

Geography/Environmental/International Studies 477
Comparative Environment and Development Studies: A Seminar in Cultural and Political Ecology¹
Spring Semester, 2022

Class Time and Location: 3-4:30 PM, Tuesdays & Thursdays, Rm Carnegie 105

Instructor: Bill Moseley (he/him/his)

Office: Rm 104d, Carnegie Hall

Office Hours: 9-10am Tues and Thurs, or by appointment

Phone: 651-696-6126

Email: moseley@macalester.edu

Class email : sp22-geog-477-01@groups.macalester.edu

Class zoom channel:

<https://macalester.zoom.us/j/97739010503?pwd=RXJZb29TVHRESzAwYnJnVkZlM2t4Zz09>

Course Description and Objectives

A concern for the relationship between nature and society has been one of the pillars of geographic inquiry, and has also been an important bridge between other disciplines. By the 1960s, this area of inquiry was referred to variously as ‘human ecology’ or ‘cultural ecology.’ Over the last two decades certain forms of inquiry within this tradition have increasingly referred to themselves as ‘political ecology.’ Much of the empirical work within these two traditions has been conducted in social and physical environments that might in some sense be called ‘marginal.’ They have been areas of environmental fragility, aridity and resource constraint; areas of socio-economic poverty; regions of indigenous populations; and local communities confronting rapid modernization and commodification.

The purpose of this seminar is to review major works within the traditions of cultural and political ecology; examine several areas of interest within these fields (e.g., agricultural modernization, environmental narratives, conservation, sustainable development); and explore nature-society dynamics across a range of geographical contexts. Towards the end of the course we will explore how one might begin to think in practical terms about facilitating development in marginal environments.

As a junior-senior level seminar, there will be considerable emphasis placed on writing, reading and discussion in this course. This is a good thing because I truly believe that, in a few years time, you will have forgotten most of what I have said in lecture. My hope, however, is that you will remember what you have discovered on your own by reading about it, writing about it, and discussing it inside and outside of class.

Format

The class will meet twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Most class periods will be devoted to discussion, interspersed with occasional lectures. Discussions will be led by students

¹ We acknowledge that Macalester College is located on the traditional, ancestral and contemporary lands of the Waŋpékhute band of Dakhóta Oyáte, the Dakota nation. We recognize that this acknowledgment is but a first step in recognizing and dismantling aggressive and persistent policies of settler colonialism that continue to oppress to this day. The work of acknowledgement must be paired with active practices like the amplification of Indigenous voices and land repatriation in order to be substantive and meaningful.

and focused on a related set of readings. In addition to a significant amount of out-of-class time devoted to reading, students will prepare and present a major research paper.

This is your class, and I want to know how it's going. Please let me know if you would like to see changes, from lecture topics to grading. You are welcome to speak with me after class or to visit me in my office. The surest way to contact me is to send me e-mail (moseley@macalester.edu), which normally will be responded to promptly during normal business hours.

Disabilities

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please meet with the Director of Disability Services, Melissa Fletcher, who serves as the coordinator for services for students with disabilities. It is important to meet with her at the beginning of the semester to ensure that your accommodations are approved and in place to begin the semester successfully. The director may be reached in the Kagin Commons, Rm 125, by phone at 651-696-6974, or email disabilityservices@macalester.edu.

Health and Wellness

You are encouraged to make your health and well-being a priority throughout this semester and during your career at Macalester. Taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. In the classroom, eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out if you are upset and need some air. Please do what is necessary so long as it does not impede your or others' ability to be mentally and emotionally present in the course. Outside of the classroom, sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient at Macalester. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to contact me and/or find support from Health & Wellness Center. I have included contact information for health and wellness resources on the course moodle page.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism and cheating are both academic crimes. Never (1) turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself, or (2) turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension from the college. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism. Anyone caught cheating on an exam will be reported to the provost in line with recognized college procedures.

Texts

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd edition. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

In addition to the texts, there are a number of readings available electronically via the course moodle page (see reading list below).

Semester Overview and Important Due Dates

Please note that this is tentative and subject to change.

Wk	Dates	Topic		Important Due Dates, Other events
		Tuesday	Thursday	
PART I: ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN GEOGRAPHY & THE EMERGENCE OF CULTURAL/POLITICAL ECOLOGY				
1	20 Jan		Course business, Introductions	
2	25-27 Jan	1. Geography and the Social-Natural Science Divide	Lecture + 2. The Study of Human-Environment Interactions in Geography	
3	1-3 Feb	Lecture + 3. Cultural Ecology: Concepts and Theory	4. Cultural Ecology: Case Studies	
4	8-10 Feb	Lecture + 5. Political Ecology: Concepts and Theory	<u>No collective class.</u> Meet with Bill individually to discuss research topics	Research proposal due Sun, 2/13 @10pm via moodle
5	15-17 Feb	Library session for capstone paper.	6. Political Ecology: Case Studies	
6	22-24 Feb	7. Political Ecology Critiques	8. First World & Urban Political Ecology	
7.	1-3 March	Writing day. No class meeting	Writing day. No class meeting	Outline & prelim bibliography due Sun, 3/6 @ 10pm via moodle
PART II: INVESTIGATION OF SELECT ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT THEMES (RELATED TO STUDENT INTERESTS)				
8	8-10 March	9. Environmental Narratives & Forest Cover (Nick)	10. Political ecology of climate change (Simon)	
9	15-17 March (Spring break)			
10	22-24 March	11. Political ecology of health and poverty (Celia)	12. Feminist Political Ecology and food systems (Brennan)	Lanegrn Day Speaker, LaToya Eaves, Thurs, March 24, 4:45-6:15.
11	29-31 March	13. Agriculture, Food Security & Nutrition (Nethmi)	14. Agriculture, tenure and biodiversity (Angus)	
PART III: ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PRAXIS: WHAT TO DO?				
12	5-7 April	15. Alternative Development Paradigms	Lecture + 16. Field work, Development and Scholarship	
13	12-14 April	Lecture and Discussion: "Life after Macalester"	Political ecology alumni panel	Paper draft due Sun 4/17, at 5pm via moodle to Bill & peers via email
14	19-21 April	Peer review in class	No collective class. Meet w/ Bill individually to discuss paper	Optional presentation opportunity at MUGS conference at Gustavus on Sat, 4/23
15	26-28 April	Research Presentations	Research Presentations	Final Research Paper (Mon, 5/2, 4pm hardcopy)

Grading

Grade Components

Seminar Participation:	29%
Discussion Leadership:	9%
Research Proposal	3%
Expanded Proposal & Bibliography:	5%
Project Draft:	10%
Peer Review of Paper Draft	3%
Research Presentation:	10%

<u>Final Paper:</u>	30%
Total:	100%

Final grades are based on a weighted average for the term. Grade cutoff points (in terms of percentage) are as follows: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92%; B+ = 87-89%; B = 83-86%; B- = 80-82%; C+ = 77-79%; C = 73-76%; C- = 70-72%; D+ = 67-69%; D = 63-66%; D- = 60-62%, NC = < 60%.

Assignments

Reading: The amount of reading required for this course is substantial. Reading assignments related to discussion sessions are listed on the outline of topics that follows. Students are expected to have done all assigned reading before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss it.

Participation and Discussion: The course will be oriented towards discussion about three-quarters of the time (see schedule). The purpose of discussion is to facilitate critical analysis of key works within the field of cultural and political ecology. Class participation accounts for roughly a third of your grade in this course and the majority of class participation points will be derived from your comments in discussion. Participation points are relatively easy to obtain if you keep up with the reading and speak up during discussion. Please see me if you have difficulty speaking in class.

In my opinion, the best discussions are those in which: 1) students listen (and learn) from one another and build on what each other is saying; 2) the discussion is focused on understanding the main argument of each reading and breaking down and analyzing this argument to see if it makes sense; 3) making connections between readings (when several are assigned on the same day) by identifying where authors agree and disagree; and 4) relating insight gained from reading and discussion to other texts or real life events. In sum, I want you to approach discussion as an ongoing scholarly debate in which we (as a community of scholars and learners) are attempting to advance our collective knowledge.

Discussion Leaders: Two student discussion leaders will be assigned to facilitate each discussion session. Students will lead approximately three discussion sessions during the semester (depending on class size). Discussion leaders will be expected to summarize the main points of each reading and to have prepared discussion questions on more debatable aspects of each article.

Capstone Paper

A major component of this seminar is to undertake a research paper. This will entail posing an interesting problem or question related to environment and development studies, and then setting out to answer this question through library research, and in some instances, the analysis of relevant data sets. You will be graded for content and ideas as well as effectiveness of writing (organization, clarity, citations, spelling, punctuation). In order to facilitate the research and writing process, and limit the possibility of a last minute effort, a number of intermediary due dates have been established, including: submission of potential research topic; expanded research proposal and preliminary bibliography, research paper draft, peer review exercise, and final research paper. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day.

The expanded research proposal should include your research question, plus a summary of your thesis and a paper outline. It should also include your preliminary bibliography of references and, in some instances, data sources. We will have a special session with a research librarian to help address any problems you may have encountered in collecting materials related to your research question.

Your final research paper should not exceed 30 double-spaced pages. All projects must be typed. Projects should be organized, written clearly and free of errors. Include citations within the paper as well as references for supporting maps, figures and tables. All sources used in

preparing your paper must be cited, including data sources. Use standard citation and presentation forms (e.g., Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*). Examples of past student papers may be found at: http://www.macalester.edu/geography/courses/geog488/moseley/f06_capstone.htm

Peer Review Exercise:

In addition to receiving feedback on your draft paper from the course instructor, each of you will receive comments from at least three other class members (and you, in turn, will provide three students with feedback). Peer review will occur in class on April 19. The guiding principles for a useful peer review are as follows: 1) engage at the level of ideas; 2) back up your comments with specific examples from the draft; and 3) be precise when giving advice.

Research Presentation

You will be asked to share your research paper findings with the class through a conference style presentation. You will have 20 minutes to make your presentation, followed by a 3-5 minute question and answer period. Use of visual aids is recommended. Because asking informed and interesting questions of a speaker is an important component of attending conferences, the other class members will be required to come up with questions for each presenter. In class time for presentations is scheduled the last full week of class on Tuesday, April 26 and Thursday, April 28.

Detailed Lecture and Discussion Schedule

PART I: ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN GEOGRAPHY & THE EMERGENCE OF CULTURAL/POLITICAL ECOLOGY

Thursday, January 20

Introductions, Overview of Course, Possible discussion leader assignments

Tuesday, January 25

1st Discussion: Geography and the Social-Natural Science Divide

Campbell, L.M. 2003. "Challenges for Interdisciplinary Sea Turtle Research: Perspectives of a Social Scientist." *Marine Turtle Newsletter*. 100: 28-32.

Cronon, W. 1996. "The Trouble with Nature or, Getting Back to the Wrong Wilderness." *Environmental History*. 1(1)7-28.

Moseley, W.G. 2009. "Beyond Knee-Jerk Environmental Thinking: Teaching Geographic Perspectives on Conservation, Preservation and the Hetch Hetchy Valley Controversy." *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. 33(3): 433-451.

Lowe, P, J. Phillipson & K. Wilkinson. 2013. "Why social scientists should engage with natural scientists." *Contemporary Social Science*, 8:3, 207-222,

Thursday, January 27

Short Lecture: The Study of Human Environment Interactions in Geography: Traditions, Tensions and Debates

2nd Discussion: The Place of the Human-Environment Tradition in Geography

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA. Chapter 2 (pp. 25-48)

Sauer, Carl O. 1956. "The Education of a Geographer." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 46(3): 287-299.

Hanson, Susan. 1999. "Isms and Schisms: Healing the Rift between the Nature-Society and Space-Society Traditions in Human Geography." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 89(1): 133-143.

Harrison, S., D. Massey, K. Richards, F.J. Magilligan, N. Thrift and B. Bender. 2004. "Thinking across the divide: perspectives on the conversations between physical and human geography." *Area*. 36(4): 435-442.

Tuesday, February 1

Short Lecture: Cultural Ecology

3rd Discussion: Cultural Ecology (concepts and theory)

Butzer, K.W. 1990. "The Realm of Cultural Ecology: Adaptation and Change in Historical Perspective." In *The Earth as Transformed by Human Action*, edited by B. L. Turner II et al., 685-702. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Denevan, W.M. 1983. "Adaptation, Variation, and Cultural Geography." *The Professional Geographer* 35, no. 4: 399-406.

Richards, P. 1985. *Indigenous Agricultural Revolution: Food and Ecology in West Africa*. London: Hutchinson. (Introduction), pp. 9-17.

Thursday, February 3

4th Discussion: Cultural Ecology (classic case studies)

Rappaport, R.A. 1969. "Ritual Regulation of Environmental Relations Among a New Guinea People." In: Vayda, A. (ed). *Environment and Cultural Behavior*. Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press. (pp. 181-201).

Nietschmann, B. 1972. "Hunting and fishing focus among the Miskito Indians, Eastern Nicaragua." *Human Ecology*. 1: 41-67.

Grossman, L. 1981. "The cultural ecology of economic development." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 71(2): 220-236.

Tuesday, Feb 8

Short Lecture: Political Ecology

5th Discussion: Political Ecology I (concepts and theory)

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA. Chapter 1, 3 & 4

Watts, M. 1983. "On the poverty of theory: natural hazards research in context. In K. Hewitt (ed.) *Interpretations of Calamity*. Boston: Allen and Unwin. (p. 231-262)

Blaikie, P. and H. Brookfield. 1987. *Land Degradation and Society*. New York: Routledge. Chapter 1.

Thursday, Feb 10

No class. Meet with Bill individually to discuss research topics

Sunday, Feb 14

Capstone research proposal due at 10pm via moodle

Tuesday, Feb 15

Library session to prepare for capstone research.

Thursday, Feb 17

6th Discussion: Political Ecology II (early case studies)

Blaikie, P. and H. Brookfield. 1987. *Land Degradation and Society*. New York: Routledge. Chapter 2.

Basset, T.J. 1988. "The Political Ecology of Peasant-Herder Conflicts in the Northern Ivory Coast." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 78(3): 453-472.

Carney, J. 1993. "Converting the Wetlands, Engendering the Environment: The Intersection of Gender with Agrarian Change in The Gambia." *Economic Geography*. 69(4): 329-348.

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA. Chapter 8 (Degradation and marginalization)

Tuesday, February 22

7th Discussion: Political Ecology Criticism and Extension

Peet, R. and M. Watts. 1996. "Liberation Ecology: Development, Sustainability, and Environment in an Age of Market Triumphalism." In: Peet, R. and M. Watts (eds). *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*. New York: Routledge. (Chapter 1, pp. 1-45).

Vayda, A.P. and B.B. Walters. 1999. "Against Political Ecology." *Human Ecology*. 27(1): 167-179.

Walker, P. 2005. "Political Ecology: Where is the Ecology?" *Progress in Human Geography*. 29(1): 73-82.

Robbins, P. 2004. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 1st edition. Malden, MA. Chapter 11

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA. Chapter 13

Thursday, February 24

8th Discussion: First World & Urban Political Ecology

Schroeder, RA, K. St Martin and KE Albert. 2006. "Political Ecology in North America: Discovering the Third World Within?" *Geoforum*. 37(2): 163-168.

Robbins, P. 2003. "Producing and Consuming Chemicals: The Moral Economy of the American Lawn." *Economic Geography*. 79(4): 425-451.

Lebowitz, A. & D. Trudeau. 2016. "Digging in: lawn dissidents, performing sustainability, and landscapes of privilege." *Social & Cultural Geography*, DOI: 10.1080/14649365.2016.1218041

Agyeman, J., & McEntee, J. 2014. "Moving the field of food justice forward through the lens of urban political ecology." *Geography Compass*. 8(3): 211-220.

Tuesday-Thursday, March 1-3

No collective class. Writing days

Sunday, March 6

Expanded research proposal, outline and preliminary bibliography due at 10pm via moodle

PART II: INVESTIGATION OF SELECTED ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT THEMES

Tuesday, March 8

9th Discussion: Environmental Narratives & Forest Cover

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd edition. Malden, MA. Chapter 6.

Fairhead, J. and M. Leach. 1995. "False Forest History, Complicit Social Analysis – Rethinking Some West African Environmental Narratives. *World Development*. 23(6): 1023-1035.

Bravo, E., & Moreano, M. 2015. Whose good living? Post-neoliberalism, the green state and subverted alternatives to development in Ecuador. In *The International Handbook of Political Ecology*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bebbington, DH and A. Bebbington. 2011. "Post What? Extractive Industries, Narratives of Development and Socio-Environmental Disputes across the (ostensibly) Changing Andean Region." In: *New Political Space in Latin American Natural Resource Governance*. Edited by H. Haarstad.

Thursday, March 10

10th Discussion: Political Ecology of Climate Change, Vulnerability & Capitalism

Ribot, J. 2013. "Vulnerability does not just fall from the sky: Toward multi-scale pro-poor climate policy." In *Handbook on climate change and human security*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Goldman, M. J., Turner, M. D., & Daly, M. 2018. "A critical political ecology of human dimensions of climate change: Epistemology, ontology, and ethics." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 9(4), e526.

Huber, M. 2006. "Fossilized Subjectivities." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers. Chicago, IL. March

Tuesday, March 22

11th Discussion: Political Ecology of Health and Poverty

Connolly, C., Kotsila, P., & D'Alisa, G. 2017. Tracing narratives and perceptions in the political ecologies of health and disease. *Journal of Political Ecology*. 24(1), 1-10

Carter E.D. and W.G. Moseley. 2021. "COVID-19 and the Political Ecology of Global Food and Health Systems." In: Andrews G.J., Crooks V.A., Pearce J.R., Messina J.P. (eds). *COVID-19 and Similar Futures. Global Perspectives on Health Geography*. Berlin: Springer. Pgs 39-45.

Kalipeni, E. and J. Oppong. 1998. "The refugee crisis in Africa and implications for health and disease: a political ecology approach." *Social Science & Medicine*. 46(12): 1637-1653.

Gray, L.C. and W.G. Moseley. 2005. "A Geographical Perspective on Poverty-Environment Interactions" *Geographical Journal*. 171(1): 9-23.

Thursday, March 24

12th Discussion: Feminist Political Ecology and Food Systems

D. E. Rocheleau, B. Thomas-Slayter and E. Wangari (eds.). 1997. *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Perspectives and Local Experience*. Chap 1.

Eaves, L. (2020). "Fear of an other geography." *Dialogues in Human Geography*. 10(1): 34-36.

Fehr, R and W.G. Moseley. 2019. "Gardening Matters: A Political Ecology of Female Horticulturists, Commercialization, Water Access and Food Security in Botswana." *African Geographical Review*. 38(1): 67-80.

Clapp, J., W.G. Moseley, B. Burlingame and P. Termine. 2022. "The case for a six-dimensional food security framework." *Food Policy*. 106: 102164

Tuesday, March 29

13th Discussion: Agriculture, Food Security & Nutrition

Moseley, W.G. 2021. "Political Agronomy 101: An Introduction to the Political Ecology of Industrial Cropping Systems." In: Alexandros Gasparatos and Abubakari Ahmed (eds). *The Political Ecology of Industrial Crops*. London: Earthscan/Routledge. Pgs 25-44.

Chappell, J. 2018. "Chapter 2: Food Security, Food Sovereignty and Beginning to End Hunger." In: *Beginning to End Hunger: Food and the Environment in Belo Horizonte, Brazil and Beyond*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pgs 34-65.

Clapp, J. and W.G. Moseley. 2020. "This Food Crisis is Different: COVID-19 and the Fragility of the Neoliberal Food Security Order." *Journal of Peasant Studies*. 47 (7): 1393-1417. DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2020.1823838.

Thursday, March 31

14th Discussion: Agriculture, land tenure and agrobiodiversity

Fan, S., & Rue, C. 2020. "The Role of Smallholder Farms in a Changing World." In S. Gomez y Paloma, L. Riesgo, & K. Louhichi (Eds.), *The Role of Smallholder Farms in Food and Nutrition Security* (pp. 13–28). Springer International Publishing.

Bezner-Kerr, R. 2014. "Lost and found crops: agrobiodiversity, indigenous knowledge, and a feminist political ecology of sorghum and finger millet in Northern Malawi." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 104: 577–93

Mackenzie, A. F. D. 2003. Land tenure and biodiversity: An exploration in the political ecology of Murang'a District, Kenya. *Human Organization*. 62(3): 255-266.

PART III: ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PRAXIS: WHAT TO DO?

Tuesday, April 5

15th Discussion: Alternative Development Paradigms

Gibson-Graham, J.K. 1996. Selections from Preface (pp.vii-xi) and Ch. 1 (pp.1-11). *The End of Capitalism (as we know it): A feminist critique of political economy*.

Gibson-Graham, J.K. 2004. Surplus Possibilities: Re-presenting Development and Post-Development. Conference on Economic Representations: Academic and Everyday. University of California Riverside. April.

Carr, E. 2011. "Chapter 12: Truly Participatory Development." *Delivering Development: Globalization's Shoreline and the Road to a Sustainable Future*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Thursday, April 7

Lecture: Participatory Development Praxis

16th Discussion: Fieldwork, Development and Scholarship

Robbins, P. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. Chap 11 (Environmental Subjects and Identities)

Moseley, W.G. 2007. "Collaborating in the Field, Working for Change: Reflecting on Partnerships Between Academics, Development Organizations and Rural Communities in Africa." *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*. 28(3).

Walker, P. 2006. "Political Ecology: Where is the Policy?" *Progress in Human Geography*. 30(3): 382-395.

Tuesday, April 12

Lecture/discussion led by Bill: "Life after Macalester."

Thursday, April 14

- 1) Presentation by career center
- 2) Political ecology alumni career panel. Engage with three alums of the course in terms of what they have done post Macalester.

Paper draft due Sunday, 4/17 at 5pm via moodle.

Tuesday, April 19

Peer review in class

Thursday, April 21

No collective class. Meet one-on-one w/ Bill to review paper draft

Tuesday, April 26

Student Presentations

Thursday, April 28

Student Presentations and course evaluations

Due: Final Research Paper by 4pm on Monday, May 2 (hard copy in Bill's office mailbox)

Welcome to the course! I look forward to working with you this semester.