

ANTH 2380/UGEC 2950
The Environment and Culture
Fall 2019

Lecture: Thursday 11:30 – 13:15, NAH 115

Instructor: Man-kei Tam (MK), tammankei@gmail.com

Office Hours: Thursday 15:00 – 17:00, and by appointment

Course Outline:

This course pays attention to the environment and its relation with human experiences. Through the lens of environment, we bring human diversity into presence, examining ways of life of peoples—from Indonesia highlander to Tokyo urbanites—and their words and deeds to tackle crises of planetary scale—climate change, nuclear disaster, air pollution, waste, deforestation. Facing these crises, can anthropological inquiry of the environment help us to explore a humanity that can accommodate living beings of all kind? How can such inquiry inspire us to make changes that create a world we can live together?

We'll follow these trails in the environment to look for engagement and conversation: cultural perception on the origin of agriculture, resource use and religious belief, debating traditional ecological knowledge, globalization and state intervention, environmental justice, land dispossession, waste and pollution, disaster and extreme environment.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand how humans have engaged the environment historically and cross-culturally;
2. Examine the relationship between the environment, local communities and the state in the present world through issues including deforestation, climate change, and nuclear disaster;
3. Explore contemporary environmental crises to cultivate sensitivity to possible forms of resistance and action from local and global perspectives;

Assessment Criteria

1. Class Participation: 15%
2. Tutorial Participation and Discussion: 20%
3. Leading Tutorial Discussion: 10%
4. Mid-term Essay: 20%
5. Final Paper: 35%

Ground Rule(s):

Please refrain from using any ELECTRONIC DEVICE including mobile phones, computers, tablets, etc in class. Please step out of the classroom to do so if need be.

http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=npr&utm_term=npnews&utm_content=20170819

A Note on Academic Honesty:

Students are required by university policy to *submit all papers to VeriGuide before* turning them in. Be sure that you leave enough time to submit the paper to VeriGuide, print out the receipt, and sign it.

There is no excuse for plagiarism. To learn more on citation and plagiarism, see

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ant/tstyle.doc> and

http://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/english/resource/referencing_avoidingplagiarism1.pdf.

Part I: Cultural Knowledge of the Environment

*Required

Week 1 (September 5): Cultural Perceptions of the Origin of Agriculture

*Sahlins, Marshall. 2006. "The Original Affluent Society." In *The Politics of Egalitarianism: Theory and Practice*. J. Solway, ed., pp.79-98. New York: Berghen Books.

Ingold, Tim. 2018. "On Taking Others Seriously," In *Anthropology: Why It Matters*. Cambridge: Polity.

Week 2 (September 12): Religious Belief in Resource Use

*Rappaport, Roy. 1967. "Ritual Regulation of Environmental Relations Among a New Guinea People." *Ethnology* 6(1): 17-30.

*Steward, Julian. 2016. "The Concept and Method of Cultural Ecology." In *The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living (Second Edition)*. Nora Haenn, Richard R Wilk, and Allison Harnish, ed., pp.12-17. New York: New York University Press.

Harris, Marvin. 1992. "The Cultural Ecology of India's Sacred Cattle." *Current Anthropology* 33(1):261-276.

Week 3 (September 19): Traditional Ecological Knowledge

*Escobar, Arturo. 2016. "Difference and Conflict in the Struggle over Natural Resources." In *The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living (Second Edition)*. Nora Haenn, Richard R Wilk, and Allison Harnish, ed., pp.362-368. New York: New York University Press.

*Nazarea, Virginia D. 2016. "A View from a Point: Ethnoecology as Situated Knowledge." In *The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living (Second Edition)*. Nora Haenn, Richard R Wilk, and Allison Harnish, ed., pp.41-47. New York: New York University Press.

Geertz, Clifford. 1972. "The Wet and the Dry: Traditional Irrigation in Bali and Morocco." *Human Ecology*, Vol. 1, No. 1:23-39.

Helmreich, Stefan. 2005. "How Scientists Think; About 'Natives,' for Example: A Problem of Taxonomy among Biologists of Alien Species in Hawaii." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11(1):107–127.

Week 4 (September 26): Materialist Conception of Nature (I)

*Li, Tania. 2014. "Enclosure," In *Land's End: Capitalist Relations on an Indigenous Frontier*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Intro & Ch 4 Capitalist Relations.

*Wolf, Eric. 1972. "Ownership and Political Ecology." *Anthropological Quarterly* 45: 201-05.

Paulson, S., Gezon, L. and Watts, M. 2003. "Locating the Political in Political Ecology: An Introduction," *Human Organization* 62(3): 205-217.

Vandergest, Peter, Mark Flaherty, and Paul Miller. 1999. "A Political Ecology of Shrimp Aquaculture in Thailand." *Rural Sociology* 64(4):573-596.

Week 5 (October 3): Materialist Conception of Nature (II)—State Intervention and Globalization

*Li, Tania. 2014. "Capitalist Relations," In *Land's End: Capitalist Relations on an Indigenous Frontier*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Intro & Ch 4 Capitalist Relations.

*Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2016. Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connections. In *The Environment in Anthropology: A Reader in Ecology, Culture, and Sustainable Living (Second Edition)*. Nora Haenn, Richard R Wilk, and Allison Harnish, ed., pp.241-244. New York: New York University Press.

Anand, Nikhil. 2012. "Pressure: The PoliTechnics of Water Supply in Mumbai." *Cultural Anthropology*. 26: 542–564.

Scott, James. 1998. "Introduction," "Nature and Space," In *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

October 10: Reading week (no class)

Part II: Contemporary Culture of Environmental Politics

Week 6 (October 17): Extraction

*Ottinger, Gwen. 2013. "The Battlefield," "Dangerous Stories," In *Refining Expertise: How Responsible Engineers Subvert Environmental Justice Challenges*. New York: New York University Press.

High, Mette. 2013. "Polluted money, polluted wealth: Emerging regimes of value in the Mongolian gold rush." *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 40, No. 4:676–688.

Week 7 (October 24): Waste

*Strasser, Susan. 1999. "Toward a History of Trashmaking," In *Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash*. New York: Metropolitan Books.

胡嘉明、張劭穎. 2016. “導言：廢品的政治與文化,” “第一部分,” *廢品生活：垃圾場的經濟、社群與空間*. 香港：中文大學出版社.

Kirby, Peter W. 2010. “Tokyo's Vermin Menace.” In *Troubled Natures: Waste, Environment, Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Liboiron, Max. 2009. “[Recycling as a Crisis of Meaning](#).” *eTopia* 4.

Week 8 (October 31): Toxicity

*Brown, Kate. 2016. “The Last Sink: The Human Body as the Ultimate Radioactive Storage Site.” *RCC Perspectives*, no. 1: 41–47.

*Roberts, Elizabeth F. S. 2017. “What Gets Inside: Violent Entanglements and Toxic Boundaries in Mexico City.” *Cultural Anthropology* 32(4): 592–619.

Lora-Wainwright, Anna. 2017. “Situating the study of rural China's environmental health activism,” “China's ‘cancer villages’: the social, political and economic contexts of pollution,” In *Resigned Activism: Living with Pollution in Rural China*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

Stawkowski, Magdalena E. 2016. “‘I am a Radioactive Mutant’: Emergent Biological Subjectivities at Kazakhstan's Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site.” *American Ethnologist*. Vol. 43, No. 1:144–157.

Walker, Brett L. 2010. “Mercury's Offspring.” In *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

November 7: No class (87th Congregation for the Conferment of Bachelor's Degrees and Master's Degrees)

Week 9 (November 14): Disaster and extreme environment

*Fortun, Kim. 2001. “Prologue: The Times,” “Plaintive Response,” In *Advocacy after Bhopal: Environmentalism, Disaster, New Global Orders*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Barker, Holly. 1997. “Radiation Communities: Fighting for Justice for the Marshall Islands.” In B.R. Johnson, ed., *Life and Death Matters: Human Rights, Environment, and Social Justice*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

Bond, David. 2013. “Governing Disaster: The Political Life of the Environment During the BP Oil Spill.” *Cultural Anthropology*, 28(4):694–715.

Kimura, Aya Hirata. 2016. “School Lunches: Science, Motherhood, and Joshi Power,” In *Brain Moms and Citizen Scientists: The Gender Politics of Food Contamination after Fukushima*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Greenpeace International. 2016. “Fukushima: Living with a Disaster,” March 10th. Accessed July 11, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oe_TCM7f71w

賴偉傑. 2015. 建構「支持的體系」取代「犧牲的體系」

Week 10 (November 21): Conservation

*West, Paige. "Preface" and "The Practices of Conservation-as-Development," in *Conservation is Our Government Now: The Politics of Ecology in Papua New Guinea* Hathaway, Michael J. 2013. "Introduction," "On the Back of Elephants," In *Environmental Winds: Making the Global in Southwest China*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Ka-ming Wu. 2016. "Farming Against Real Estate Dominance: The Ma Shi Po Community Farm in Hong Kong." In *Green Asia: Ecocultures, Sustainable Lifestyles and Ethical Consumption*, edited by Tania Lewis, pp. 169-184. New York: Routledge

Turner, Robin L. 2004. "Communities, Wildlife Conservation, and Tourism-based Development: Can Community-Based Nature Tourism Live Up to Its Promise?" *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy* 7, nos. 3-4: 161-82.

Week 11 (November 28): Climate Change

*Weston, Kath. 2017. "Climate Change, Slippery on the Skin." In *Animate Planet: Making Visceral Sense of Living in a High-tech Ecologically Damaged World*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Meyer, Robinson. 2019. "This Land Is the Only Land There Is: Here are seven ways of understanding the IPCC's newest climate warning." *The Atlantic*, Aug 8.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/08/how-think-about-dire-new-ipcc-climate-report/595705/>

Patel, Raj and Jason W. Moore. 2018. "Cheap Energy," In *A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet*. London ; New York : Verso 2018.

Stensrud, Astrid B. 2016. "[Climate Change, Water Practices, and Relational Worlds in the Andes.](#)" *Ethnos* 81, no. 1: 75-98.

Week 12 (December 5): Conclusion—Rethinking Development

*Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2017. "A Threat to Holocene Resurgence Is a Threat to Livability." In M. Brightman, J. Lewis, eds., *The Anthropology of Sustainability*, pp. 51-65. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ingold, Tim. 2000. "From Trust to Domination." In *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge.

Lyons, Kristina Marie. 2016. "Decomposition as Life Politics: Soils, Selva, and Small Farmers under the Gun of the U.S.—Colombia War on Drugs." *Cultural Anthropology* 31, no. 1: 55-80.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS (by Prof. Teresa Kwan)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Criteria for 1) the course and 2) for coursework</i>
A	<p>1) Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.</p> <p>2) The work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way. The argument is logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. Concrete evidence corresponds to statements and claims.</p>
A-	<p>1) Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.</p> <p>2) The work synthesizes course materials and key ideas in an original way, but there are areas for improvement.</p>
B-range	<p>1) Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.</p> <p>2) The work demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.</p>
C-range	<p>1) Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.</p> <p>2) The work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged. The argument and the writing is not clear, and/or there is no evidence for statements and claims made.</p>
D-range	<p>1) Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.</p> <p>2) The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are major problems with clarity of argument and writing.</p>
F	<p>1) Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.</p> <p>2) The work has failed respond to the assignment prompt.</p>