

Immersion Lecture and SESYNC Seminar: Climate and Social Vulnerability: Analytics of Cause and Responsibility

Time of Event:

Friday, November 18, 2016 - 11:00 to 12:00

Video:

Adaptation is forward looking. But we need to look back at the causes of fragility to move toward security. Causal analysis of vulnerability aims to identify the roots of crises so that transformative solutions might be found. Yet root-cause analysis is absent from most climate response assessments. Framings for climate-change risk analysis often locate causality in hazards while attributing some causal weight to proximate social variables such as poverty or lack of capacity. They rarely ask why capacity is lacking, assets are inadequate or social protections are absent or fail. This talk frames vulnerability and security as matters of access to assets and social protections. Assets and social protections each have their own context-contingent causal chains. A key recursive element in those causal chains is the ability – means and powers – of vulnerable people to influence the political economy that shapes their assets and social protections. Vulnerability is, as Sen rightly observed, linked to the lack of freedom – the freedom to influence the political economy that shapes entitlements. In this talk I want to explore why broader political-economic causes have such a difficult time entering into climate impact models – and thus solutions to vulnerability, that is various policies called adaptation, remain relatively shallow.

Presentation slides

Slides will be added here following the presentation.



Jesse Ribot is a Professor of Geography with appointments in the Department of Anthropology, School of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (NRES), the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory, Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, Global Studies, Women and Gender in Global Perspective (WGGP), and Institute for Sustainability, Energy and the Environment (iSEE), and is on the faculty of the College of Humanities and Development Studies of China Agricultural University in Beijing. He is also a co-director and co-founder of the Initiative on Climate Adaptation Research and Understanding through the Social Sciences (ICARUS). Before coming to Illinois Ribot was a Senior Associate in the Institutions and Governance program at the World Resources Institute from 1999 to 2008. He has been a visiting professor in Politics at the New School for Social Research in New York, and a or fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Yale Program in Agrarian Studies, Center for the Critical Analysis of Contemporary Culture at Rutgers, and was a MacArthur Fellow at the Harvard Center for Population and

Development Studies. From 1991-94 he was a lecturer in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. He also advises foreign governments and international development agencies.

Event type:

Immersion Speaker

Event Attendance:

Private Working Group

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