



INSTITUT DE HAUTES
ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
GRADUATE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)

Academic year 2020-2021

Environment and Society

ANSO055- Spring - 6 ECTS
[Schedule & Room](#)

Course Description

How can we understand the many ways in which people shape their environments and are, in turn, shaped by them? This course addresses this question by examining the cultural, social, and political dimensions of human-environment relations. We explore foundational concerns and approaches in environmental anthropology; the formation of environmental knowledge; and the relation between environmental governance and the governance of people. Examining recent debates about the Anthropocene, we consider how alternate understandings emerging from posthumanism, multi-species, and ontological perspectives complicate received renderings of human-environment relations with a view to considering intertwined human and environmental futures.

> PROFESSOR

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Syllabus (subject to revision)

Class Participation (30%): I expect your regular attendance in class, whether it be online or in-person. Whenever possible, please inform the class TA in advance of any absences. You should arrive in class having read and reflected on the readings, ready to participate by contributing your ideas and questions.

Reading Responses (20%): You will be responsible for submitting two reading responses over the course of the semester. You will have the opportunity to sign up for the weeks of your choice during the first week of class. Your responses should be approximately 700 words. You should concisely capture the key points of the readings, relate the readings to each other (or to others we have covered in the course), and discuss particular strengths or weaknesses. Your response should conclude with two questions that you would like to be considered for discussion in class. I will use your responses to inform the class discussion, and may call on you during class to share or elaborate on ideas, arguments, or reflections you have written.

Please post your responses to Moodle by 10pm on Monday evening. All members of the class are expected to read each other's responses prior to each class meeting.

“Arts of Noticing” Assignment (10%): Anna Tsing opens *The Mushroom at the End of the World* telling her readers that when it seems the world is falling apart, she goes for a walk. It is on these walks that, she says, “mushrooms pull me back into my senses.”

This assignment is an invitation to explore the ethnographic and methodological possibilities of being pulled back into our senses by practicing the “arts of noticing” as a way of perceiving and reflecting on human-environment relations. You have considerable latitude in deciding how you go about this. The assignment will take the form of a short in class presentation (5-10 minutes) accompanied by a 1,000 word short essay (due on the Monday following your presentation). Presentations will be spread throughout the semester, with the idea being that we will begin most classes with one or two of you sharing your forays in the arts of noticing.

Final Research Paper (40%)

The culminating requirement for this class will be a research paper of 3000 words that extends course themes and/or readings on a topic of your choosing. I strongly encourage you to use my office hours early in the semester (prior to the Easter break) to discuss possible ideas for your paper. An outline and provisional bibliography should be posted to Moodle on Friday, April 9, and our class on April 13 will be dedicated to workshopping these outlines with a view to developing them further.

The final two classes will be dedicated to presentations of your research. Further details about these presentations will follow in due course.

Final papers will be due on Wednesday, June 9 at 5pm.

Contact

Email is the best way to contact me, and between 9am and 4pm during the working week I will do my best to respond to your email as soon as possible. At other times of day, and on the weekends, it may take me longer to respond. I will use Moodle to circulate class announcements, assignments, resources, and other course-related information. I encourage you to attend my office hours. In the short-term, these will be held online but if sanitary conditions improve it may be possible to hold office hours in-person.

Academic Honesty

The free exchange of ideas, at the Graduate Institute and as members of a larger intellectual community, hinges on academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism involves deliberately or inadvertently representing the work of others as one's own. Please refer to the Graduate Institute's policy on academic honesty and plagiarism, available in the "Academic Policies and Regulations" section of the Student Portal.

While research and knowledge advance in part because we use and build on the ideas of others, it is vital that we always acknowledge our sources. I encourage each of you to develop a consistent system for note taking, referencing, and citing your sources. Please use the Chicago author-date system for both in-text citations and bibliographies. See:

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

I encourage you to visit the Graduate Institute's Library where you will find information on training presentations for using bibliographic and referencing software such as EndNote and Zotero.

Please do not hesitate to see me if you ever have any questions about academic honesty and how it applies to your work.

Late Work

Late assignments submitted without prior consultation or justification will lose one-quarter of a point for each day of lateness. Extensions will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

(ROOTS)

February 23: Introduction

- Alexander von Humboldt and Aimé Bonpland. 2013 [1807]. "Essay on the Geography of Plants". (excerpt) In *The Future of Nature*, eds. Libby Robin, Sverker Sörlin and Paul Warde. New Haven: Yale University Press. pp. 209-219.
- Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2015. *The mushroom at the end of the world: on the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Part I: What's Left? pp. 11-52.
- Todd, Zoe. 2016. "An indigenous feminist's take on the ontological turn: 'Ontology' is just another word for colonialism." *Journal of historical sociology* 29 (1):4-22.

(TRUNK)

March 2: Anthropology and the Environment

- E. E. Evans-Pritchard. 2008 [1940] Interest in Cattle. In *Environmental Anthropology: A Historical Reader*, eds. Michael R. Dove and Carol Carpenter. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. pp.118-137.
- Raymond Firth. 2008 [1959]. Critical Pressures on Food Supply and Their Effects. In *Environmental Anthropology: A Historical Reader*, eds. Michael R. Dove and Carol Carpenter. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. pp.202-222.
- Rappaport, Roy A. 1967. "Ritual Regulation of Environmental Relations among a New Guinea People." *Ethnology* 6 (1):17-30.

March 9: Anthropology and the Anthropocene

- Crutzen, Paul J, and Eugene F Stoermer. 2000. "The Anthropocene." *Global change newsletter* 41:17-8.
- Moore, Jason W. 2017. "The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44 (3):594-630.
- Davis, Heather, and Zoe Todd. 2017. "On the Importance of a Date, or Decolonizing the Anthropocene." *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies* 16 (4):761-80.

Recommended:

- Orr, Y.; J. S. Lansing, and M. R. Dove. 2015. "Environmental Anthropology: Systemic Perspectives." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol 44:153-68.
- Mathews, Andrew S. 2020. "Anthropology and the Anthropocene: Criticisms, Experiments, and Collaborations." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 49 (1):67-82

(BRANCHES)

Governing the Environment, Governing People

March 16: Conservation and Environmental (In)justice

- Paige West, 2007. *Conservation is Our Government Now*. Durham: Duke University Press. Chapter 1&6. pp. 1-26, 183-238.

Michelle Murphy, "Chemical Infrastructures of the Saint Clair River," in *Toxicants, Health, and Regulation Since 1945*, edited by Nathalie Jas and Soraya Boudia. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013.

*For further exploration of chemical infrastructures and environmental justice around the Saint Clair river, you may optionally wish to look at "The Land and the Refinery" project:
<https://www.landandrefinery.org/>

March 23: Urban environments

Anne Rademacher. 2009. When is Housing an Environmental Problem: Reforming Informality in Kathmandu", *Current Anthropology*, 50(4).

Anand, Nikhil. 2011. "Pressure: The PoliTechnics of Water Supply in Mumbai." *Cultural Anthropology* 26 (4):542-64.

Please watch "Techniques of Floating: Time and Space on the Urban Sea," by Nikhil Anand:
<https://www.inhabitedsea.org/urban-sea> (8 minutes)

March 30: Ignorance, uncertainty, denial

M. Thompson, M. Warburton and T. Hatley. 1986. *Uncertainty on a Himalayan Scale: An Institutional Theory of Environmental Perception and a Strategic Framework for the Sustainable Development of the Himalaya*. London: Milton Ash. Selections.

Andrew S. Mathews. 2005. Power/Knowledge, Power/Ignorance: Forest Fires and the State in Mexico. *Human Ecology* 33(6): 795-820.

Norgaard, Kari Marie. 2011. *Living in denial: climate change, emotions, and everyday life*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Introduction and Chapter Three.

April 6: Easter Break (no class)

April 13: Workshopping outlines for final assignment

Details to follow in due course

Climate Change

April 20: Climate change: ethics, practice, ways of knowing

Castree, Noel; William M. Adams; John Barry; Daniel Brockington; Bram Büscher; Esteve Corbera; David Demeritt; Rosaleen Duffy; Ulrike Felt; Katja Neves; Peter Newell; Luigi Pellizzoni; Kate Rigby; Paul Robbins; Libby Robin; Deborah Bird Rose; Andrew Ross; David Schlosberg; Sverker Sörlin; Paige West; Mark Whitehead, and Brian Wynne. 2014. "Changing the intellectual climate." *Nature Climate Change* 4 (9):763-8.

Hastrup, Kirsten. 2018. "A history of climate change: Inughuit responses to changing ice conditions in North-West Greenland." *Climatic Change* 151:67-78.

Cross, Jamie. 2019. "The solar good: energy ethics in poor markets." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 25 (S1):47-66.

April 27: Making mitigation: carbon economies and accountabilities

Mackenzie, D. 2009. "Making things the same: Gases, emission rights and the politics of carbon markets." *Accounting Organizations and Society* 34 (3-4):440-55.

Gunel, G. 2016. "What Is Carbon Dioxide? When Is Carbon Dioxide?" *Polar-Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 39 (1):33-45.

Whittington, J. 2016. "Carbon as a Metric of the Human." *Polar-Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 39 (1):46-63.

Interspecies Relations

May 4: : Human-animal relations: intimacy, kinship, zoonoses

- Paul Nadasdy, 2007. The Gift in the Animal: The Ontology of Hunting and Human-Animal Sociality. *American Ethnologist*, 34(1): 25-43.
- Govindrajan, Radhika. 2015. "The goat that died for family": Animal sacrifice and interspecies kinship in India's Central Himalayas." *American Ethnologist* 42 (3):504-19.
- Porter, Natalie. 2013. "Bird flu biopower: Strategies for multispecies coexistence in Việt Nam." *American Ethnologist* 40 (1):132-48.

May 11: Human-plant relations: re-thinking ontology, politics, personhood

- Dove, Michael R. 2003. "Bitter shade: throwing light on politics and ecology in contemporary Pakistan." *Human Organization* 62 (3):229-41.
- Chao, Sophie. 2018. "In the Shadow of the Palm: Dispersed Ontologies among Marind, West Papua." *Cultural Anthropology* 33 (4):621-49. doi: 10.14506/ca33.4.08.
- Hall, Matthew. 2019. "In Defence of Plant Personhood." *Religions* 10 (5):317.
- Trewavas, Anthony. 2002. "Mindless mastery." *Nature* 415:841.

May 18: Atak Ayaz – Seminar based on Doctoral Research

(LEAVE/INGS)

May 25: Presentations and wrap-up

June 1: Presentations and Wrap up