

## **ROBERT K. HITCHCOCK: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Robert K. Hitchcock is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan, USA where he has been since August, 2006. Formerly he was Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of Anthropology and Geography at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. At UNL, he was the Coordinator of African Studies and the Coordinator of Conflict and Conflict Resolution Studies as well as a past director of International Studies and of the Human Rights and Human Diversity Program. At Michigan State University, Hitchcock participates in African Studies, Peace and Justice Studies, and in a program focusing on indigenous children in collaboration with the Departments of Social Work and Family and Child Ecology.

Hitchcock received his B.A. in Anthropology and History from the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) in 1971, an M.A. in Anthropology from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1977, and his Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of New Mexico in 1982.

Over the past several decades, Hitchcock has served as a cultural anthropologist, archaeologist, and development consultant on issues ranging from indigenous peoples' rights and land use planning to social impact analysis and community-based natural resource management, particularly in Africa and North America. His focal areas of concern are human ecology, international socioeconomic development, human rights of indigenous peoples, women, refugees, and minorities, and conflict resolution. Some of his work focuses on hunters and gatherers and deals with socioeconomic change among societies that engage in foraging for part of their livelihoods.

Much of his professional career has been spent working on issues relating to the San (Bushmen, Basarwa), the indigenous peoples of southern Africa. A major focus of his research and consulting work has dealt with issues involving resettlement and involuntary relocation relating to large-scale development projects (dams, agricultural programs, conservation areas), inter-group conflict, and natural disasters such as drought and livestock disease.

Hitchcock was a co-organizer of the Task Force on Human Rights and later the Commission for Human Rights of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), which eventually evolved into the Committee for Human Rights (CfHR), of which he was the co-chair of in 1999 and is now an emeritus member. He serves currently as the Co-President and member of the Board of Directors of the Kalahari Peoples Fund, a non-profit 501c3 organization that assists poor people in southern Africa.

Hitchcock has lived and worked in Africa (14 years) and the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, 15 years); he has also conducted research and done applied anthropological and archaeological work in Hawaii, Guatemala, Peru, the San Juan Islands of Canada, and various parts of the United States including California, Pennsylvania, the southwest, and the northern Great Plains (Nebraska, Colorado, South Dakota, Wyoming). A significant portion of Hitchcock's time in Africa has been spent in remote rural areas. He has worked in 12 African countries, including

many of those in southern Africa, as well as central Africa (Uganda), the Horn of Africa (Somalia), and tropical Africa (Gabon).

For the past several years he has worked with refugees from Nigeria (Ogoni) and from the southern Sudan (Nuer, Dinka, Shilluk, Maban, and Nuba) who have been resettled in the United States by the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. He was a member of the Sudanese Refugee Working Group in Lincoln and took part in refugee related research in the Great Plains, with particular emphasis on refugees from conflict areas in west, east, and southern Africa. Since 2006, Hitchcock has worked on issues surrounding indigenous, minority, and refugee children in the Great Lakes region and around the world.

Hitchcock has had relatively extensive long-term and short-term consulting and development work experience in Africa. In 1977-79 he served as a remote area development consultant to the government of Botswana and later, in 1980-82 he was the Senior Rural Sociologist in the Division of Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture there. In 1983-84 he worked as the Planning Advisor and Research Manager in the National Refugee Commission of the Government of Somalia, and from 1985-87 he was the Traditional Sector Specialist in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) of the Government of Swaziland where he worked on projects involving women and traditional leaders.

Hitchcock has worked for the World Bank, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Ford Foundation, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), various Scandinavian governments (e.g. Norway, Denmark, Sweden), and various non-government organizations (e.g. the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs) in Africa and the Americas.

As part of his work, Hitchcock examines social movements among indigenous peoples, including the San of southern Africa and groups in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific. In the past several years, Hitchcock evaluated two major San organizations in Botswana: Kuru Development Trust (KDT) and First People of the Kalahari (FPK). Currently he is working on development and human rights issues among San peoples and others in the Kalahari Desert region.

For a decade and a half Hitchcock has been a member of the Panel of Environmental Experts (POE) that is monitoring the implementation of the Lesotho Highlands Development Project, the largest hydroelectric dam and tunnel project in Africa. He has also worked on other large-scale water-related development projects, including those affecting the Nile, the Nkomati, the Okavango, and the Limpopo in Africa and the Missouri and Niobrara Rivers in the Great Plains of the United States. In the late 1990s, Hitchcock helped design the compensation and resettlement program for the Maguga Dam Project on the Nkomati River in Swaziland. In addition, he helped design and run a course on transboundary water management issues in southern Africa for the Southern African Development Community that was held in Zimbabwe in July, 1999. Much of his research in the 1980s and 1990s was on community-based natural resource management in eastern and southern Africa and in the Great Plains.

In 2001 he examined the impacts of refugee resettlement in Namibia for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Since 2002 Hitchcock has worked as part of the advisory board of the Trust for African Rock Art (TARA), a rock art and cultural preservation organization based in Nairobi, Kenya. Some of his work is on issues of cultural property, including landscapes, and intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples.

Hitchcock has published over 250 journal articles, book chapters, and reports. He is the author of Kalahari Cattle Posts (Government of Botswana, 1978) and Kalahari Communities: Bushmen and the Politics of the Environment in Southern Africa (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 1996). He is the co-editor (with Neil Parsons and John Taylor) of Research for Development in Botswana (Botswana Society, 1987), Hunter-Gatherers and the Modern State: Conflict, Resistance, and Self-Determination (with Megan Biesele and Peter P. Schweitzer, Berghahn Books, 2000), Endangered Peoples of Africa and the Middle East: Struggles to Survive and Thrive (with Alan J. Osborn, Greenwood Publishing, 2002), Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Southern Africa (with Diana Vinding, International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2004), and Updating the San: Image and Reality of an African People in the Twenty First Century (with Kazunobu Ikeya, Megan Biesele, and Richard B. Lee, Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, Senri Ethnological Studies, 2006).

Currently, Hitchcock is working on a book entitled Organizing to Survive: Indigenous Peoples' Political and Human Rights Struggles (Routledge Press, New York) and co-authoring a second book with Megan Biesele entitled The Ju/'hoansi San of Nyae Nyae Since Independence: Development, Democracy, and Indigenous Peoples' Participation in Namibia (New York: Berghahn Books). He continues to do work on social and environmental impacts of development projects and human rights of indigenous peoples, women, refugees, minorities, and the rural poor, especially those from Africa, the Middle East, and Native North America.

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