



NATURE, SPACE, AND POLITICS: INVESTIGATING DIVERSE WAYS OF KNOWING

June 10th, 2019
Sequoyah Room 103 &
Spiro Library
9:00am-3:30pm

PLEASE RSVP:

NPOSTERO@UCSD.EDU
MCAZCARATE@UCSD.EDU

A workshop bringing together
indigenous scholars, activists and
local artists to ask:

*What different ways of knowing,
managing, and living in nature
and space exist, and how do they
overlap or conflict?*

International Institute
Nature, Space and Politics & Indigenous Resource Governance Groups

Nature, Space, and Politics: Investigating Diverse Ways of Knowing International Institute, Faculty Group Workshop

**June 10th, 2019
Sequoyah Room 103 & Spiro Library
UC San Diego**

This Spring, two Faculty Groups from [UC San Diego's International Institute](#) are combining forces to hold a small one-day workshop. The [Nature, Space and Politics](#) group and the [Indigenous Resources](#) group are thinking together about the many divergent ways we “know” nature, and the practices of development, extraction, and inhabitation that result. We are bringing together indigenous scholars, activists and local artists thinking about natural resource management, urban planning, and spatial practices in order to cross pollinate across seemingly different disciplines. What different ways of knowing, managing, and living in nature and space exist, and how do they overlap or conflict? What can we learn from putting these different disciplinary foci together?

Please RSVP to nposter@ucsd.edu or mcazcarate@ucsd.edu

Program

9.00 am -10:45 am Politics of Knowledge

Location: Sequoyah Room SEQUO 103

- Esme G. Murdock (Philosophy, SDSU): Keeping Ourselves: The Role of Land and Corporeality in Environmental Justice.
- Casey Walsh (Anthropology, UCSB): Water, Waters, and the Political Economy of Ontological Difference (tbc)
- Francisco López Bárcenas (El Colegio de San Luís, San Luis Potosí, México): Colonialismo, Resistencia y Emancipación Epistémicos.

11:00- 12:15 Sensing Nature

Location: Spiro Balcony

- Rudy Duran & Judith Parenio (San Diego Local Artists): Nature-Cultures Hands-on Clay Project.

12:30-1:15 Lunch

Location: Spiro Balcony

1:30 -3:30 Sciences in Translation

Location: Sequoyah Room SEQUO 103

- Alberto Morales (UC Irvine, Anthropology): Experimental Ecologies and Research Infrastructures in Panama's 'City of Knowledge' Biotech Zone.
- Riley Taitingfong (UCSD Communication): Editing the 'Āina: Indigenous Knowledge and Conservation Gene Drives in Hawai'i.
- Josh Jones (UCSD SIO, Marine Mammal Acoustics): Industrial Development, Marine Mammals, and Inuit Subsistence Hunting in a Rapidly Changing Canadian Arctic.

Abstracts

Esme G. Muñoz, Department of Philosophy & Associate Director, SDSU Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs, San Diego State University

Keeping Ourselves: The Role of Land and Corporeality in Environmental Justice Education: This paper examines decolonial strategies for storying Environmental Justice education with the messiness of multiple, and many times incommensurable, environmental heritages and identities. Particularly, this paper explores what the complicating of too-neat narratives of Environmental Justice (EJ) does to open up space in EJ pedagogy for more complete tellings centering corporeality and relations to land. This paper relies on on-going concerns within EJ literature about the convergence of EJ narratives into a singular story that often over-determines communities facing environmental injustice as powerless or always already associated with the environment in one-dimensional, largely negative ways.

Casey Walsh, Anthropology, UC Santa Barbara (tbc)

Water, Waters, and the Political Economy of Ontological Difference: Different groups of people think differently about the world, but some groups, and their ideas, dominate others. In this paper, I propose a conceptual and methodological approach to political ecology that recognizes profound ontological differences among ways that humans know the world, and at the same time shows how these multiple ways of knowing are arrayed in deeply unequal material social fields. To do this I draw on recent research in Mexico about how an ancestral notion of waters as plural and heterogeneous was largely displaced by one of water as singular and homogeneous. This history of ideas is inseparable from the building of unifying hydraulic infrastructures, and processes of dispossession, enclosure and commoditization. Paradoxically, however, these material processes of domination and unification actually reproduce a range of ontological difference in the form of values and uses for bottled and mineral waters. This view on political ecology embraces the counterhegemonic possibilities of ontological performativity, while retaining the analytical power of historical materialism.

Francisco López Bárcenas, El Colegio de San Luís, San Luis Potosí, Mexico

Colonialismo, Resistencia y Emancipación Epistémicos: El desafío que tenemos enfrente y al que habrá que darle respuesta es que hoy nos encontramos ante el reto de pensar, de pensarnos como pueblos indígenas y como sociedad diferentes, en un contexto donde muchas de las condiciones son adversas para hacerlo // The challenge that we face today and that we must confront is that we find ourselves with the problem of thought. The comprehension of ourselves as indigenous peoples and as a different society. Specifically, in a context in which many of the conditions to do so are unfavorable.

Rudy Duran & Judith Parenio, San Diego Artists.

Nature-Cultures Hands-on Clay Project: this is a hands-on activity where artists Rudy Durand and will teach us how to work clay with our hands. While making clay, we will learn about the technical processes, methods (coils/pinching) and nature elements that Native American communities incorporate in fabricating utensils and spiritual objects. Please bring an old t-shirt to use and a “natural object” that you might want to imprint in your creation.

Alberto Eduardo Morales, Anthropology, UC Irvine

Experimental Ecologies and Research Infrastructures in Panama’s City of Knowledge: This paper examines the social, scientific and political-economic contexts of natural products scientists in a private, non-profit, and state-supported science park, the City of Knowledge. Natural products scientists are interdisciplinary researchers who study the molecular properties of naturally occurring compounds for the development of potential pharmaceutical therapeutics and industrial application in chemical engineering and other biotechnological fields. I have found that natural products research practices today rather than focusing on testing plants or isolating single molecules for drug creation more and more search for molecular networks by closely examining inter-species chemical relations such as those found in microbiotic communities existing on the bodies of ants and their fungi cultivars, or even the endophytic fungi living inside mangrove tree leaves. The scientists’ research infrastructures thus, crucially, are also made up of these other biochemical and technological actors who are redefining human-nonhuman relations and consequently the production of health and well-being through multispecies medicine. In the absence of readily available pharmaceutical treatments for infectious diseases worldwide, a drying-up pipeline of chemical leads from nature, and an increasing patentization of scientific knowledge production, research centers around the world like Panama-Biotech-AIP continue the work of finding ways to respond to these uneven global distributions of health, research funds, scientific know-how, and forms of expertise that could accelerate the production of much needed drug interventions to control and contain threatening non-human life forms. In this context, I examine local human capacity building, international or translocal collaboration, and the absences and failures of technoscientific systems under precarious forms of financialization in today’s global knowledge economy.

Riley Taitingfong, Communication, UC San Diego

Editing the ‘Āina: Indigenous Knowledge and Conservation Gene Drives in Hawai‘i: This presentation will share preliminary findings from an ethnographic study of the ethical issues

surrounding the development of “gene drive” technologies for conservation purposes in Hawai‘i. A gene drive is a genetic engineering technique used to spread (or “drive”) a desired genetic variant and its effect (e.g., inability to transmit a pathogen) throughout an entire population of organisms. In Hawai‘i, scientists are using gene drives to engineer mosquitoes that are unable to transmit diseases to native birds. Given the many ethical concerns surrounding this emerging technology that has yet to be tested outside the laboratory (e.g., ecological effects, risks of unintended and irreversible spread of transgenic organisms), this project focuses on Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) perspectives and concerns regarding calls to use gene drives on their ‘āina (land), as well as the extent to which those involved in the development of gene drive mosquitoes attempt to elicit, understand, and respond to those concerns through “community engagement” efforts. Finally, analyzing this emerging technology in the historical and contemporary context of settler colonialism in the Pacific, this presentation will also problematize broader calls to test gene drives on “isolated” islands as contributing to the continued rendering of islands as laboratories available for scientific appropriation and experimentation.

Josh Jones, UCSD SIO, Marine Mammal Acoustics

Industrial Development, Marine Mammals, and Inuit Subsistence Hunting in a Rapidly Changing Canadian Arctic.

Joshua Jones (SIO) studies underwater acoustics and marine mammals. He has carried out research in Northern Canada in a site where corporations are transporting iron ore from a mine across a bay, registering sound levels and their effects on the bay’s marine mammals. Local indigenous residents have long relations with these mammals and “know them” through generations of practice. In government meetings about the effects of increased trips and noise in the bay, however, indigenous knowledge is not valued in the same ways as Jones’s “science”. In this presentation, Jones discusses the differing forms of knowledge at play and the efforts to bring them together to benefit both the communities and the mammals.