

David M Kneas

Department of Geography • University of South Carolina • kneas@mailbox.sc.edu

Academic Appointments

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography and School of Earth, Ocean, and the Environment,
University of South Carolina, 2014-present
Faculty Affiliate, Department of Anthropology
Faculty Associate, Latin American Studies

Education

Ph.D. Environmental Studies and Anthropology, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies
and Yale Department of Anthropology, December 2014
MSc. Environmental Science, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, 2005
B.A. Biological Sciences & Spanish, DePauw University, 2000

Grants & Awards

2019 Office of the Provost, Faculty Research Grant, University of South Carolina
2019 Office of the Provost, Visiting Scholar Award, University of South Carolina, Co-PI
2018 College of Arts and Sciences, Faculty Research Grant, University of South Carolina
2010 Finalist, Roy A. Rappaport Prize in Environmental Anthropology, Anthropology & Environment
Society, American Anthropological Association
2009 Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Award, Science, Technology, and Society
Program, National Science Foundation
2009 Yale Center for International and Area Studies Dissertation Fellowship
2009 Yale Tropical Resources Institute Research Grant
2008 Yale Program in Agrarian Studies Research Grant
2008 Yale Tropical Resources Institute Research Grant
2005 Teresa Heinz Scholar for Environmental Research
2004 Yale Tropical Resources Institute Research Grant

Publications

2018 Emergence and Aftermath: The (Un)becoming of Resources and Identities in Northwestern
Ecuador. *American Anthropologist*. 120(4): 752–764.
2018 From Dearth to El Dorado: Andean Nature, Plate Tectonics, and the Ontologies of Ecuadorian
Resource Wealth. *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society*. 4: 131-154.
2017 Necessary Illusions: Fetishism and the Becoming of Subsoil Resources. *The Extractive
Industries and Society*. 4: 846-851
2017 Chest Hair and Climate Change: Harrison Ford and the Making of ‘Lost There, Felt Here.’
Environmental History 22: 516-526.
2016 Subsoil Abundance and Surface Absence: A Junior Mining Company and its Performance of
Prognosis in Northwestern Ecuador. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 22(S1): 67-
86.
2016 After-Eden: Narratives of Nature, Degradation, and Poverty in Amazonian Discourse. *Journal of
Latin American Geography* 15(2): 33-53.
2016 Review of Kirsch, Stuart “Mining Capitalism: The Relationship between Corporations and Their
Critics” (UC Press, 2014). *Environment & Society: Advances in Research* 7: 138-139.
2013 Whose Diversity Counts? The Politics and Paradoxes of Modern Diversity. *Sustainability* 5:
2495-2518. with Baker, L., M. Dove, D. Graef, A. Keleman, S. Osterhoudt, and J. Stoike.
2005 Contesting Copper: Documentary Film, Research, and Mining in Ecuador’s Intag Region.
Tropical Resources: The Bulletin of the Yale Tropical Resources Institute 24: 15-20.

Publications in Progress

Translating Tierra Baldia: Land, Landscape, and the Becoming of Frontier Terrain in Northwestern Ecuador. *Ethnos*. Special issue on *Translating Environments*. Forthcoming.

Mega Projects that Didn't Happen. *Environment and Society: Advances in Research*. Forthcoming (with Ashley Carse).

Cultivating Class: Agrarian Transformation and Mining Conflicts in Northwestern Ecuador. *Journal of Peasant Studies*. In preparation.

Teaching Experience

Faculty, Department of Geography, University of South Carolina, 2014-present

Introduction to the Environment (ENVR 101)

Cultural Geography (GEOG 311)

Introduction to Political Ecology (GEOG 343)

Global Environmental Imagery (Honors College, SCHC 337)

Globalization and Cultural Questions (GEOG/ANTH 581)

Producing and Consuming Nature and Natural Resources (GEOG 721)

Instructor, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, 2008-2012

Environmental History, Land Navigation & Mapping

Three-week summer program, Great Mountain Forest, Norfolk, Connecticut.

Teaching Fellow, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and Yale Department of Anthropology, 2007-2012

Introduction to Society and Environment

Advanced Readings in Society and Environment

Disaster, Degradation, and Dystopia

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Conference Papers and Invited Presentations

2019 *Paging Dr. Copper*. Paper to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers. Panel session: "Stealth 'Unknown-Knowns', Environmental Knowledge and Scientific Uncertainty: Exploring the Connections." Washington DC, April.

2018 *Gaming Nature: Tricksters, Fraud, and the Cultural Politics of Discovery*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Anthropologists. Panel Session: *The Bogus and the Bona-Fide: Synthetic Natures, Authentic Materials, and the Blurred Boundaries of the Real*. San Jose, November. **Panel Co-Organizer**. Co-Sponsored Session (Anthropology and Environment Society, Society for Humanistic Anthropology) San Jose, November.

2018 *Chest Hair and Climate Change: Exploring the Embodied Geographies of Celebrity Environmentalism*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers. Panel session: "Natural Covers: Comparative Cultural Geographies of Hair and Forests." New Orleans, April.

2017 *The Marginal Histories of Marginal Places*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Panel Session: "Marginal Belonging in Conflict Environments." Washington, DC, December.

- 2017 *Cane & Able: Situating Local Opposition to Mining in Northwestern Ecuador*. Invited paper for research conference: "Extraction/Exclusion: Exploring Multidisciplinary Approaches to Exclusionary Practices in Resource Extraction." Oxford University, Oxford, UK, October.
- 2017 *From Dearth to El Dorado: The Cultural Politics of Nature and the Articulation of Ecuadorian Resource Wealth*. Invited paper for research workshop: "STS Underground: Investigating the Technoscientific Worlds of Mining and Subterranean Extraction." Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO, February.
- 2017 *"The Hour of Mining Has Arrived": Hydro-Power, National Police, and the Imagined Infrastructures of the Ecuadorian Mining Industry*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers. Panel session: "Political Ecologies of the Infrastructure-Mining Complex: Global Comparisons." Boston, MA, April.
- 2016 *Inferred Ignorance: The Cultural Politics of Nature in Ecuador's Mining Industry*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Division of the American Association of Geographers. Panel session: "Stuck in the Mud: When Commodities Come to a Halt." Columbia, SC, November.
- 2016 *Panama Hats and National Police: The Politics of Knowledge, Ignorance, and Nature in Ecuador's Mining Industry*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Panel session: "Territory, Knowledge, Motion: Materials and Politics on the Move." Minneapolis, MN, November.
- 2016 *Commodities, Culture, and Citizenship: International Lessons in Natural Resources and Nationhood*. Invited presentation in the Environmental Citizenship Speaker Series, St Mary's College of Maryland. St Mary's City, MD, April.
- 2015 *Cultivating Class: Agrarian Transformation and Mining Conflicts in Northwestern Ecuador*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Panel session: "Translating Natures: Relations, (In)Determinacies, and the Work of Translation in Natural Resource Use." Denver, CO, November.
- 2015 *Magical Futures and Immaterial Mines: The Promotion of Resource Wealth in Ecuador*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers. Panel session: "The Stone Unquarried: Extractive Imaginaries and Mining Futures." Chicago, IL, April.
- 2014 *Present Pathology and Future Prosperity: The Body Politics of Mineral Wealth in Ecuador*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Panel session: "The Politics of Underground Extraction and Contamination." Washington, DC, November.
- 2014 *The Curious Case of Copper: The (De)Composition of a Mineral Deposit in Northwestern Ecuador*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Ethnological Society. Panel Session: "Prices and Reserves: The Pragmatics of Figures in Extractive Industries." Boston, MA, April.
- 2012 *Conceptual Copper: Resource Estimates, Financial Frames, and the Construction of Geological Knowledge*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Anthropology and Environment Invited Session: "Prognosis Politics: Visions of Resource Futures." San Francisco, CA, November.

- 2012 *Chronic Potential: Unfulfilled Dreams of Mining in Ecuador*. Paper presented at Meeting of the Society for Cultural Anthropology. Panel Session: "Life Cycles of Resource Extraction: Lives, Deaths and Afterlives for Mining Communities and Commodities." Providence, RI, May.
- 2012 Discussant, *An Orchard Grows at the City's Edge: A Colombian Farmer and His Fruit Trees in the Wake of Displacement*, by Roseann Cohen, Yale Program in Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series, Yale University. New Haven, CT, April.
- 2011 *Play and Reconciliation: Coexistence Amidst a Conflict Over Mining In Northwestern Ecuador*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Panel session: "Beyond the Social Life of Things: Natural Resources and Emergent Personhoods." Montreal, November.
- 2011 *Of Porphyry and Periphery: The History and Culture of Mineral Resources in the Ecuadorian Andes*. Paper presented as Finalist for Roy A. Rappaport Prize in Environmental Anthropology, Anthropology and Environment Society, American Anthropological Association. Montreal, November.
- 2011 Discussant, *Upper Louisiana, Agriculture, and the American Nation*, by Jennifer Turner, Yale Program in Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series, Yale University. New Haven, CT, January.
- 2010 *Racial Purity and Agricultural Plenty: Imagining National Well-Being in the Frontier Landscapes of Northwestern Ecuador*. Paper presented at Yale Environmental History Conference: "Creating Healthy Landscapes: Human and Environmental Well-Being in Comparative and Historical Perspective." New Haven, CT, March.
- 2010 *Agrarian Pasts and Environmental Futures: The Shifting Politics of Nature, Land, and Ethnicity in Northwestern Ecuador*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Panel session: "Ethnic Landscapes and Landed Ethnicities: Attachments, Stoppages and Circulations." New Orleans, LA, November.
- 2010 *From Dearth to El Dorado: The History and Culture of Mineral Resources in the Ecuadorian Andes*. Paper presented at Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies Doctoral Conference. New Haven, CT, September.
- 2008 Discussant, *Mining Capitalism: Indigenous Activism and the Politics of Ecological Destruction*, by Stuart Kirsch, Yale Program in Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series, Yale University. New Haven, CT, April.
- 2008 Discussant, *Indigeneity: Cosmopolitan Images, Local Realities*, by Stephanie Rupp, Comparative Workshop on Ecological Nationalisms, Yale University. New Haven, CT, April.
- 2007 *Non-Equilibrium Ecology and Equilibrium-based Environmental Impact Assessments*. Paper presented at Institute for the Social Sciences, Cornell University, "Knowledge in Contention: Social Movements and the Politics of Science." Ithaca, NY, October.
- 2005 *Contested Terrains: Mining, the Environment, and the State in Ecuador's Intag Region*. Paper presented at Yale University International Society of Tropical Foresters Conference, "Conservation in the Matrix: Efforts at Inter-disciplinarity in Tropical Forest Conversation." New Haven, CT, April.

- 2004 *Everyday Forms of Neoliberal State Formation: Mining, The World Bank and the Reconstruction of Environmental Authority in Ecuador*. Paper presented at Antioch New England Graduate School Conference, “Conservation Without Borders: The Impact of Conservation on Human Communities.” Keene, NH, October.
- 2001 *Loxicha: Women’s Resistance to State Violence in Oaxaca, Mexico*. Paper presented at Rocky Mountain Conference on Latin American Studies. Tuscon, AZ, May.

Advising

Faculty Advisor for senior thesis projects, University of South Carolina Honors College

Patrick McKenzie, in progress.

Kaitlyn Bretz, “Indonesia’s One Map Policy: The Social Implications of a Mess,” 2017

Daniel Keenan, “Exploring the Globalization of English Soccer,” 2017.

Ari Robbins, “A History and Analysis of the Congaree River and its Development,” 2016

Kira Koppel, “Helping What? The Multiple Natures of Environmental Imagery,” 2016

Committee Chair

Jessica Martinez, Masters student, Earth and Environmental Resources Management, University of South Carolina. Topic: Urban environmental justice

Committee Member

Alice Arnold, MA student, Geography, University of South Carolina

Angela Seidler, MA student, Geography, University of South Carolina

Daniel Abrahams, PhD Student, Geography, University of South Carolina

Erika Chin, PhD Student, Geography, University of South Carolina

Beth Nelson, PhD Student, Geography, University of South Carolina

Sam Neilson, PhD Student, Geography, University of South Carolina

Anais Parada, PhD Student, Anthropology, University of South Carolina

Undergraduate Advisor

Geography (6 students)

Environmental Science (10 students)

Environmental Studies (11 students)

Professional Activities

Peer review

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

Geoforum

The Extractive Industries & Society

Regional Environmental Change

Languages

Fluent in Spanish

Memberships

American Association of Geographers

American Anthropological Association

American Ethnological Society

Society for Cultural Anthropology

American Society for Environmental History