treated when contacted by Europeans? 3) How was this justified? 4) What do you think the reaction of any European country would be, from an ethical standpoint of right or wrong, were its citizens treated in a manner comparable to how the Spanish had treated Indians in the New World? 5) What can be said about Bartolome’s perspective? 6) How were Indians impacted by these first encounters? 7) How does this all fit within the constructs of Schroeder’s article?

WEEK 2, January 18: MLK Day No Class

WEEK 3, January 25: Invasion and Pacification in the Name of Science
Read: Tribal Peoples & Development Issues, sections 2, 3, & 5 (24 pages)
This class will examine the actions, philosophy and tools of colonization to assess its impact on Indigenous Peoples of India and Melanesia and where this fits within a scope of such actions being right or wrong against a concept of what European scholars speak of as normative ethics.

Discussion Questions: 1) What were some of the underlying psychological impacts on the people? 2) How did some of these impacts manifest themselves physically with the people? 3) What were some of the rationales given as reasons for a decrease in the Native’s population? 4) What are you thoughts about the level of accuracy of such rationales? 5) From a normative ethical standpoint, is there any philosophical right a people or government can claim that would justify acts of ethnocide? Whether yes or no, explain why. 6) Why do you think the international community has made it so difficult to lay claims of genocide against a country or government? (see “The U S Genocide…” https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1199196.shtml ) and https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/1091

WEEK 4, February 1: Ethical Impacts of Western Civilization
Read: Tribal Peoples & Development Issues, Sections 6, (Indian Protection Service) 8 (The Effect on the Naga Tribes of Assam of Their Contact with Western Civilization) & 9 (The Psychological Factor in the Depopulation of Melanesia) (26 pages)
2:30 – 3:30 pm Video Screening: Act of War: The Overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation (60 min)
3:45pm. C. Group 1 facilitated discussion of video + readings

John Locke, considered by some as one of the most influential political philosophers of the modern age, and the father of liberalism, claimed men are free and equal against claims that God had made all people naturally subject to a monarch. Week three’s class will look at how the sons of missionaries established plantations, one of which was the Dole plantation, in a manner that disenfranchised Native Hawaiians of land. Then when the Queen attempted to establish a new constitution that would protect Native Hawaiians, the committee of safety, comprised of 13 foreigners, after identifying themselves as the new government of Hawaii, locked up the Queen on charges of treason against the Nation of Hawaii. When President Cleveland reversed this and ordered the Queen’s released the Committee of Safety declared war on the United States, without impunity, which eventually paved the way for Hawaii being annexed to the United States. Couched within moral concepts of right and wrong behavior are some questions to consider: 1) Did Hawaiians benefit from this take over? 2) What are you thoughts about the Queen being charged with treason and locked up for putting a new constitution before her constituency? 3) How do the actions and behavior of the Committee of Safety relate to chapters 8 and 9 of this week’s readings? 4) How would you weigh their actions to John Locke’s beliefs (find him on the Internet), such as people have rights to life, liberty, and property that have a foundation independent of the laws of any particular society, and President Cleveland’s claim that the US committed an Act of War against a friendly nation?
Indigenous Peoples and the Ethics of Development
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WEEK 5, February 8: Indigenous Peoples and the Insurgence of Colonialism

Read: Tribal Peoples & Development Issues, Sections 13-15 (16 pages)
3:10-3:25 Jammin in a Cram. Reading Assignment Assessment A over materials from Jan 11, 25, & Feb 1

This week’s class will examine a question of ethics and whether the work of missionaries helps or destroys Native cultures relative to Don Richardson’s letter “Do Missionaries Destroy Cultures?” In Richard’s view missionary intervention, even with the most isolated tribes, is justified because it will soften their inevitable transition to civilization and ensure their physical survival. With this as his argument: How then does this hold up to a human basic right of choice when a belief in some nebulous inevitability is forced on another culture in a manner that effectively eliminates choice as an option?

WEEK 6, February 15: Presidents Day No Class

WEEK 7, Feb. 22: Comments on the Ethics and Ethnoidal Impact and Response to Development
Read: Tribal Peoples & Development Issues, Sections 17, 25 & 27 (35 pages)
2:05 – 3:35 VIDEO: James Bay II (92 min)
3:45pm. C. Group 2, facilitated discussion of video topic and readings

WEEK 8, March 1: The Impact of Economic Development & Resource Exploitation
Read: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/09/05/canada-deforestation-worst-in-world_n_5773142.html
“Canada Largest Contributor To Deforestation Worldwide: Study”
2:05 – 3:35 VIDEO: Blockade (90 min)
3:45pm. C. Group 3, facilitated discussion of video topic & readings

In continuing from last week’s discussion on what is perceived as the inevitability of progress, this week’s class will view a film documentary of a small group of First Nations Canadians who made a choice to block the inevitability of corporate development’s progress that confronted them.

WEEK 9, March 8: Native Sovereignty and Self-government
Read: Chapter 7 in Paradigm Wars (10 pages)
Read: Tribal Peoples & Development Issues, Sections 20 (14 pages) + Sections 26 (10 pages)

The required readings for this week’s class will examine “Miskito and Kuna Struggle for Nation Autonomy” and the question, at what point does colonizing an independent people become ethically correct? The second reading Melanesian Resistance to Ecocide and Ethnocide: “Transitional Mining Projects and the Fourth World on the Island of New Guinea.” will examine how a large corporation caused dangerous chemical pollution and ecocide to a people in a remote corner of the world largely unnoticed and hence unquestioned, even when the Indigenous peoples mounted armed resistance, which should also generate comparable discussion of the risk raised by NODAPL and whether in light of such risks whether this poses any ethical issue.

3:10-3:25 Jammin in a Cram. Reading Assignment Assessment B on material up to and including March 1

WEEK 10, March 15: The Ethics of Patenting Human Genes
Read PARADIGM WARS Chapter 8 & 9
2:35 – 3:30, VIDEO: Gene Hunters (52 min)
3:45pm. C. Group 4 facilitated discussion of readings & video

During the 1990s an American pharmaceutical company gained patent rights to the genetic make up of an Aboriginal man in New Guinea, In the latter part of the same decade, a Seattle businessman discovered that his genetic makeup was patented by his family Doctor. Bringing the case to court it was ruled that once these cells left his body he could no longer claim ownership over them. This week’s discussions will look at this area of what has been labeled the new “colonial invasion” and what that has brought about not just for Indigenous people but for the rest of humankind.

Questions to consider: 1) In the patenting of a new Guinea man’s genetic make-up, does the patent holding pharmaceutical company legally own the father’s offspring as a result of a company claiming ownership over the genetic make-up of the father? 2) With regard to Washington’s supreme court ruling over the ownership of patented human cells, what could this ruling mean regarding cells being gestated and then exiting a women through C-section by a doctor? 3) How are these issues not seen as basic ethical issues such that a court can only see the underlying economic impact to a company?
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WEEK 11, March 22:

Read
BREAKING THE IRON BONDS Chapter 5 (27 pages)

2:30 – 3:30, VIDEO: Indian Country: Resource Management (60 min)

3:45pm.

C. Group 5, facilitated discussion of video and readings

E. Final Research Paper must be emailed and received by me no later than 4 pm, Thursday, April 18

In 1988, during a meeting in Russia, President Ronald Reagan responded to a Soviet student’s question about American Indians, by saying he, the President, could not understand what their complaints could be, given that the American people had humorized the Indians by providing them with reservations where their primitive lifestyle was to blame for their poverty.” [Breaking the Iron Bonds, Marjane Ambler page 3]. Likewise, there are certain academics that believe there is no ethical substance to the subject matter of this class nor to how Indigenous people have and are still treated. This week’s class will examine through student discussion both what underlies such a perspective and the accuracy of it.

WEEK 12, March 29

Read
PARADIGM WARS, Chapter 6 (5 pages), & BREAKING THE IRON BONDS Chapter 7 (30 pages)

2:15 – 3:35, VIDEO: NOHO HEWA (2008; 81 min)

3:50pm.

C. Group 6, facilitated discussion of readings & video

The award-winning film Noho Hewa provides a contemporary look at Hawaiian people, politics and resistance to their systematic erasure. It is a raw and unscripted story that makes critical links between seemingly unrelated industries and is told from the perspective of Hawaiians.

“Noho Hewa: The Wrongful Occupation of Hawai’i” is an intense, exceptional, and important film that shows settler colonialism and the destructive effects on the Kanaka Maoli people, their land, and their way of life. – Lloyd L. Lee (Navajo), author, editor, assistant professor at University of New Mexico (“Dine Perspectives: Reclaiming Navajo Thought,” University of Arizona Press)

Deftly combining a powerful critique of militarism, environmental degradation, tourism and cultural annihilation, “Noho Hewa” should be required viewing at every school, university, and military academy – Gayatri Gopinath, professor at New York University

“In 1898, the U.S. took formal control of Hawai‘i against the wishes of the Hawaiian people. This is the main reason Hawaiians today speak of independence from the U.S. The takeover was literally illegal under international law, and under U.S. law. No treaty of annexation took place, so Hawaii was never annexed to the U.S. It has simply been occupied since 1898. Thus there is this paper trail, and a strong legal and moral argument for de-occupation and reinstatement of Hawai‘i as an independent country. We can say out loud that this is an illegal occupation, but because we are Hawaiian, and America and the rest of the world goes along with the bullshit narrative of this place… nobody cares about the truth. Or rather only a small minority cares about the truth of this place. The United Nations stood by in 1959 and allowed the fraudulent “statehood” vote that made Hawai‘i the “50th state” and the U.N. has never done anything to right this wrong… we may be correct to say we have the right to independence, but we are Hawaiian and America sees our country as a sacrifice zone and the nations of the world agree. So our narrative as non-white people means nothing to Americans.” (Simba Russeau)

Reminder! The final paper must be emailed and received on or before Thursday April 18th by 4 pm.

Students that did not facilitate a class discussion must write and email a term summary paper by Sunday April 21st by 4 pm.

WEEK 13, April 5:

Read
BREAKING THE IRON BONDS Chapter 9 (35 pages)

This class will examine the risks of becoming a major factor with tribes managing the development of their own resources

3:10-3:25 Jammin in a Cram. Reading Assignment Assessment C on material from Feb. 22, Mar. 8, Mar. 15, Mar 22, & Mar. 29
Indigenous Peoples and the Ethics of Development
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WEEK 14, April 12: Land, Health, The Sacred & The Profane
READ PARADIGM WARS, Chapter 14 (6 pages) & PROGRESS CAN KILL, Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-26)
3:00 – VIDEO: Marathon For Justice (44 min)
4:15pm C. Group 7, facilitated discussion of video and readings

From 1944 to 186 the Navajo had 1,000 uranium mines on their land with as many as 5,000 Navajo working the mines. These mines led to one of the worst spills in US history. On July 16 1979 a dam broke on the Navajo Nation near Church Rock, N.M. that released “94 million gallons of radioactive waste to the Puerco River, which flowed through nearby communities.” – May 2014 report from the U.S. General Accountability Office. (See Report to Congressional Requestors at, www.documentcloud.org/documents/1211503-gao-report-on-navajo-uranium-mines.html)

That morning a Navajo woman herded her sheep across the river; before the sun set she and her sheep were dead. Kerr McGee, the primary responsible corporation refused to supply the Navajo with drinking water to compensate for the damage to their water supply.

Spanish-born American philosopher George Santayana is regarded as one of the most important thinkers of the first half of the twentieth century and among the most prominent champions of critical realism. His theoretical works have debated philosophical questions on human existence, ethics, reality, politics, life and death, and along with Gregory Bateson, human nature. To Santayana we owe the quote; “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” With the issues raised over water at Church Rock and now Standing Rock, are we looking at the transition of theory to reality through the writings of George Santayana?

WEEK 15, April 19: Land, Health, The Sacred & The Profane
READ PARADIGM WARS, Chapter 14 (6 pages) & PROGRESS CAN KILL, Sections 1-3 (approx. 26 pages)
3:00 – VIDEO: We Are All Related Here (2016; 50 min)
4:15pm C. Group 8, facilitated discussion of video and readings

This class will expand on issues of resource management rights and development through discussion that pertain to Sami efforts to protect and manage a long standing cultural tradition of reindeer herding while under threat of development in Finland and the surprising solution arrived at in negotiating what cold be considered as an ethical and or moral dilemma.

In American philosopher John Rawl’s Theory of Justice, once hailed as the most important work in moral philosophy post WWII, he stated, contrary to the mantra of progress... for the greater good of society, justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow that the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many. Therefore in a just society the rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests.

Questions to consider. 1) With regard to the video and readings, what can be said of John Rawl’s thoughts on justice and society relative to the human rights that have been violated? With the film as a backdrop, what can be said about what has been overlooked by law enforcers and politicians over the Dakota Pipeline? 2) Is the worth of human rights something that can only be secured by the money one possesses to defend it? 3) How does one elaborate on any truth that can be found in the idea that when the rights of a few are denied, the rights of all stand in jeopardy? 4) How are these issues so easily denied lacking any ethical merit by so many US institutions? 5) What institutions can be listed as those that do not see such issues as ethical issues that warrant being addressed and discussed?

April 26 - April 30 FINALS WEEK