

ROBERT H. WINTHROP
+1 202-744-2701 • rwinthro@umd.edu

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS

Robert Winthrop is an environmental anthropologist based in Washington, D.C. with broad training in the social sciences and four decades of both practical experience and scholarship addressing complex problems of socio-environmental systems. He has worked as a consultant, a U.S. government social scientist, and an academic, focusing on energy and resource extraction, climate change, indigenous rights, and social impact assessment.

Specific interests include:

- locally-based climate mitigation strategies
- socio-environmental systems and metrics (ecosystem services)
- political economy of energy and natural resources

Current project: *Climate and Cultural Choice* (under contract with Routledge). Seeking more effective climate mitigation strategies, the book argues for *social* innovation, climate-positive practices that are strongly motivated, enduring, and culturally salient.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Social Scientist (2002 - 2017). USDI Bureau of Land Management, Washington, DC. Socioeconomics Program lead, with responsibility for the application of economics, anthropology, and other social sciences to understand the human impacts of land use, energy, and natural resource projects from northern Alaska to the Mexican border.

Director, Environmental Anthropology Project (2000 - 2001). Society for Applied Anthropology, Oklahoma City, OK. Led a national program funded by the Environmental Protection Agency to increase the socio-cultural effectiveness of environmental planning and regulation.

Principal, Cultural Solutions. Ashland, Oregon (1982 - 2000). Conducted applied ethnography, social impact assessment, and conflict resolution, primarily concerning American Indian rights, interests, and indigenous knowledge as affected by energy and natural resource development.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Research Professor (2016 - present). Adjunct Professor, Associate Research Professor (2008 - 2015), Department of Anthropology, University of Maryland, College Park.

Associate Professorial Lecturer (2001 - 2002), Department of Anthropology, The George Washington University, Washington, DC

Adjunct Professor (1987 - 2000). Visiting Assistant Professor, (1982 - 1986). Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon.

EDUCATION

M.I.P.P. (Master of International Policy and Practice), Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, 2002. International relations, economics, public policy.

Ph.D. in Anthropology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1981. Research: tradition and innovation in Catholic monasticism. **M.A. in Anthropology**, 1977. Supporting field: South Asian Studies.

B.A. in Anthropology (honors), University of California, Berkeley, 1972.

ADVISORY PANELS

External Advisory Board, National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (NSF-funded research center), University of Maryland, Annapolis, MD, 2018 - 2019.

Social Science Coordinating Committee, U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, 2014 - 2017. The committee's role is to strengthen use of the social sciences in federal climate change research.

Subcommittee on Ecological Systems, Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Sustainability, U.S. National Science and Technology Council, Washington, DC, 2013 - 2016.

Department of the Interior Climate Change Task Force, Washington, DC, 2007.

Strategic Unconventional Fuels Task Force, Washington, DC, 2006 - 2007. Represented the Interior Department on an interagency energy policy panel involving three departments and five states.

BOOKS

Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology. Greenwood Press, 1991 (sole author). Selected as an "Outstanding Academic Book" by *Choice*, January 1993.

Culture and the Anthropological Tradition. University Press of America, 1990 (editor).

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

A Crisis in the US Federal Government. *Human Organization*, June 24, 2025. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00187259.2025.2518208>.

Entries: Cultural Services; Decision Support Systems. Brent M. Haddad and Barry D. Solomon, eds., *Dictionary of Ecological Economics: Terms for the New Millennium*. Edward Elgar, 2023.

Explaining Differential Vulnerability to Climate Change: A Social Science Review. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 10(2): e565, 2019 (co-author). Citations > 1,000.

Culturally Reflexive Stewardship: Conserving Ways of Life. Angela M. Labrador and Neil A. Silberman, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Public Heritage Theory and Practice*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

The Strange Case of Cultural Services: Limits of the Ecosystem Services Paradigm. *Ecological Economics* 108:208-214, 2014.

From Global Change Science to Action with Social Sciences. *Nature Climate Change* 4:656-659, 2014 (co-author).

A Comparative Assessment of Decision-Support Tools for Ecosystem Services Quantification and Valuation. *Ecosystem Services* 5:27-39, 2013 (co-author). Citations > 1,000.

Environment and resources. Riall W. Nolan, ed., *A Handbook of Practicing Anthropology*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.

Defining a Right to Culture, and Some Alternatives. *Cultural Dynamics* 14 (2):161-83, 2002. Issue editor, Cultural Rights and Indigenous Identity in the Americas.

The Real World (quarterly column on culture and public policy). *Practicing Anthropology* (1997 – 2002).

Resource Stewardship by Middle Columbia Tribes of the American Pacific Northwest. Darrell Posey, ed., *Cultural and Spiritual Values of Biodiversity*. Intermediate Technology Press for the U.N. Environmental Program, 1999.

Fogs of Darkness and Other Deceits: Monastic Tradition and Cultural Context in an Eleventh Century Cluniac Manuscript. In R. Winthrop, ed., *Culture and the Anthropological Tradition*, 1990.

Leadership and Tradition in the Regulation of Catholic Monasticism. *Anthropological Quarterly* 58 (1): 30-38, 1985.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Presentation, How Climate Science Divides Us: Social Dimensions of Climate Change Mitigation. Southern Oregon Climate Action Now. Medford, Oregon, July 2025. https://youtu.be/EZdQo_n97g?si=v-vmhWfjFoGXXhNp.

Panelist, Revitalizing Strategies for Climate Change Mitigation. Society for Applied Anthropology. Portland, Oregon, March 2025.

Invited presentation, Implementing Ecosystem Based Management. National Academies, Committee on Offshore Science and Assessment. Washington, DC, virtual workshop March 3, 2023.

Invited presentation, Social Vulnerability to Climate Change. National Academies, Board on Environmental Change and Society. Washington, DC, February 7, 2019. <https://vimeo.com/322038292>.

Conference lead organizer and chair, Social Science Perspectives on Climate Change. Social Science Coordinating Committee, U.S. Global Change Research Program. Washington, DC, March 8 - 10, 2017.

Invited presentation, Symposium – Valuing the Environment for Decision-Makers. International Congress for Conservation Biology. Baltimore, Maryland, July 2013.

Invited panelist, Integrating Social and Behavioral Energy Research Activities. American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Washington, DC, November 2012.

Presentation, The Cultural Exception in International Trade Policy. Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics annual meeting. Amsterdam, June 2001.

Keynote address, Living Traditions and Sustainable Environments. Seminar: Harnessing Traditional Knowledge and Practices for Conservation of Nature. Organized by Manav Adhikar Seva Samitee (MASS), Sambalpur, Orissa, India, March 2000.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Fellow, Royal Anthropological Institute

Fellow, Society for Applied Anthropology

Member, American Meteorological Society

Member, Washington Association of Professional Anthropologists

OTHER INFORMATION

h index = 12; citations = 3,346 (Google Scholar, 11/24/2025)

Orcid ID: 0000-0001-6710-948X

Academic website: <https://anth.umd.edu/facultyprofile/winthrop/robert>

ResearchGate website: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert-Winthrop>