

Environmental Anthropology: Ethnography of Landscape

Anthropology 542 / Geography 606
(16:070:542:01) (16:450:606:03)

The class meets Mondays 9:15-12:15
Ruth Adams Building, Room 302 (Douglass)

Professor David M. Hughes
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Office hours: Tuesdays 2-5pm, Thursdays 10-12 noon, or by appointment
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Course description

This course attempts to move the background into the foreground. All ethnography – except that of virtual space – unfolds on a landscape. How should the methods of writing anthropology, geography, history and related fields grapple with the diversity, flows, and impermanence of terrain? In the past, of course, scholars have ranged from environmental determinism to cultural constructivism. This course will explore a middle ground, holding human imagination and biophysical nature in productive tension. Throughout, we will devote attention to makes a good ethnography: how, in other words, the “flashlight” of concept and comparison best illuminates the dark crevasses of lives you encounter in the field.

Reading

The recommended reading is only available through regular library check-out. All of the required reading available as hard or electronic copies through the library system. I have scanned and posted reading when copyright laws permitted. Readings not scanned – invariably large portions of books – are available in the Douglass Library as hard-copy reserves. You are also welcome, of course, to purchase those books. Graduate students no longer seem to patronize the university books store since you all find better deals at Amazon or at used book sites (eg. Advanced Book Exchange, <http://www.abebooks.com>). Below, I have listed the books in question and the lowest price on Advanced Book Exchange or Amazon – whichever is cheaper - as of October 2013.

- Bass, Rick. 1989. *Oil Notes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (\$3).
- Basso, Keith. 1996. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press (\$17).
- Cruikshank, Julie. 2005. *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press (\$32).
- Carter, Paul. 1988. *The Road to Botany Bay: an Exploration of Landscape and History*. New York: Knopf (\$4).
- Li, Tania. 2007. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (\$19).
- Pratt, Mary Louise. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge. (\$15).
- Redfield, Peter. 2000. *Space in the Tropics: From Convicts to Rockets in French Guiana*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (\$10)
- Thompson, Krista A. 2007. *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism Photography and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (\$17)
- Thongchai Winichakul 1994. *Siam Mapped: a History of the Geobody of a Nation*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press (\$15).
- West, Paige. 2012. *From Modern Production to Imagined Primitive: the Social World of Coffee from Papua New Guinea*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press (\$18).
- White, Richard. 1995. *The Organic Machine: the Remaking of the Columbia River*. New York. New York: Hill and Wang. (\$8)

Presentation

Each student will take charge of a week of the course. He or she will be responsible for contributing thematic questions and summaries and critiques of some or all of the recommended reading.

Final paper

By 9 May, each student will submit a term paper or equivalent writing project in hard copy. Prior to that deadline, each student will circulate an electronic copy to the class by 29 April. In pairs, students will comment on each other's paper and engage in general discussion of the papers on 5 May.

Grading

The grade rests on (1) in- class participation, (2) the presentation of reading material during one of the seminars, (3) the presentation of another student's draft final paper at the end of the course, and (4) the student's own final paper.

Syllabus

Week 1: introduction (27 January)

Place naming exercise

Basic Ideas

Week 2: What is landscape to the European (3 February)

Carter, Paul. 1988. *The Road to Botany Bay: an Exploration of Landscape and History*. New York: Knopf. Chapters 1-3, 11 (about 100 pp).

Cosgrove, Denis E. 1984. *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 (about 70 pp).

Recommended

Castree, Noel and Bruce Braun. 2001. *Social Nature: Theory, Practice, and Politics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Schama, Simon. 1995. *Landscape and Memory*. New York: Knopf.

Spirn, Anne Whiston. 1998. *The Language of Landscape*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Steinberg, Philip E. 2001. *The Social Construction of the Ocean*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Week 3: Landscape imagined otherwise (10 February)

Basso, Keith. 1996. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. Preface, Chapters 1,2, Epilogue (about 75 pp).

Cruikshank, Julie. 2005. *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. Chapters 1-4 (about 150 pp).

Recommended:

Nadasdy, Paul. The gift in the animal: the ontology of hunting and human-animal sociality." *American Ethnologist* 34(1):25-43.

Skaria, Ajay. 1999. *Hybrid Histories: Forests, Frontiers, and Wildness in Western India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Week 4: The problem of nature (17 February)

Harris, Marvin. 1974. *Cows, Pigs, Wars, and Witches: the Riddles of Culture*. New York: Vintage. Prologue (pp. 3-7).

Williams, Raymond. 1973, *The Country and the City*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Chapters 1-4 (45 pp).

Williams, Raymond. 1980. "Ideas of nature." In *Problems in Materialism and Culture: Selected Essays*. London: Verso. Pp. 67-85.

Moore, Donald S., Anand Pandian, and Jake Kosek. 2003. "Introduction: the cultural politics of race and nature." In Donald S. Moore, Jake Kosek, and Anand Pandian, eds. *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. pp. 1-70.

Recommended

McKibben, Bill. 1989. *The End of Nature*. New York: Vintage.

Sayre, Nathan. 2012. "The politics of the anthropogenic." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41:57-70.

The colonial cascade

Week 5: Location and difference (24 February)

Redfield, Peter. 2000. *Space in the Tropics: From Convicts to Rockets in French Guiana*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Preface, Chapters 1, 3-5, 7 (about 130 pages).

recommended

Gerbi, Antonello. 1973[1955]. *The Dispute of the New World: the History of a Polemic, 1750-1900*. Trans. by Jeremy Moyle. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

-- 1985 [1975]. *Nature in the New World: from Christopher Columbus to Fernández de Oviedo*. Trans. by Jeremy Moyle. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Gómez, Nicolás Wey. 2008. *The Tropics of Empire: why Columbus Sailed South to the Indies*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Chapter 5 (pp. 293-334).

Week 6: Exploring islands (3 March)

Cosgrove, Denis. 2005. "Tropic and tropicality." In Felix Driver and Luciana Martins, eds. *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 197-216.

Thompson, Krista A. 2007. *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism Photography and Framing the Caribbean Picturesque*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Introduction, Chapters 1-3, Epilogue (166 pp).

Recommended

Gillis, John. 2004. *Islands of the Mind: how the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 5 (pp.83-100).

Moore, Amelia. 2010. "Climate changing small islands: considering social science and the production of island vulnerability and opportunity." *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 1:116-31.

Week 7: Space and time measured (10 March)

Carter, Paul. 1988. *The Road to Botany Bay: an Exploration of Landscape and History*. New York: Knopf. Chapters 4,5,7 (about 100 pp).

Thongchai Winichakul 1994. *Siam Mapped: a History of the Geobody of a Nation*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. Introduction, Chapters 1-6 (128 pp).

Olson, Valerie A. 2012. "Political ecology in the extreme: asteroid activism and the making of an environmental solar system." *Anthropological Quarterly* 85(4): 1027-44.

Recommended

Kain, Roger J.P and Elizabeth Baigent. 1992. *The Cadastral Map in the Service of the State: a History of Property Mapping*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brotton, Jerry. 2012. *A History of the World in Twelve Maps*. London: Penguin.

Braun, Bruce. 2000. "Producing vertical territory: geology and governmentality in late Victorian Canada." *Cultural Geographies* 7(1):9-46.

Spring break

Week 8: Working (24 March)

Marx, Karl. 1977 [1844]. "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. In David McLellan, ed. *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. pp. 74-112.

Li, Tania. 2007. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. Durham, NC. Duke University Press. Introduction, Chapters 1-4, Conclusion (about 160 pp)

Recommended

Kopytoff, Igor. 1987. "The internal African frontier: the making of an African political culture." In Igor Kopytoff, ed. *The African Frontier: the Reproduction of Traditional African Societies*." Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press. Pp. 3-84.

Smith, Neil. 1996. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. London: Routledge.

Geertz, Clifford. 1963. *Agricultural Involution: the Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 4 (35 pp)

Things in motion

Week 9: Plastic meanings (31 March)

West, Paige. 2012. *From Modern Production to Imagined Primitive: the Social World of Coffee from Papua New Guinea*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8.

Hughes, David McDermott. 2006. "Hydrology of hope: farm dams, conservation, and whiteness in Zimbabwe." *American Ethnologist* 33(2):269-87.

Recommended

O'Reilly, Jessica. 2011. "Tectonic history and Gondwanan geopolitics in the Larsemann Hills, Antarctica." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 34(2):214-32.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1986. "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value." In Arjun Appadurai, ed. *The Social Life of Things*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 3-63.

Mankekar, Purnima. 2004. "Dangerous desires: television and erotics in late twentieth-century India." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 63(2):403-31.

Week 10: Matter in space (7 April)

Watts, Michael. 2001. "Petro-violence: community, extraction, and political ecology of a mythic commodity." In Nancy Lee Peluso and Michael Watts, eds. *Violent Environments*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp. 189-212.

Bass, Rick. 1989. *Oil Notes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Whole book (172 pp).

Recommended

Ingold, Tim. 2012. "Toward an ecology of materials." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41:427-42.

Bennett, Jane. 2010. *Vibrant Matter: a Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Scott, James C. 2009. *The Art of not being Governed: an Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Chapter 6.

Barry, Andrew. 2013. *Material Politics: Disputes along the Pipeline*. Malden, MA: Wiley. Chapter 7.

Week 11: Infrastructure (14 April)

Larkin, Brian. 2013. "The politics and poetics of infrastructure." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42:327-43.

Anand, Nikhil. 2011. "Pressure: the politechnics of water supply in Mumbai." *Cultural Anthropology* 26(4):542-64.

White, Richard. 1995. *The Organic Machine: the Remaking of the Columbia River*. New York: Hill and Wang. Whole book (118 pages).

Recommended

- Barry, Andrew. 2006. "Technological zones." *European Journal of Social Theory* 9:239-53.
- Khan, Naveeda. 2006. "Flaws in the flow: roads and their modernity in Pakistan." *Social Text* 24(4):87-113.
- Mrázek, Rudolf. 2002. *Engineers of Happy Land: Technology and Nationalism in a Colony*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wittfogel, Karl A. 1957. *Oriental Despotism: a Comparative Study of Total Power*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Care

Week 12: Good to feel with (21 April)

- Pratt, Mary Louise. 1992. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge. Chapters 3-5 (about 100 pp).
- Rudiak-Gould, Peter. 2013. *Climate Change and Tradition in a Small Island State: The Rising Tide*. New York: Routledge. Chapter 4.
- Salazar Parreñas, Rheana (Juno). 2012. "Producing affect: transnational volunteerism in a Malaysian orangutan rehabilitation center." *American Ethnologist* 39(4):673-87.

Recommended

- Agrawal, Aurn. 2005. *Environmentality: Technologies of Government and the Making of Subjects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Heise, Ursula K. 2008. *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hughes, David McDermott. 2013. "Climate change and the victim slot: from oil to innocence." *American Anthropologist* 115(4):570-81.

Week 13: the arrogance of stewardship (28 April)

- Grove, Richard. 1995. *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3 (pp. 95-153).
- Braun, Bruce. 2003. "'On the raggedy edge of risk: articulations of race and nature after biology.'" In Donald S. Moore, Jake Kosek, and Anand Pandian, eds. *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Pp. 175-203.
- Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff. 2001. "Naturing the nation: Aliens, apocalypse and the postcolonial state." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3):627-51.

Recommended

- Neumann, Roderick. 1998. *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Mitchell, Don. 1996. *The Lie of the Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Blackbourn, David. 2006. *The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape, and the Making of Modern Germany*. London: Jonathan Cape. Introduction, Chapters 1, 4-6, Epilogue (pp. 1-70, 179-348).

Week 14: Paper presentations (5 May)

By 9 May, each student will submit a term paper or equivalent writing project in hard copy. Prior to that deadline, each student will circulate an electronic copy to the class by 29 April. In pairs, students will comment on each other's paper and engage in general discussion of the papers on 5 May.