

FALL 2012**ENVS 5909 – ‘Doing Political Ecology’ seminar**

instructor: Max Boykoff boykoff@colorado.edu

Day/time: Wednesdays 11–11:50am

location: IBS 5 conference room

office hours: Wednesdays 8:30–10:30am

website: http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/students/envs_5909

This interactive seminar will consider tools of political ecology as they relate to participants’ ongoing research explorations. There are many derivations of political ecology, and our seminar here will explore them while considering what it ‘does’. By way of Piers Blaikie and Raymond Bryant, political ecology works through "the interaction between changing environments and the socio-economy, in which landscapes and the physiographic processes acting upon them are seen to have dialectical, historically derived and iterative relations with resource use and the socio-economic and political sets of relations that shape them" (1999, 132). We will also draw on insights from Paul Robbins who speaks of political ecology as critique (‘the hatchet’), and as equity/sustainability research (‘the seed’) (2004, 12-13).

Week 1: August 29 – *introductions, course plan discussion, reading literature suggestions*

Robbins, Paul (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* Wiley-Blackwell, London (2nd edition), introduction (pp. 1-8)

Week 2: September 5 – *what political ecology is/does, how it can relate to your research, co-facilitation #1*

Blaikie, Piers (2000). Development, Post-, Anti-, and Populist: A Critical Review. *Environment and Planning A* 32 (6): 951-1140.

Watts, Michael (2000). Development at the Millennium: Malthus, Marx and the Politics of Alternatives. *Geographische Zeitschrift* 88 (2): 67-93.

Week 3: September 12 – *grant writing discussion (case-study: Shawn Olson & EPA STAR)*

- read EPA STAR call for proposals, Shawn’s 2011 proposal, reviewer comments

Week 4: September 19 – *co-facilitation #2*

Robbins, Paul (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* Wiley-Blackwell, London (2nd edition), part I – what is political ecology? Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 9-48)

Week 5: September 26 – *conference presentation discussion (case-study: Lucy McAllister & DOPE 2012)*

- identify and bring in a list of presentation tips and suggestions

Week 6: October 3 – *co-facilitation #3*

Robbins, Paul (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* Wiley-Blackwell, London (2nd edition), part I – what is political ecology? Chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 49-100)

Week 7: October 10 – *articulating your projects practice/discussion; building (collective) identity*

- prepare a 2-3 min. summary of your research (plans) A. for academic colleagues, and B. for a journalist

Week 8: October 17 – *visit/mixer from Professor Paul Sutter's research group* (Department of History, Center for the American West, CU-Boulder)**Week 9: October 24** – *visit to Katie Lage* (Earth Sciences/Map Librarian, Acting Head; Jerry Crail Johnson Earth Sciences & Map Library); *research strategies and habits discussion***Week 10: October 31** – *co-facilitation #4*

Robbins, Paul (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* Wiley-Blackwell, London (2nd edition), part II – conceptual and methodological challenges, Chapters 5, 6 & 7 (pp. 101-154)

Week 11: November 7 – *prequalifying exams discussion (case-study: Mike Henry exam, May 2012)***Week 12: November 14** – *co-facilitation #5*

Robbins, P. (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* Wiley-Blackwell, London (2nd edition), part III – political ecology now, Chapters 8, 9 & 10 (pp. 155-214)

Week 13: November 21 – **fall break, no class****Week 14: November 28** – *co-facilitation #6*

Robbins, P. (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* Wiley-Blackwell, London (2nd edition), part III – political ecology now, Chapters 11 & 12 (pp. 215-244), part IV – where to now? Chapter 13 (pp. 245-253)

Week 15: December 5 – *peer review discussion/exercise; conference participation identification*

- read peer review manuscript TBA, identify three conferences pertinent to your work in 2012-2013

Week 16: December 12 – *wrap up, political ecology revisited, 2-3 min research summary revisited*

To earn 1 credit for the course, each participant will lead one session discussion of their research, and will co-facilitate one session of reading discussions. **To earn 3 credits**, each participant will fulfill the responsibilities noted above, and will produce some sort of written artifact – this can be a literature review, a book review, a grant proposal or a conference paper (for eventual submission to a peer-reviewed journal). Word counts will vary based on which path is taken.

All participants must attend all sessions (presentations & discussions), do all assigned readings, and actively participate in discussions. This might all be a little intense for 1 credit, but it will hopefully be worthwhile.