

070.225  
The Nature of Extraction  
Spring 2012

Dunning 206  
Tuesdays 1:30-3:50

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office hours:  
*Weds 11:30-12:30*  
*Thursdays by appointment*

On January 9, 2012, the US government announced a twenty year moratorium on new uranium concessions within one million acres surrounding the Grand Canyon. For most Americans, the moratorium responded to a belief that extraction of any sort -- but especially of radioactive minerals -- would violate the sanctity of Nature as it has been preserved in the wilderness area surrounding the National Monument. But mines are always located deep within -- and hence in some respect "violate" -- nature. Indeed, the US government supports and promotes mineral extraction in numerous sites within the US, as well as in recognized "wilderness" and natural conservation areas of the many other countries where US mining corporations hold mineral concessions. Why are some natural regions worthy of protection from mining and others not? How is the "nature" from which we extract minerals shaped by the histories and lives of the people who live there? Why does it strike us as absurd to construct an open pit coal mine in the middle of a city, but not in an agricultural or "undeveloped" mountain area?

In this class we will draw on anthropological, historical and legal texts to explore the social memories, value systems, and affects through which "nature" is appropriated, contested and reclaimed in relationship to practices of mineral extraction. In what ways has the historical practice of mining itself shaped our understanding of nature as both resource and reserve? How are cultural and political lives shaped by the latent--and often unfulfilled--promise of invisible, subsoil resources? What does it mean to live next to a mine? What cultural and political resources do local populations mobilize to negotiate their relationships to the ongoing activities of established mines, and the latent promise and threat of nearby mining concessions? How is nature configured in law? In what ways do international regulatory regimes shape local perceptions of nature? How can alternative understandings of landscape, territory, home and consent find footing within transnational discourses of regulatory and environmental safeguards?

Requirements: This course will be run as a lecture discussion class. The instructor will provide a brief lecture and presentation on the assigned readings, followed by class discussion. Students should come to class prepared to actively engage in discussion of both the lectures and assigned readings. Discussion questions will be circulated for each set of readings in advance. In addition, as preparation for discussion you should make note of any concepts, arguments or other material in the assigned readings that you found to be either particularly interesting, difficult,

confusing or troubling. In addition to texts, we will be viewing several films in the class. The films will be screened in class. In addition, all films will be on reserve in the MSEL library.

Writing assignments include:

a) **five** short (1-2 page) **response pieces** in which you record your reactions to one of the assigned readings for the day on which you turn in the response paper. The purpose of the response papers is to facilitate your participation in class discussions. Your response should therefore be focused on issues you found either particularly important and interesting, or problematic in the readings assigned for that week. It should not be a summary of the assigned article or book. The five response papers can be distributed over the course of the semester, but you can do only one response paper per week. Response papers will be read by the instructor, but they will not be assigned a letter grade. Because response papers are intended to facilitate your participation in class discussion, they may not be turned in late.

b) **three short (5-6 page) essays** due on **February 23 and March 29**. Prompts for the essays will be handed out in class one week before the essays are due.

c) **a final 8-10 page essay due on May 16**. For this final essay, students will discuss and critically evaluate any one of the books or films we have read or viewed in the course, situating it in relationship to the other case studies or arguments we have discussed in class and in the other assigned readings.

*\*Grading criteria for each of the three essays will be discussed and explained in class.*

Final grades will be determined based on the following distribution:

Response papers (15%)

Essays (45% - 10% for each of first two essays; 20% for third essay)

Class participation and attendance (40%)

All readings will be available on electronic reserves at Eisenhower Library. Assigned and recommended books (*We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us*; *Not Ours Alone*; *Crude Chronicles*. *Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines*; and *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* ) have been ordered for purchase at the University Bookstore. They are also on overnight reserve at Eisenhower Library. Films will be screened in class, and will also be available for viewing at the Eisenhower Video Reserve desk.

### **Syllabus of readings**

January 31 Introduction

Invisible Resources

February 7

Ross Morris. 2008. "The Miner's Ear." *Transition*, 98:96-115

Jessica Banko. "Mother of God, Child of Zeus." *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Fall 2010:94-121

Jane Perlez. 2005. "Tangled Strands in Fight over Peru Gold Mine." *New York Times*, October 25, 2005, p. 1 (Section A)

Karl Marx. 1859. "The Precious Metals." In *Grundrisse: Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*:

[http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/ch02\\_4.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/ch02_4.htm)

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1857/grundrisse/ch03.htm>

February 14

June Nash. 1993. *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us. Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines*. NY: Columbia University Press

**recommended**

June Nash. 1992. *I Spent my Life in The Mines: The Story of Juan Rojas, Bolivian Tin Miner*. New York: Columbia University Press

February 21

Clark Erickson. 2002. "The Domesticated Landscapes of the Bolivian Amazon." In *Time and Complexity in Historical Ecology*, pp.235-278. William Balée & Clark Erickson, ed. (New Orleans: Tulane University Press)

David Cleary. 1990. *Anatomy of the Amazonian Gold Rush*. Iowa City" University of Iowa Press; **Read: pp. TBA**

Terence Turner. 1995. "An Indigenous People's Struggle for Socially Equitable and Ecologically Sustainable Production: The Kayapó REvolt Against Extractivism," *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, 1(1):98-121

**Film: *Streams of Gold*, 2004.** A documentary video by John Tweedy and Beret E.Strong (59 minutes)

**recommended:** Candace Slater. 1996. "Amazonia as Edenic Narrative." In William Cronon, ed. *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, pp. 114-131, 488-490 (New York: W.W. Norton)

### Extractive States

February 28 Emma Elizabeth Ferry 2005. *Not Ours Alone: Patrimony, Value and collectivity in Contemporary Mexico*. NY: Columbia University Press

March 6 Anthony Bebbington & D. Humphreys Bebbington. 2011. "An Andean Avatar: Post-neoliberal and neoliberal strategies for securing the unobtainable." *New Political Economy*, 15(4):131-145

Elizabeth Dore. 2000. "Environment and Society: Long Term Trends in Latin American Mining," *Environment and History*, 6:1-29

Michael Goldman. 2004. "Eco-Governmentality and other Transnational Practices of a 'Green' World Bank." In Michael Watts & Richard Peet, eds. *Liberation Ecologies*, pp.153-178. NY & London: Routledge

**recommended:**

-David Harvey. 2005. "The Neoliberal State" and "Uneven Geographical Developments," In, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, pp.64-119 (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press)

March 13 David Szablowski. 2007. "The Selective Absence of the State: Delegating Responsibility for Mining and Community Conflicts." In *Transnational Law and Local Struggles: Mining, Communities and the World Bank*, pp. 27-60. Portland, Or: Hart Publishing

Fabiana Li. 2009. "Documenting Accountability: Environmental Impact Assessment in a Peruvian Mining Project," *PoLAR (Political and Legal Anthropology Review)*, 32(2):218-236

J. Bury. 2005. "Mining mountains: neoliberalism, land tenure, livelihood and the new Peruvian mining industry in Cajamarca (Peru)," *Environment and Planning*, Vol 37:221-239

March 20                   **Spring Break: No Class**

March 27                   Gabriela Valdivia. 2008. "Governing Relations Between People and Things: Citizenship, Territory and the Political Economy of Petroleum in Ecuador." *Political Geography*, 27:4560477

Elana Shever. 2008. "Neoliberal Associations: Property, Company and Family in the Argentinian Oil Fields," *American Ethnologist*, 35(4):701-716.

Suzanne Sawyer. 2004. *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*. Durham: Duke University Press; **Read PP. TBA**

**March 29: Second Essay Due**

Resources and Resistance

April 3                   **Film:** *Crude: The Real Price of Oil* (Joe Berlinger, 2009, 104").

Suzanne Sawyer. 2006. "Disabling Corporate Sovereignty in a Transnational Lawsuit," *PoLAR*, 29(3):23-43.

Emily Achetenberg. 2012. "Oil Politics in Ecuador: Saving Yasuni without Chevron." January 6 2012. *NACLA.org Blog*:  
<https://nacla.org/blog/2012/1/6/oil-politics-ecuador-saving-yasun%C3%AD-without-chevron%E2%80%99s-blood-money>

**recommended:**

- Chevron Document available on: <http://www.crudethemovie.com/>

- Suzanne Sawyer. 2004. *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*. Durham: Duke University Press; **Read PP. TBA**

**April 10**

D. Humphreys Bebbington & Anthony Bebbington, “Extraction, territory and inequalities: Gas in the Bolivian Chaco,” *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 30(1-2):259-280

Gretchen Gordon & Aaron Luoma. “Oil and Gas: The Elusive Wealth Beheath Their Feet.” In Melissa Draper & Jim Schultz, eds. *Dignity and Defiance: Stories from Bolivia’s Challenge to Globalization*, pp. 77- . Berkeley: University of California Press

**April 17**

**Film:** *Even the Rain* (Iciar Bollain, 2008, 103”)

Robert Albro. 2005. “The Water is Ours, Carajo! Deep Citizenship in Bolivia’s Water Wars.” In J. Nash, ed. *Social Movement: An Anthropological Reader*, pp. 249-271. (Malden, MA: Blackwell)

<http://www.eventherainmovie.com/index.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Even\\_the\\_Rain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Even_the_Rain)

**Recommended:** For background information on the main historical characters portrayed in the film see:

Bartolome de Las Casas:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartolom%C3%A9\\_de\\_las\\_Casas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartolom%C3%A9_de_las_Casas)

**Antonio de Montesinos:**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio\\_de\\_Montesinos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_de_Montesinos)

**Hatuey:** <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/oriente/hatuey.htm>

**April 24**

**Film:** *Tambogrande: Mangos, Murder, Mining* (Ernesto Cabellos & Stephanie Boyd, 2007, 85”).

Harvard Haarstad & Arnt Floysand. 2007. “Opposition and the power of rescaled narratives: A Case of Opposition to Mining in Tambogrande, Peru.” *Political Geography*, 26:289-308

**May 1**

Lewis Taylor . 2011. "Environmentalism and Social Protest: The Contemporary Anti-Mining Mobilization in the Province of San Marcos and the Condebamba Valley, Peru," *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 11(3), July 2011:420-439

William W. Monning. "The Treasure of Cajamarca -- and other Peruvian Curses." *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 2005

**Recommended:** Inca Garcilaso de la Vega. *The Royal Commentaries of the Inca*. K. Spalding, edit. Indianapolis, In: Hackett Publ Co.; **Read:** pp. TBA

**May 8****Study Week****May 15****Third Essay Due**