

Rethinking the Global Wealth Divide

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T 1:10-4:10P

Honors College Rm E128

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Will Count Towards SAS-Anthropology Major

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The richest 85 people in the world today possess wealth equal to that of half of the world's entire population. If that statistic startles us, it also provokes debate about inequality's causes and morality, and it inspires fantasies of a global moral community and redemptive humanitarianism. Many have declared wealth inequality to be an urgent global risk—including Nobel-Prize winning economists, Pope Francis, IMF managing director Christine Lagarde, President Barack Obama, and hosts of the annual World Economic Forum at Davos. Global wealth inequality attracts more attention from media, world leaders, and scholars today than it has in decades.

Why do some consider rising wealth inequality to be an inevitable or evolutionary process, while others vigorously contest this notion? What causes wealth inequality? Is inequality harmful, and if so, in what ways? How have popular discourses as well as scholarly thinking about wealth inequality changed in recent years? How may rising inequality threaten a parallel trend—namely the decline between the early 1980s and the early 2000s in the number and percentage of the world's people living in absolute poverty? Why do nearly three-quarter's of the world's people live in countries where the gap between rich and poor is greater now than it was three decades ago? How are wealth inequalities connected to long-standing differences rooted in gender, race, ethnicity, and other identities? How might the neediness of the benefactor shape humanitarianism? These questions and more are the focus of the honors seminar "Rethinking the Global Wealth Divide." Readings incorporate geographically diverse examples and are drawn from anthropology, history, political science, psychology, economics, geography, sociology, literary and cultural commentary, and news media.

PROFESSOR ANGELIQUE HAUGERUD'S research specialties include political and economic anthropology, satirical activism, social movements, cultural politics of wealth inequality, neoliberalism, politics of development, land tenure, and political ecology. She has conducted research in both the United States and in East and Central Africa. Her recent ethnographic research focuses on the cultural politics of wealth and satirical activism in the United States. She is author of *No Billionaire Left Behind: Satirical Activism in America* (Stanford University Press, 2013) and *The Culture of Politics in Modern Kenya* (1995); co-editor (with Marc Edelman) of *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism* (2005); and co-editor (with M. Priscilla Stone and Peter D. Little) of *Commodities and Globalization: Anthropological Perspectives* (2000). Professor Haugerud has been awarded research fellowships from the National Science

Foundation, Social Science Research Council, American Philosophical Society, and Rockefeller Foundation, among others. She was editor-in-chief of the scholarly journal *American Ethnologist* (2011-2015) and of *Africa Today* (1996-1998). She has been elected to the executive boards of the American Anthropological Association's General Anthropology Division (2002-2005), the African Studies Association (1999-2002), the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology (1997-2000), and the Society for Economic Anthropology (1992-1995).