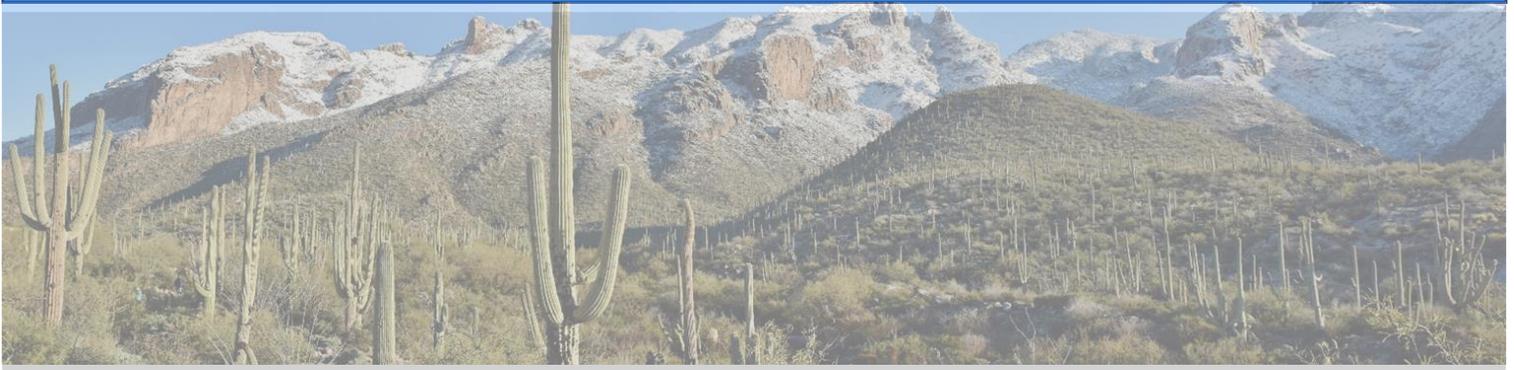


# iglobes

interdisciplinary and global  
environmental studies

## Social Sciences Seminar Series



Wednesdays, February 1 – May 3 from 1 – 2pm  
University of Arizona, Marshall Building 845 N Park Ave  
5<sup>th</sup> floor Room 531



# Program

## SESSION 1: February 1, 2023

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Arnaud Buchs

Associate Professor, School of Political Studies, Grenoble Applied Economy Lab, University Grenoble Alpes

### **Commoning for Water Security in the Alps (France). Revealing Pluralism Within the Commons**

Alpine regions, known as the “water tower of Europe”, are particularly affected by climate change (Hock *et al.* 2019): as water scarcity episodes become more frequent, water use conflicts emerge in specific places and times. This illustrates the need to find solutions that are not only corrective and punctual to sustainably articulate water resources and uses.

The objective of this research is to question the capacity of common management (Ostrom 1990), and more specifically of commoning (Linebaugh 2008), for the definition of “securing water paths” i.e. sustainable and adaptive scenarios articulating water-related uses, resources and infrastructures in the Vercors High Plateaux Nature Reserve (French Alps), a 17,000 ha protected area, where landscapes have been shaped to a large extent by age-old pastoralist activity (e.g. opening up of landscapes).

By referring to a “social-ecological economics of water” (Buchs *et al.* 2020) and to mixed analytical-deliberative methods (Allain and Salliou, 2022), we developed a collaborative research to reveal pluralism within the common. Qualitative and quantitative data collection is coupled with the Q methodology (Grimsrud *et al.* 2020). Three visions of the common expressed by water users are then translated into scenarios.

## SESSION 2: February 15, 2023

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Amanda Hilton

Research Scientist, Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, University of Arizona

### **Living Landscapes: Sensory Approaches to Relationality in Sicilian Oliviculture**

This talk presents the case of Sicilian oliviculture to unsettle a landscape, and a people, too often considered timeless and unchanging. In a context of historically entrenched economic underdevelopment and environmental ruination exacerbated by climate change, centering life and liveliness troubles a simplistic focus on impossibility and apocalypse.

Drawing on extensive ethnographic fieldwork with olive growers and olive oil producers in Sicily, Italy, I offer the concept of “living landscapes” to conversations about multispecies relationality and, in Anna Tsing’s words, “the possibilities of life in capitalist ruins” (2015). Sicilian oliviculturalists refer to olive oil as alive (*l’olio è vivo*) and to “living the land” (*vivere la terra*). In the current moment, what does it mean to be alive, to live a place, and for a landscape to be living?

I situate a discussion of these questions in a broader discussion of care and multispecies relationality in economically precarious and environmentally ruinous contexts. I include a methodological discussion of sensory anthropology as I used it, and how relationality is embodied and sensed through place and through interactions with specific plants, landscapes, and people. In so doing I maintain attention on the local impacts of global systems of economic and political power.

## SESSION 3: March 1, 2023

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Pascal Marichalar

Research Fellow, French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)

### **Giant Telescopes on Post-Colonial Territories: A History of Astronomy as Field Science (Hawai'i, Chile, Canary Islands)**

From the 1950s, various transnational groups spearheaded efforts to build new giant telescopes because of recent developments in research and instrumentation. The decade saw the development of a new subfield per se of astronomy, the science of "site selection", around the figure of Dutch-American astronomer Gerard Kuiper, based at the University of Arizona from 1960. One particularity of the science of site selection was that it was no longer constrained by geography: for the first time, astronomers agreed that the planet was the limit.

At the beginning of the 1960s, drawing on a specific set of instruments, protocols and objectives, Kuiper and his colleagues "discovered" the two best sites in the world for optical astronomy: Hawai'i's volcano Mauna Kea, and the peaks of Chile's Atacama desert. At the same time, the Spaniard Francisco Sánchez Martínez identified what would be recognized as the third best site, Roque de los Muchachos on La Palma, Canary Islands. To this day, all major optical telescope projects are still sited on one of these three locations.

The main premise of my work is that cutting-edge astronomical observation is made possible not only by the exceptional quality of a site, but also by a complex and mostly invisible social infrastructure which brings together labor, the economy and post-colonial politics. Through a material history of science and an intersectional sociology of labor, this talk will describe the regimes of land tenure and the social division of work that allowed these instruments of big science to thrive in post-colonial settings. In particular, it will study the frequent controversies surrounding new telescope projects on all three of the sites, which reached a recent climax with the 2019 standoff on Mauna Kea, Hawai'i, about the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project.

## SESSION 4: March 15, 2023

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Marie Vidal

PhD candidate, School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS, France)

### **White Middle-Class Ladies? Categories, Social Divisions and Women's Subjectivities (Davis, Northern California)**

How do people negotiate the intensification of identity discourses at the turn of the 2020s, in a North American context of heightened political fractures and economic inequalities?

Drawing on a seventeen months' PhD fieldwork, this presentation is built on recurring stereotypes and figures of excess [Cohen, 1998] heard during the ethnography ("old white lady", "white suburban middle-class moms"). These stereotypes are conducive to contextualizing the research while situating its location amidst regional variations (rural California vs the coastline, Northern California vs Southern California, California vs the rest of the US).

After tracking the historical genealogies of such stereotypes and, more broadly, of the notion "whiteness", this paper will delve into the ways in which they are used in situation today. The aim is to enlighten new social divisions around education, in order to then outline the profile of the "10%'s elite" [Piketty, 2019].

## SESSION 5: April 5, 2023

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Laura Goffman

Assistant Professor, School of Middle Eastern & North African Studies, University of Arizona

### **Disease, Memory, and Opposition in Eastern Arabia**

As communities tried to make sense of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, media outlets around the world reached for illustrative examples of past pandemics. In Qatif, a city on Saudi Arabia's Persian Gulf coast, memories of a 1970 quarantine surfaced in local media as the pandemic unfolded. This presentation investigates why COVID-19 prompted public remembering of a state-imposed cholera quarantine in Qatif in 1970 by reconstructing formative assemblages of disease and popular politics in postwar Arabia.

## SESSION 6: April 19, 2023

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Brian O'Neill

Research Scholar, College of Global Futures, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University

### **When Environmental Justice is Whatever You Want: A Case Study of the Collision of Infrastructure Finance and Environmentalism in a California City**

The environmental justice frame (EJF) is a key feature of successful grassroots mobilization against the uneven distribution of environmental problems. At the same time, it is increasingly significant to academics, governments, industries, and NGO's who are promoting various versions of "just transitions," often using infrastructure projects that should usher in a more sustainable, and supposedly socially minded, future in the context of climate change. Through an ethnographic case study of desalination (producing potable seawater) in California, this talk problematizes both popular and academic manifestations of the EJF. Findings indicate community groups and non-governmental organizations make normative environmental justice arguments about the high costs of desalination, community disruption, and industrial burden.

By contrast, organized labor and public sector actors align with the private sector to promote desalination, using a competing series of arguments about local independence, regional responsibility, and employment. Disentangling these discourses and position-takings, the talk describes how claims in favor of desalination are a part of what this paper calls a *cooptation of the environmental justice frame*. As such, the talk will begin a discussion regarding the extent to which this phenomenon may have wide reaching consequences for climate politics (e.g., energy sector debates), because it occurs in an increasingly relevant context, specifically the public-private partnership infrastructure financing models used for large scale climate adaptive projects. Linking to recent discussions about the Green New Deal's techno-optimism, eco-apartheid, and the return of high modernism, the analysis presented observes how infrastructure initiatives can ultimately facilitate community division in favor of a class bias for luxury commodities. Interpreting this socio-ecological problem through a political economic lens, this research calls scholars, activists, and decision-makers to attend to how environmental (in)justice politics can take on surprising meanings amid the expansion of financial capitalism.

Boris Wiczorek

PhD student, Iglobes & Grenoble Applied Economics Laboratory, University of Grenoble

### **Social Norms and Community Enforcement of Cooperation**

Social norms are a powerful tool in influencing prosocial and pro-environmental behavior. They represent informal rules of behavior in groups and societies that lead individuals to behave in a certain manner due to peer pressure. Social norms have a normative component, which represents the appropriate social behavior of the reference group, and a descriptive component, which represents the effective behavior of the reference group. Despite the numerous articles about social norms and their implementation, our knowledge of the various mechanisms and dynamics associated with them is still incomplete. We conducted a laboratory experiment to empirically measure the evolution of social norms and cooperative behavior over time in different frameworks. We implemented different treatments by varying the composition of the groups, giving unequal types to the participants. We also incorporated a communication mechanism that reduces uncertainties and improves participants' coordination. Our experimentation allows us to answer three questions. First, we looked at how social norms of cooperation change over time as a function of inequality and communication. We found an immediate negative impact of the inequality on the social norm, while the communication supports the norms over time. Then, we studied how inequality and communication affect the relationship between social norms and cooperation. We found that inequality changes the way in which the components of the social norm are used in the cooperative decision process. Lastly, we examined how social norms can predict cooperative behavior. Here, we were able to predict 75% of the behavior in each treatment with a model that integrates the costs of not respecting the perceived social norms. The predictive ability of the model for all treatments highlights the fact that communication mechanisms can be summarized as a change in perceived social norms. Finally, our model allowed us to simulate the effect of implementing norm-nudges by revealing the local social norm, which supports the idea that social norms could be an equilibrium selection mechanism in a multi-equilibrium framework.

## Presenter Bios



### Arnaud Buchs

Associate Professor, Grenoble Applied Economy Lab, University Grenoble Alpes

Arnaud Buchs' research articulates an approach at the crossroads of ecological economics and institutional economics and is based on several research fields (Spain, Morocco, Switzerland, Australia, French Alps). He focuses on the analysis of change, diversity and complexity of institutions that govern water resources and their uses. He has developed a comprehensive approach to water scarcity and, since 2020, has initiated research on the common management of water resources in the French Alps. He is the co-editor-in-chief of the peer-reviewed journal *Développement durable & territoires* [Sustainability & territories] and co-director of the master's program *Transition écologiques* [Ecological transitions].



### Laura Goffman

Assistant Professor, School of Middle Eastern & North African Studies, University of Arizona

Laura Frances Goffman is a historian of health in the modern Middle East. Her research focuses on the intersections of public health, empire, state building, and social change in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula. She is committed to bringing the Gulf region into discussions of world history, especially narratives of how migration, gender, citizenship, and state formation intersect with the movement of disease.



### Amanda Hilton

Research Scientist, Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, University of Arizona

Amanda Hilton is a Research Scientist at the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA) at the University of Arizona. She is an applied environmental anthropologist and political ecologist who works in Sicily, Italy and the US Southwest and Southeast. Her research addresses processes of human-environment interaction and relationality through place-making, focusing on agricultural practices and other livelihood strategies. She is interested in how people and socioecological systems are positioned within and respond to global political economic forces, and with what effects.



### Pascal Marichalar

Research Fellow, French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)

Pascal Marichalar is a sociologist and historian of science and labor, based at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Paris, France. On his current research theme, he published an article in *The Journal of Pacific History* (2021) and another in *History and Anthropology* (2021). He previously studied issues of industrial disease and working-class history, and was a Fulbright Scholar at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (2017). His last book is *Qui a tué les verriers de Givors? Une enquête de sciences sociales* (Paris, *La Découverte*, 2017).



### **Brian O'Neill**

Research Scholar, College of Global Futures, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University

Brian F. O'Neill's research and teaching draw primarily on engagements with environmental sociology, political ecology, and political economy. The underlying question throughout his empirical work is: *what is the nature of the recent, intense interest in "green" practices invoked by climate adaptation strategies?* His research has appeared in such publications as *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, *International Sociology*, the *Journal of World-Systems Research*, *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, and *VertigO: La revue électronique en sciences de l'environnement*.



### **Marie Vidal**

PhD student, School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS, France)

Marie Melody Vidal is a PhD candidate in anthropology at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (Paris), in the Center for North American Studies. She is also part of the Contributing Editors Program of the Society for Cultural Anthropology.



### **Boris Wiczorek**

Ph.D student, Iglobes & Grenoble Applied Economics Laboratory, Grenoble Alpes University

Boris Wiczorek is a Behavioral and Experimental Economist at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). He is currently a final year PhD student working on the relationship between social norms and heterogeneities to address climate change issues. He studied how social norms evolve and explain prosocial and pro-environmental behaviors over time in different environments, through online and laboratory experiments. This year, he is at the University of Arizona as a visiting scholar, applying his work in the field by implementing Norms-Nudge to reduce water consumption in Arizona's drought area.