

Cultural Ecology Newsletter

(CEN #36 -- Fall 2000)

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Announcements

Notes from the Chair

Necrology: Jim Blaut

[Calls: Conferences, meetings, publications](#)

AAG New York sessions 2001

[Jobs/scholarships](#)

Plenty

[Meeting Reports](#)

[Members' News](#)

Harold Brookfield

Richie Howitt

Denevan in *Science*

New Hires

[Book Reviews & Notes](#)

Gray on Toulmin and Quan (eds.)

New Books

Announcements

The CESG Listserv (AAG-CESG-L) is for general exchange of information, news, views, debate, questions and answers by the members of the specialty group. All current CESG members have been subscribed to the list. You can manage your subscription and see past messages at <http://lists.psu.edu/archives/aag-cesg-l.html>. For all queries, email jpm23@psu.edu. Only list members (CESG members) can post messages. To do so, send your message to the list address: AAG-CESG-L@LISTS.PSU.EDU. Everyone on the list will receive your message so please ensure that the subject line is informative, and the content is appropriate. Contributions sent to this list are automatically archived for posterity.

Notes from the Chair

Do you remember the paper [Cultural Ecology Newsletter](#) that showed up in your mailbox twice a year, usually some shade of yellow, folded in half and stapled? It meant a lot to me as I was joining this community as a doctoral student at Texas and continued to mean a lot in terms of keeping up with happenings after I moved

to Penn State. We still have the CEN, of course, the virtual version that Bob Kuhlken founded in 1996 and that fully replaced the paper version in 1999. It offers many advantages, but you can't take a pile of back issues on a long flight with you to reflect on our collective history. That's what I recently did with my collection of paper CENs (1989-99) when seeking some perspective from which to write this column. The paper CENs are something all right, and in looking back through them I found some CESC milestones. In 1989, Phil Porter reported that three members used e-mail, those precocious few being himself, Jeanne Kay, and Greg Knight. In 1990, the first two Student Paper Awards went to Karl Zimmerer and Tom Whitmore. And in 1994, Antoinette Winklerprins became the first Student Representative. The last issue is on metric paper, signaling the shift in editorship to Simon Batterbury in England.

Beyond such remarkable changes -- from only three members with e-mail in 1989 to an e-CEN a decade later, for one -- some constants also emerged from my review. The principal one has been an ongoing concern over the linkage between group size and identity. Most of the Chairs of the 1990s at some point reflected on the size and composition of the membership, which has climbed from just under a hundred in 1985 to about 320 now (down a bit from the high of around 350 during the late 1990s). That issue of group size has often intersected with the issue of group identity, mainly as reflected in debates over our name. Some have feared that changing the name would drive some existing members out, others that not changing the name would keep potential members away. It is also clear from the Notes from the Chair columns, members letters, and editorials that few of us believe in growth for growth's sake. Rather, the issue comes down to the belief that vitality requires a certain size to encompass the diversity, especially intergenerational diversity, necessary to critical debate and intellectual growth.

As we come up to the 2001 AAG meeting in New York, concerns about our size and identity persist. The issue of a name change was raised on the [Listserv](#) by Bill Doolittle and hotly debated. At the same time, our membership really is down, a decrease that parallels the general recent decline in [AAG](#) membership. Yet we have a healthy population structure, in terms of both gender and age; so we are not going extinct. The sessions we sponsor at national meetings are well attended and characterized by open-minded discussion. We are sponsoring or co-sponsoring some three dozen sessions and panels at the New York meetings, many being efforts to interact with other specialty groups. We have a [Listserv](#) with 230 subscribers. And, best of all, we continue to disagree. I am determined that all of our members should also be able to read through the CEN back issues in order to appreciate how such disagreement and critical debate has been a source of constructive dynamism. I am therefore currently trying to get hold of a complete set of CENs to have them scanned and put on the web [**Editor's Note:** See the "Archives" link from the main CAPE s.g. website]. In part, that project contributes to the AAG centennial effort by establishing

a public archive for research on intellectual and institutional history. It will also, I hope, jog our collective memory to celebrate our intellectual dynamism.

And, of course, that dynamism includes changes in the CESG Board. Many thanks to the outgoing Board -- Oliver Coomes, Emily Young, Julie Fischer, Tony Bebbington, Paul Robbins, and Eric Keys -- for a job well done. The current Board -- Tom Whitmore, Barbara Brower, Mike Steinberg, Karl Offen, Dave Carr, and myself -- are honored to have your confidence and aim to serve you well. Please contact us with questions, ideas, and concerns. Send Simon Batterbury your news items and book reviews. Send me agenda items for the business meeting. Send the Board your entries for the [Student Paper](#) and [Field Study](#) Awards. And visit the [CESG web site](#) for further information on those and other items.

[Andrew Sluyter](#), CESG Chair

Necrology: James M. Blaut (20th Oct 1927-11th Nov 2000).

Compiled by Simon Batterbury [with reference to internet sources: thanks to Ben Wisner].

[Jim Blaut](#), who passed away 11 November 2000 after a battle with cancer, played a formative intellectual and political role in geography and the social sciences. One of the most singular, seminal, and far-sighted figures in modern geography, he consistently followed a 'road not taken' in critical scholarship of tropical cultural ecology, colonialism and environmental determinism, environmental cognition, and questions of race and nation. In tackling these questions Jim explored new terrain in contemporary Marxism, but because of the breadth of his work, also contributed widely to theories of agricultural development and to cultural ecology. He is perhaps best known for his critiques of diffusion theory, and always argued against 'diffusionist' models of European capitalism and cultural hegemony. Jim argued against the view that capitalism began in Europe, and - *contra* the major tenets of environmental determinism - nor were there any privileged qualities to the European peoples, or their environments, that made them 'natural' agents of capitalism. The 'diffusion' model of European civilization ignored a vital counter-traffic in ideas and goods from the periphery, and it was 'invented' to justify European economic and political expansion. *The Colonizers' Model of the World* (1993) was conceived as the first of a trilogy, but he lived only to complete the second volume, *Eight Eurocentric Historians* (2000), which takes on the work of Max Weber, Lynn White, Jr., Robert Brenner, Eric Jones, Michael Mann, John Hall, Jared Diamond, and David Landes for their [colonialist understandings of history](#). In a parallel strand, Jim's pioneering work on environmental cognition and behavior (with David Stea and others) also challenged paternalistic ideas of non-western behaviour - arguing through comparative research that 'mapping' is a cultural universal, and serves as an important ecological adaptation.

Jim was born in New York in 1927, and was educated at Chicago, the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad, and Louisiana State University (MS 1954, PhD 1958). Despite the global sweep of his later work, his dissertation was on the microgeography of a one acre market-garden in Singapore. Work in tropical and spatial cognition took him from the University of Malaya, Singapore (1951-53), to Yale as an assistant professor (1956-1961), Cornell (1960), the University of Puerto Rico (1961, 1971-72), UEMSCO in the Dominican Republic (1964), the College of the Virgin Islands (1964-66), the University of Connecticut (1966-67), and to then to Clark University (1967-71). His early work in tropical cultural ecology was on peasant agriculture and ethnoscience in Singapore (1951-53), Jamaica (1958-59), Costa Rica (1960), Venezuela (1963-65), St Croix (1964-66), and St. Vincent (1970), and he also worked in socialist Grenada in 1983 on an energy planning project. Jim remained a member of CESG until his death, and attended the 2000 Pittsburgh Specialty meeting. I believe his work on the tropics was partially curtailed by asthma, but his interest in human-environment relationships remained undiminished.

At Clark University, Jim remains something of a legend. With Dick Peet, David Stea, Ben Wisner and other radicals, he participated in *Antipode's* modest beginnings, and contributed several seminal and oft-reprinted contributions to that journal in its pioneering, radical years. "Jim Blaut's plane" - something of a Clark myth to graduate students - actually did exist - it was a light aircraft purchased for research work on spatial cognition. While countercultural movements attempted to 'raise the Pentagon' in 1967 to exorcise its demons, Jim Blaut was there, flying a group of Clark geographers overhead. The Clark plane was even used for graduate fieldtrips to Puerto Rico, but ended its days after suffering mechanical failure. In dispute with an unsympathetic Department Head and the management - and with tenure in jeopardy - Jim quit Clark, leaving the plane grounded in the tropics. After so many years as an itinerant geographer, he spent the rest of his working life as a Professor of Geography and Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he first touched down in 1972.

Jim was presented with a [Distinguished Scholarship Award from the AAG](#) in 1997 for his original, influential scholarly contributions to geographical theory and practice. As an uncompromising and articulate supporter of the academic left, involved in both academic debate and activism, he was committed to a vision of geography as a means to social justice, and entered debate with real passion ([Jim on the Annals reorganization](#)). Jim was a member of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, and a strong supporter of the Puerto Rican *Independistas*. His practical work on children's mapping and geographical education has spread far and wide in the teaching profession.

Always in touch with the pulse of critical scholarship, his postings to numerous listserves and conference networks began to fall silent in recent months. The New York AAG meetings hosted special sessions in his honor. He will be sorely

missed. Jim is survived by his wife America Sorrentini, and his daughter Gini Blaut-Sorrentini. He was buried in Puerto Rico.

JIM BLAUT: APPENDIX TO NECROLOGY

[David Stea](#), Southwest Texas State University

The passing of a great man or woman is a time, beyond mourning, for reminiscence. It is personal reminiscence that softens the pain of loss, that bridges the gap between the person and oft-recounted achievements, for beyond these achievements is almost always an intensely human story to be told by those who knew him or her best.

So it is with Jim Blaut. Jim piloted small planes for a number of years and he and I met in January, 1966, appropriately enough, on an airstrip in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. I'd written a letter to him, which he answered (I was later to learn how special this was, since, until the advent of e-mail, Jim hardly ever wrote letters). Jim was a master of the personal touch: he came to meet me not alone, but with his wife, Meca, and his daughter, Gini. He announced that he was about to fly out, but the weather closed in, so that neither of us could leave. We talked through the night. When I awoke the next morning, I knew that this was someone with whom I wanted to work for a long time.

More than a year later, concluding my research in Mexico, I received an offer from Clark University. The word that Jim had joined their Graduate School of Geography convinced me. When I walked into the year's first faculty meeting in September, 1967, Jim's first words to me were: "I see you finally got out of St. Thomas".

Jim's real life was his basement, and moved from his basement in Worcester to his basement in Chicago. The Worcester basement was work space, talk space, party space; in it as much as elsewhere, *Antipode*, which was born among a group of us who remained behind at the end of one of my faculty seminars, grew and flourished. The Place Perception Project's official home was at Clark, but our ideas about the development of spatial cognition, of mapping skills, in very young children matured in chats with Meca in Jim's kitchen, as he consumed cold pizza and warm Coke on Sunday mornings, and later underground. This 'underground' was both real and symbolic: it was the birthplace of the radical ideas that resulted in Jim's seminal works of the 90s; it was the locale as well of Jim's famous 'antiparties', where Meca, Gini, and the rest of Clark's radical core danced to Puerto Rican music until the wee hours of Sunday mornings. It was there, too, that Jim, Howard Stanton, and I launched the 'Miniversity', an experiment in alternative higher education.

Even troglodytes need fresh air now and then, and when we emerged from the fabled basement it was often to go 'watching': Jim watched birds and I watched trains, and we could sometimes do both at the same time, in the same place. While Rhode Island slaughterhouses were good places for bird-watching, some train tracks were even

better. Insects took wing with the passing trains, and the birds swooped down to feast on them.

Amidst a storm of controversy, Jim and I left Clark in 1971. The world around us had changed. Our joint work on the development of mapping abilities in young children continued with diminishing intensity through the late seventies. Unwilling simply to swim with the postmodern tide, Jim retreated once more down into his basement, this time in Chicago, for more than a decade. What emerged, along with a stream of published articles, were [1492](#) and the two volumes of his incomplete trilogy.

Jim and I joined forces again at the beginning of the 1990s to resurrect our work with kids. The ideological reaction which had infected almost all aspects of life, academia included, had made the results of our earlier research with children so controversial that another series of research projects was clearly called for, this time of an international and intercultural scope. The work involved colleagues in Mexico, Iran, South Africa, and the U.K. Funded by the National Science Foundation, we were working on the capstone of this series when Jim passed away. The research involved several British colleagues, principal among them another birdwatching enthusiast, [Chris Spencer](#). Very recently, Chris reminisced about "...visits; long, long phone calls, birdwatching down the freeway from the airport into Chicago (this was Jim driving, and using binoculars at the same time)..and looking for Dippers in the Derbyshire streams, without success, only to have him come triumphant into the Department (Sheffield's Department of Psychology) the next morning, having spotted his first one on the stream which runs past the Beauchief Hotel, from his kingsize bed there". Jim's huge frame always demanded a king size bed. According to Anne Reid, our closest co-worker in Mexico and herself something of an iconoclast, Jim stood out as a vital and funny force in the generally conventional world of academe."

A few people have the privilege of walking in the footsteps of giants. The memory of Jim, of what he stood for and what he did, will always remain strong with so many of his colleagues, students, grandstudents, and great-grandstudents, who are finding it hard to imagine a world without him. With Dick Peet, "it was a shock to hear about him..frankly I' m in deep disbelief."

Jim Blaut's contributions, not just to radical geography but to radical thought and action in general, will always be with us. He was one of the very few geographers whose influence outside geography was as great or even greater than within our field: his work is well-known to psychologists, anthropologists, historians...the list goes on and on. But the picture that I will forever carry in my mind is of the three of them, Jim, incredibly tall, tiny Meca, and 13-year old Gini waving across the airfield in St. Thomas nearly 35 years ago. As Anne Reid put it "he was in every sense larger than life" .

Some key publications

Blaut, J.M. 1959. A study of cultural determinants of soil erosion and conservation in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. *Social and Economic Studies*, 8:403-420.

Blaut, J.M. 1970. Geographic models of imperialism. *Antipode* 2,1:65- 85.

M. Muir and J.M. Blaut. 1971. Studies of geographic learning. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 61: 387-393.

J.M. Blaut. 1973. The theory of development. *Antipode* 5,2: 22-27.

J.M. Blaut.1974. The ghetto as an internal neocolony. In: R. Morrill and J. Eichenbaum, eds., *New Perspectives in Urban Location Theory*. Special number of *Antipode*, 6,1: 37-42.

J.M. Blaut. 1975. Imperialism. *Antipode*, 7,1: 1-19.

J.M. Blaut. 1976. Where was capitalism born? *Antipode*, 8,2: 1-11.

J.M. Blaut. 1977. Two views of diffusion. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 67: 343-349.

J.M. Blaut. 1980. A radical critique of cultural geography. *Antipode*, 12,2: 25-30.

J.M. Blaut. 1982. Nationalism as an autonomous force. *Science and Society*, 46,1: 1-23.

J.M. Blaut.1987. Diffusionism: A Uniformitarian Critique. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 10, 1: 30-47.

Blaut, J.M. 1987. Place perception in perspective. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 297-306

J.M. Blaut.1987. *The National Question: Decolonizing the Theory of Nationalism*. London: Zed Books. ([chapter 5 cont.](#))

J.M.Blaut. & L Figueroa. 1988. *Aspectos de la cuestion nacional en Puerto Rico*. San Juan: Editorial Claridad. ([section on Marxists who oppose independence](#))

J.M. Blaut. 1989. [Colonialism and the Rise of Capitalism](#). *Science & Society* 53,3: 260-296.

J.M. Blaut, 1991. Natural mapping. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16ns:55-74.

J.M.Blaut. 1992. [The theory of cultural racism](#). *Antipode* 23: 289-299.

J.M. Blaut (ed.) 1992. [Fourteen Ninety-Two: The Debate on Colonialism, Eurocentrism, and History](#). Africa World Press, Trenton.

J.M. Blaut.1994. [Robert Brenner In the Tunnel of Time](#). *Antipode* 26,4: 351-374.

D. Stea, J.M. Blaut, and J. Stephens. 1996. Mapping as a Cultural Universal. In J. Portugali, ed., *The Construction of Cognitive Maps*. Boston: Kluwer.

Blaut, J.M. 1993. *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History*. New York: Guilford Press.

J.M. Blaut, 1997 Piagetian Pessimism and the Mapping Abilities of Young Children. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 87,1: 168-177.

J.M. Blaut 1997 [Evaluating Imperialism](#). *Science and Society*. Fall.

Blaut, J.M. 1999. [Environmentalism and Eurocentrism](#). *Geographical Review* 89,3: 391-408

Blaut, J.M. 1999. [Marxism and Eurocentric diffusionism](#). Chilcote, R. (ed) *The Political Economy of Imperialism: critical appraisals*. Boston: Kluwer. pp127-140.

Blaut, J.M. 1999. Maps and spaces. *Professional Geographer*, Vol.51, No.4, pp.510-515

Blaut, J.M. 2000. *The Colonizer's Model of the World, Volume 2: Eight Eurocentric Historians*. New York: [Guilford Press](#).

Calls; conferences, meetings, publications

AAG New York Feb 2001 - list of sponsored sessions

Please find below a listing of the thirty-eight AAG 2001 sessions that have been sponsored by the CESG (6 each) and co-sponsored with other specialty groups (32 each). Clearly we continue to be an extremely active group that overlaps and collaborates with other groups. A breakdown of co-sponsorship provides some insight into which other groups we collaborate with.

Latin America 8 ; Human Dimensions 7 ; Africa 6 ; Cultural 6 ; Hazards 6 ; Asian 5 ; Indigenous Peoples 5 ; Qualitative Research 4; Geomorphology 4 ; Contemporary Ag 3 ; Political 2 ; CLAG 1 ; Climate 1 ; Biogeography 1 ; Coastal and Marine 1 ; Economic 1 ; Remote Sensing 1 ; Socialist 1 ; Urban 1 ; Water Resources 1.

Many of the co-sponsorships obviously represent long-standing associations, especially those towards the top of the ranking. The new/re-named Indigenous Peoples SG clearly has much in common with the CESG. Also worth remarking on is the lack of co-sponsorship with some specialty groups that would seem to overlap with CESG in areas of interest. Thanks to those who put the following sessions together. I hope you all find the listing useful. Please remember to e-mail me agenda

items for the NYC business meeting and keep those entries in the student paper and field study competitions coming in. Thanks. *Andrew Sluyter, Chair.*

1. Seasonal Climate Forecasts: Linking Climate and Users in Africa (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Hazards, Climatology, and Human Dimensions of Global Change Specialty Groups). Organizers: William Easterling, Pennsylvania State University, Thomas Downing, University of Oxford. Chair: William Easterling, Pennsylvania State University.
2. Gardens as Cultural Survival/Garden's as Resistance (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Urban Geography, and Qualitative Research Specialty Groups). Organizer: Gerda R. Wekerle, York University. Chair: Gerda R. Wekerle, York University.
3. Critical Perspectives on the Use of GIS/Remote Sensing Techniques in People-and-Environment Research (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology Specialty Group). Organizer: Matthew Turner, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Chair: Matthew Turner, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
4. Water Resources Geography: Theoretical Reappraisals (Sponsored by Water Resources, Cultural Ecology, and Qualitative Methods Specialty Groups). Organizer: Daanish Mustafa, George Mason University. Chair: George E. Clark, Environmental Protection Agency.
5. Rethinking Conservation and Development Territories (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology Specialty Group). Organizers: Thomas J. Bassett, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Karl Zimmerer, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Chair: Thomas J. Bassett, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
6. Critical Approaches to Ecological Restoration (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology Specialty Group). Organizer: Morgan Robertson, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Chair: Morgan Robertson, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
7. Indigenous Geography I: Cartographies and Geomatics (Sponsored by: Indigenous Peoples, Cultural Geography, Cultural Ecology, Latin America, Asian Geography, and African Geography Specialty Groups). Organizer: RDK Herman, Towson University. Chair: David Aagesen, SUNY-Geneseo.
8. Indigenous Geography II: Representation and Identity (Sponsored by: Indigenous Peoples, Cultural Geography, Cultural Ecology, Latin America, Asian Geography, and African Geography Specialty Groups). Organizer: RDK Herman, Towson University. Chair: Douglas Deur, Louisiana State University.
9. Indigenous Geography III: Landscape, Territory and Conflict (Sponsored by: Indigenous Peoples, Cultural Geography, Cultural Ecology, Latin America, Asian Geography, and African Geography Specialty Groups). Organizer: RDK Herman, Towson University. Chair: Dick Winchell, Eastern Washington University.

10. Indigenous Geography IV: Conservation and Management (Sponsored by Indigenous Peoples, Latin American, Asian Geography, Africa, Cultural Ecology, and Cultural Geography Specialty Groups). Organizer: RDK Herman, Towson University. Chair: Brian J. Murton, University of Hawaii.

11. Indigenous Geography V: The Importance of Indigenous Geography (Sponsored by Indigenous Peoples, Latin American, Asian Geography, Africa, Cultural Ecology, and Cultural Geography Specialty Groups). Organizer: RDK Herman, Towson University. Chair: RDK Herman, Towson University.

12. Cultural/Political Ecology in an Urban Industrial World I (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology and Contemporary Agriculture and Rural Land Use Specialty Groups). Organizer: Paul Robbins, Ohio State University. Chair: Paul Robbins, Ohio State University.

13. Cultural/Political Ecology in an Urban Industrial World II (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology and Contemporary Agriculture and Rural Land Use Specialty Groups). Organizer: Paul Robbins, Ohio State University. Chair: Paul Robbins, Ohio State University.

14. Cultural/Political Ecology in an Urban Industrial World III (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology and Contemporary Agriculture and Rural Land Use Specialty Groups). Organizer: Paul Robbins, Ohio State University. Chair: Paul Robbins, Ohio State University.

15. Chiles, Satellites, Institutions, and History: Understanding Tropical Deforestation in the Southern Yucatan Peninsula (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology, and Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Specialty Groups, and CLAG-LASG). Organizer: B.L. Turner II, Clark University. Chair: Diana Liverman, University of Arizona.

16. Incorporating Nature: Ecology and the Non-Human in Critical Approaches to Nature (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology and Socialist Geography Specialty Groups). Organizers: Morgan Robertson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bruce Braun, University of Minnesota. Chair: Morgan Robertson, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

17. Historical Ecology--Methods and Applications (Sponsored by Biogeography and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizer: Steven P. Norman, Pennsylvania State University. Chair: Steven P. Norman, Pennsylvania State University.

18. Integrating Biophysical and Social-political Approaches to Environmental Change: Theoretical and Empirical Challenges and Prospects (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Human Dimensions of Global Change, and Qualitative Research Specialty Groups). Organizer: Andrea J. Nightingale, University of Minnesota. Chair: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University.

19. Changing Landscapes and Landscapes of Change: Conservation and Development Implications of the Anthropogenic Amazon (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology and Latin American Specialty Groups). Organizer: Antoinette WinklerPrins, Michigan State University. Chair: Antoinette WinklerPrins, Michigan State University.
20. African Political Ecology (Sponsored by African and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizer: Nikolas C. Heynen, Indiana University. Chair: Nikolas C. Heynen, Indiana University.
21. Agricultural Change and Landscape Transformations (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology Specialty Group). Organizers: Brad Jokisch, Ohio University, Rheyna Laney, Sonoma State University. Chair: Brad Jokisch, Ohio University.
22. Questions on the Marine Frontiers of Human Geography (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Cultural Geography, and Coastal and Marine Specialty Groups). Organizer: Seth Macinko, University of Connecticut. Chair: Seth Macinko, University of Connecticut.
23. Social Movements and Protest in Natural Resource Conflicts (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology Specialty Group). Organizers: Christian A. Kull, McGill University, Jeffrey Bury, University of Colorado-Boulder. Chair: James McCarthy, Pennsylvania State University.
24. Reflecting on Some Human - Environment Geographies: Commonalities, Differences, Changes I. (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Hazards, and Human Dimension of Global Change Specialty Groups). Organizer: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University. Chair: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University.
25. Reflecting on Some Human-Environment Geographies: Commonalities, Differences, Changes II (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Hazards, and Human Dimensions of Global Change Specialty Groups). Organizers: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University, Kirstin Dow, University of South Carolina. Chair: Kirstin Dow, University of South Carolina.
26. Reflecting on Some Human-Environment Geographies: Commonalities, Differences, Changes III. Organizers: Andrew Sluyter, The Pennsylvania State University, William Solecki, Montclair State University. Chair: William Solecki, Montclair State University.
27. Reflecting on Some Human-environment Geographies: Commonalities, Differences, Changes IV. (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Hazards, and Human Dimensions of Global Change Specialty Group). Organizer: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University. Chair: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University.
28. The Politics of Socially Produced Natures (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, Economic Geography, and Political Geography Specialty Groups). Organizers: W. Scott Prudham, University of Toronto, Gavin Bridge, University of Oklahoma, Terry

Marsden, Cardiff University, Phil McManus, University of Sydney. Chair: W. Scott Prudham, University of Toronto.

29. Everybody Is Talking About It (Sponsored by: Hazards and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizer: Daanish Mustafa, George Mason University. Chair: James Russell, University of Colorado.

30. Soils in Cultural Context I: Western Asia (Sponsored by: Geomorphology and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizers: Tim Beach, Georgetown University, Nicholas Dunning, University of Cincinnati, Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, George Mason University. Chair: Nicholas Dunning, University of Cincinnati.

31. Soils in Cultural Context II: Northern Europe (Sponsored by: Geomorphology and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizers: Tim Beach, Georgetown University, Nicholas Dunning, University of Cincinnati, Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, George Mason University. Chair: Dorothy Friedel, Sonoma State University, William I. Woods, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

32. Soils in Cultural Context III: Mesoamerica and Africa (Sponsored by: Geomorphology and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizers: Tim Beach, Georgetown University, Nicholas Dunning, University of Cincinnati. Chair: Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, George Mason University.

33. Soils in Cultural Context IV: American West (Sponsored by Geomorphology and Cultural Ecology Specialty Groups). Organizers: Tim Beach, Georgetown University, Nicholas Dunning, University of Cincinnati. Chair: Tim Beach, Georgetown University.

34. Bambi Meets Godzilla: Human Environment Concerns and Remote Sensing/GIS (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology, Africa, and Remote Sensing Specialty Groups). Organizer: B.L. Turner II, Clark University. Chair: B.L. Turner II, Clark University.

35. Guatemala: Fieldwork in a Post-Revolutionary Landscape (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology and Latin America Specialty Groups). Organizer: Michael K. Steinberg, University of Mississippi. Chair: Michael K. Steinberg, University of Mississippi.

36. The Next Generation: Graduate Student Papers in Cultural/Political Ecology (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology Specialty Group). Organizers: Andres Guhl, University of Florida, Robert Daniels University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign. Chair: Andrew Sluyter, Pennsylvania State University.

37. The Globalization of Environmental Policy (Sponsored by Cultural Ecology, and Political Geography Specialty Groups). Organizers: Joshua Muldavin, University of California Los Angeles, Piers Blaikie, University of East Anglia, Alex Clapp, Simon Fraser University, Lucy Jarosz, University of Washington, George Leddy, University of California Los Angeles. Chairs: Joshua Muldavin, University of California Los Angeles, Piers Blaikie, University of East Anglia. Piers Blaikie (UEA) and Joshua

Muldavin (UCLA). Upstream downstream, China, India: different environment or different narrative? Alex Clapp (Simon Fraser). Global markets and environmental narratives in the social construction of the Great Bear Rainforest (Canada). George S. Leddy (UCLA). Conservation Trends and Global Trade in Marine Fishery Products: a critique Lucy Jarosz (Washington). Development Discourses of Tropical Forest Policy: the case of Madagascar.

38. Rights to Resources: Unraveling Property Regimes (Sponsored by: Cultural Ecology and Qualitative Geography Specialty Group). Organizer: Firooza Pavri, Emporia State University. Chair: Firooza Pavri, Emporia State University.

Raising Agricultural Productivity in the Tropics: Biophysical Challenges for Technology and Policy. 16-17 October 2000, Harvard University. A conference with papers by Jeffrey Sachs, Calestous Juma, Vern Ruttan, Rattan Lal, Pedro Sanchez etc. See <http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidbiotech/ag/index.html> for details. Draft papers available.

Jobs/scholarships

Job at Western Kentucky The Department of Geography and Geology at Western Kentucky University invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track position as Assistant Professor beginning August 2001, subject to budget approval. A Ph.D. is preferred, as is teaching experience. We seek a Cultural/Human Geographer who can contribute to the Department's planning, methodology, and regional studies courses (Latin America and/or Europe). Candidates with a background in Geographical Information Sciences (GIS) and Data Analysis will be given preference. Applicants should demonstrate their commitment to quality undergraduate and graduate teaching as well as their potential to contribute to the long-term development of the program. Faculty are expected to develop active research programs, particularly in the area of collaborative student/faculty research, and engage in service to the Department, University, and community. Send a letter of application, curriculum vitae, the names and contact information of three references, and graduate transcripts by **March 15, 2001**, to Dr. David J. Keeling, Chair, Search Committee, Department of Geography and Geology, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101-3576. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled. See <http://www2.wku.edu/geoweb>.

Job at Central Washington The Department of Geography and Land Studies at Central Washington University invites applications for an Assistant/Associate

Professor to teach a broad range of classes with an emphasis in field oriented Cultural Geography. Position is tenure-track, beginning September 2001. Teaching experience, knowledge of contemporary geographic techniques, and PhD required. Research and teaching interests in Latin American and/or Native American geography preferred. We are a medium-sized department offering a comprehensive curriculum within the state's main teacher training university. Candidate will be expected to teach classes and advise students in the geography major, the environmental studies minor, and in the interdisciplinary resource management graduate program. Teaching expectations include World Regional and Human Geography, along with more specialized upper division topical and regional courses. Ellensburg is ideally situated in the center of the state, providing easy access to diverse research and field trip locations for both physical and cultural geography. There are sizable populations of Hispanic and Native American groups nearby, and opportunities abound for geographers interested in political ecology and related issues such as environmental justice. Apply: Applicants should send a letter of application and curriculum vitae to Robert Kuhlken, Search Committee Chair, Department of Geography and Land Studies, Central Washington University, Ellensburg, WA 98926-7420, USA [kuhlkenr@cwu.EDU] More information is available on our web site: <http://www.cwu.edu/~geograph/index.html>. Review of applications begins 16 January 2001, and continues until position is filled. CWU is an AA/EOE/Title IX Institution.

Job at ICIMOD. Researcher, Mountain Agricultural Systems (Vac.2000/3). The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) was established in 1983 to promote an environmentally sound mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of the mountain populations of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas (HKH). ICIMOD is looking for a suitable person for the position of Researcher, for its project on "Methodologies for Assessing Sustainable Agricultural Systems in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas". The focus of the project is on development of a regional approach towards delineation of characteristic mountain farming systems in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. The project intends to apply an integrated methodology along identical lines on two scales; one broad regional scale covering the complete Himalayas as an ecoregion and one subregional scale for selected pilot areas in India, Nepal and China. Data collection tries to balance the optimal line between regional coverage and highest relevance of various farming system aspects. Scaling effects therefore form an inherent part of the methodology. For the integration of regional biophysical and socio-economical data in various states of aggregation and different temporal and spatial resolutions, the project seeks additional input from a researcher with a strong background in the socio-agronomic aspects of mountain agricultural systems. Major Tasks - Contribute to further development and testing of the methodology, in particular related to impacts of agricultural policies - Assist in coordination of work with the regional partner institutions in the Himalayas - Contribute to the compilation of publications and organization of regional workshops to be held by the project.

Minimum Qualifications - MSc. or preferably a PhD. with comparative experience in the field of Agricultural Sciences, Geography, Anthropology or related social science - Strong background in systems approaches and affinity with modeling - Strong conceptual capacity to synthesize implications of various policy related development processes - Good knowledge of key issues in agricultural development in the Himalayan region, including knowledge of one or more regional languages - Good background in usage of spatial data and good knowledge of GIS and relational database management system concepts - Excellent communicational skills in English
Term: One-and-half years commencing 16 October 2000, or as early as possible.
Remuneration: Equivalent to level P1. Interested persons should apply with complete bio-data and names and contact address of three referees to the following address before 25 September 2000. The Personnel Section, ICIMOD GPO Box 3226 Kathmandu, Nepal Fax: (977-1) 524509.kansakar@icimod.org.np.
Web: <http://www.icimod.org.sg>

Assistant/Associate Professor, University of Arizona, 2001.

Job at Oregon. International Studies Program, Univ. of Oregon. Assistant Professor to begin Fall 2001; senior rank possible for an exceptional scholar with leadership abilities. Preference for expertise in Environment and Development. The faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and original research. Geographic area of specialization and disciplines are open, but with preference for candidates with expertise on Africa or Latin America, and those with backgrounds in economics, geography, history, political science, and related areas. Ph.D. or equivalent required. Candidates should send a letter of application, statement of research agenda and teaching interests/expertise and current vita to Professor Anita M. Weiss/Dr. Rob Proudfoot, Search Committee Co-Chairs, International Studies Program, 5206 University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403-5206. The final date for receipt of applications is December 1, 2000.

Job at Boulder (re-advertised). Assistant Professor, Environmental Policy. The Department of Political Science and Environmental Studies Program of the University of Colorado, Boulder invite applications for a jointly rostered tenure-track position at the rank of Assistant Professor. Preference for candidates interested in globalization or governance issues, but we welcome applications in the field of environmental policy defined. Competitive candidates will be able to demonstrate an active and systematic research agenda and effective teaching. Please send a CV, samples of research, teaching portfolio and three letters of recommendation to the: Environmental Policy Search Committee, Department of Political Science, Campus Box 333, University of Colorado, Boulder, Boulder, CO 80309-0333, USA. To ensure consideration, application materials should be received no later Oct. 15, 2000.

Ohio State job (re-advertised). ASSISTANT or ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, Department of Geography, The Ohio State University. PhD required or strong expectation thereof. HUMAN GEOGRAPHER with a focus on Society and Environment. Interests that intersect with Urban and/or Economic Geography will be an advantage, although other orientations in human geography will be considered. Knowledge of and appreciation for the diverse research approaches represented in this Department also will be an advantage; i.e., preference will be given to those whose interests augment and support the department's substantive, theoretical, and analytical orientations. This position will complement two emerging University-wide initiatives in which Geography plays a central role -- on urban and regional analysis and environmental policy. Other complementary areas include societal aspects of environmental change that link with strengths directly in this area, our substantial expertise in Atmospheric-Climatic Studies, the Geography faculty overall, and the University's Environmental Science Graduate Program. The Ohio State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Qualified women, minorities, Vietnam-era veterans, and individuals with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. To be assured of consideration, a completed set of application materials must be received by October 15, 2000, but later applications will be considered until the position is filled. Letter of application, complete vitae, statement of professional interests and accomplishments, three letters of reference, and selected papers (published, forthcoming, submitted) should be sent to Lawrence A. Brown, Chair; Department of Geography; The Ohio State University; 154 North Oval Mall; Columbus, Ohio 43210- 1361, USA. Tel: 614-292-2514/2320; FAX 614-292-6213; e-mail labrown@geography.ohio-state.edu;... [home page](#).

Job at Iowa. The University of Iowa, Department of Geography, Visiting Assistant Professor. One year, beginning in August, 2001. The department seeks a person to expand and complement our teaching and research capabilities in Environmental Studies. Specialties in environment and development, and human dimensions of global change are especially welcome. A Ph.D. by the time of appointment is required. The 3/2 teaching load (five courses per year) is spread over introductory, intermediate, and graduate levels. The successful candidate will be expected to teach one semester of a large, introductory social science course on contemporary environmental issues. The department seeks a person with a commitment to research publication, excellent teaching, and graduate education. Send letter of application, vita, and evidence of teaching ability, and arrange to have three letters of reference sent as soon as possible. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The University of Iowa is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications from women and minorities are especially encouraged. Apply: Gerard Rushton, Search Committee Chair, Department of Geography, 316 Jessup Hall. The University of Iowa, Iowa City 52242, USA. Phone (319) 335-0151. E-mail: gerard-rushton@uiowa.edu

National Security Education Program (NSEP) Graduate International Fellowships enable U.S. graduate students to pursue specialization in area and language study or to add an important international dimension to their education. NSEP Fellowships support students pursuing the study of languages, cultures, and world regions which are critical to U.S. national security, but which are less frequently studied by U.S. graduate students, i.e., areas of the world other than Western Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The Academy for Educational Development administers the program. Support for language or area studies coursework at your home university is \$2,000 per semester. Overseas study is based on program expenses for a maximum of \$10,000 per semester for up to two semesters. All details at <http://www.aed.org/nsep/>. Deadline January 16, 2001. [note: check the service requirements. Ed.]

Meeting Reports

Members' (or those who should be..) News

Harold Brookfield's new book, 'Exploring Agrodiversity' will be published by Columbia University Press in New York in about February 2001. He describes it as a contribution to human or cultural ecology, rather than to any of the parent disciplines of this interdisciplinary field. Brookfield is an Emeritus Professor at the Australian National University, and a former CESG Netting Award recipient. harold.brookfield@anu.edu.au

Richie Howitt, senior lecturer in the Department of Human Geography at Macquarie University, Australia, has been named the 1999 Outstanding Social Sciences teacher for Australian Universities. Howitt teaches geography at Macquarie and contributes to the University's Aboriginal Studies Program, offering a course on resource management and native title issues to Aboriginal students, and chairing the Academic Senate's Aboriginal Studies Committee. His research deals with the social and environmental impacts of mining on indigenous peoples and local communities, the strategies of transnational resource corporations and the regional development effects of resource projects. "I see my research and my teaching each contributing to the

value my work brings to society," says Howitt. "A good university teacher brings real world experience into the classroom, and never forgets the excitement of really learning. This means that you always make time to listen to students to understand their passions, their worries and their aspirations. And sharing your passion about the world around us." His teaching includes innovative work using the Internet, simulation exercises that encourage students to think outside the framework of their everyday life. Professor Bob Fagan, Head of the Department of Human Geography says students and staff alike use words like 'dedicated', 'passionate' and 'inspiring' to describe Howitt's interest and enthusiasm for teaching. "He sets an awe-inspiring standard...student centred learning with strong and effective mentoring from a truly innovative lecturer," says Fagan. The 1999 Australian Awards for University Teaching are now in their third year. The award consisted of a certificate, trophy and grant of \$40,000. Howitt's book on indigenous resource geography is forthcoming with Routledge Press. [Source.Howitt's teaching page](#)

Science magazine recently quoted **Bill Denevan**, on the recent [Tierney - Chagnon controversy](#). [\[here\]](#) "The whole business was very odd," says William Denevan, an archaeologist emeritus at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, who has worked extensively in Amazonia. "There's a lot of defensiveness on the part of the whole discipline of anthropology without really having the facts or details." He adds, "Very few of the people who spoke had actually done any research on the Yanomamo, yet they almost all had extremely strong opinions. And 95% of the audience hadn't read the book, but there they were clapping and cheering one side or the other."

Hires

Rene Veron (research associate, Cambridge/Keele: PhD Zurich) has been appointed temporary lecturer in Environment and Development, Development Studies Institute, the LSE from Jan 2001.

José Esteban Castro (research associate, Oxford: PhD Oxford) has been appointed temporary lecturer in Development Studies, Development Studies Institute, the LSE from Oct. 2000.

John Soussan (Environment Centre, Leeds) has been appointed to a professorship in Environment and Development, University of Leeds, UK.

Book Reviews

All CESG members, and others, are invited to submit reviews of books that would be of interest to our Specialty Group. Publishers are invited to send books to the Editor, and willing reviewers are sought.

Toulmin, Camilla and Quan, Julian F. (Eds). 2000. Evolving Land Rights, Policy and Tenure in Africa. [International Institute for Environment and Development](#), London. xii & 324 annexes, tables, figures, boxes and index. ISBN: 1 899825 51 7. £12.50 (**Free** to non-OECD countries - contact IIED).

Reviewed by Leslie Gray, Political Science, Santa Clara University, lcgray@scu.edu

With land and resource struggles in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Congo and Sierra Leone splashed on newspaper front pages these days, this edited volume provides a timely discussion of the difficult debates that African governments, policymakers and international donors are facing concerning the sensitive issue of land policy. The land issue is at a particularly important juncture in Africa. Many southern African countries are aiming to redistribute rights and assets; other countries, plagued by low agricultural productivity, believe that changes in land rights will promote economic development. This edited book is both theoretically and geographically comprehensive and provides an excellent reference on land issues in Africa.

One large theme of this book is how history matters. In much of sub-Saharan Africa the current disconnect between customary and formal systems of land management emerged from the colonial period. In chapter 4, McAuslan argues that English land law was superimposed upon customary rights, in effect allocating commonly controlled land to the colonial state. One contemporary contradiction that has emerged out of this colonial legacy is that while many states in Africa assert national control over land, de facto control is often held at the local scale. This creates complex systems of formal and customary land rights, neither of which is totally dominant. Many of the chapters argue that uncertainties that arise from this confusion about who controls land have resulted in increased conflicts. The consensus of many of the authors (Lavigne Delville, Okoth-Ogendo and McAuslan) is that in order to succeed, land legislation should try to incorporate both elements of customary and formal systems.

Toulmin and Quan, in their excellent introduction, describe how several myths and misperceptions of land tenure in Africa still have a powerful hold on international donors and government officials. One misperception that has persisted despite overwhelming evidence against it is Hardin's idea of the 'Tragedy of the Commons'. Hardin argued that common property systems would lead to widespread overuse and degradation. Under private property regimes, individuals should have the proper incentive to manage resources well. Of course, what Hardin did not recognize was that common property systems often have elaborate rules and regulations that prevent overuse. His confusion of open-access resource regimes for common property has laid the basis of much policy in Africa, as attempts to enclose the commons and assign individual rights to land have been associated with better management. Cousins (chapter 8) provides an interesting discussion of common property regimes, illustrating their weak legal status.

Another myth, discussed extensively by Platteau (Chapter 3) and Quan (chapter 2), is that land titling is necessary in order to improve agricultural productivity and tenure security. One predicted effect of customary tenure is that farmers are hesitant to invest in intensifying techniques because of the inherent insecurity of customary systems. Furthermore, they cannot access the collateral value and credit that are often available with land titling. Another predicted effect is that governments lose out on the administrative benefits of land titling: it is difficult to tax and increase revenue and, without centralized records, difficult to monitor and mediate land claims and conflicts. Platteau describes the growing body of research showing that these concerns about customary land tenure systems are misplaced. Evidence from Kenya and other countries have not demonstrated that titling programs increase farmer investment. If anything, land titling programs generally increase uncertainty and conflicts. In addition, most African countries do not have the economic resources to set up successful systems. Platteau instead sets out an evolutionary theory of land rights which asserts that with growing land scarcity, people demand greater tenure security and land systems evolve toward individual control.

Many authors in this volume agree with Platteau's assessment that with increased population pressure and land scarcity, local systems are evolving toward more individual control. This situation poses several problems. As individual rights are expanded, other types of rights holders are excluded, particularly those with secondary or weak rights, often women, migrants and pastoral nomads. Hilhorst (Chapter 9) expands on the tenuous status of women's land rights in Africa, focusing on how any legal reforms need to address women's access. Women generally gain access to land through their status as wives, mothers, and sisters. Rights frequently change with a change in status: divorce, marriage, or widowhood may change a woman's rights to land. Land titling programs have often denied formal recognition to these secondary rights holders, but some formal programs are starting to recognize the rights of women.

One of the consequences of changing rights has been increases in land conflicts. This partially emerges from confusion about, as was mentioned above, the rules of control. Lavigne Delville describes how problems emerge because of the multiplicity of arbitration authorities. One way farmers often get around this is by presenting authorities with a *fait accompli*, which often results in success. This also, unfortunately, escalates conflict. One of the interesting consequences is that while formal titling programs have generally failed, with escalating conflict and competition over land, there is some need for formal control over land. Several authors propose interesting solutions. Lavigne Delville suggests that a starting point to formalizing tenure relations would be to document land transactions. A contractual approach particularly in situations where people feel that they are insecure- land borrowed by migrants would be an example- would set the basis for a paper trail that could create flexible but legitimate arrangements.

Quan (chapter 10) suggests that land boards in southern Africa, particularly Botswana and Namibia, have created institutions for managing land that can potentially represent the interests of local stakeholders and the government. Land boards are locally constituted institutions that operate under national land policies. They grant rights to land, record customary land allocations and transfers, and impose restrictions, all without creating the large-scale bureaucracy found in centralized titling projects. Some problems with land boards, especially in Botswana, are that they frequently come under the control of local elites and the central government. Nonetheless, they seem to provide an alternative to centralized, bureaucratic control of land. In Chapter 11, Toulmin and Quan illustrate other examples where states have attempted to register customary rights. Some countries are attempting to register communal rights. This might be a better alternative to registering individual rights. No matter what kind of registration a country attempts, a broader point is that any kind of registration will alter what have been historically flexible, negotiable relationships. Ultimately there will be winners and losers, and any land policy will have to support rights for marginalized groups.

Finally, Martin Adams *et al* in Chapter 7 and Claassens in Chapter 13 discuss the politically difficult issue of land distribution in Southern Africa. Many of the southern African countries are unique in that they did not throw off the yoke of colonialism until the 1980s and 1990s. Zimbabwe and South Africa in particular must deal with the difficult question of land distribution. In both countries, white commercial farmers control the bulk of highly productive land. The sensitive and volatile nature of land relations has led many governments to postpone discussions of land reform, with current repercussions in countries like Zimbabwe, where land tenure reform is belatedly invoked by an unpopular leader to prop up his regime.

This book illustrates the great diversity of land policy problems and solutions. Toulmin and Quan have created an extremely comprehensive look at Africa's land issues; this review can hardly do justice to the breadth or depth in which it tackles many topics. In certain parts it is a bit repetitive, but nonetheless is an essential volume for anyone researching land issues in Africa.

New Books:

Stott, P & Sullivan, S. (eds.) 2000. Political Ecology. [Edward Arnold](#), London. c.£17.99 sterling ISBN 0340761660. Mainly consisting of contributions from people associated with SOAS, University of London, and arguing that 'science matters'.

Wells, D & Lynch, T. 2000. The Political Ecologist. Aldershot: Ashgate. £35. ISBN 0754611191. A book by two Australian political scientists, arguing that "political ecology is essentially a politics of the commons, in the same way that traditional liberalism is frequently characterised as a politics of 'freedom' or socialism as a politics

of 'equality'." Links political ecology to political change. [15% reduction if ordered [online](#)]