



Zurich Human Geography Colloquium

Program Fall Semester 2023

Dr Carlos Zepeda, Assistant Director of Policy and Practice, Laudato Si' Research Institute, Campion Hall, University of Oxford

Integral Ecology in Research Practice: Methodological Insights for Transformative Change

Public lecture: Tue, 3 October, 4-5pm, Room Y25-H-38

Workshop: Wed, 4 October, 9:30-12:30pm, Room Y25-L-40

(For details and to register for the workshop, please write to sierra.deutsch@geo.uzh.ch by 27 September)

Prof Dr Carola Mantel, Pädagogische Hochschule Zug (University of Teacher Education Zug), Institut für internationale Zusammenarbeit in Bildungsfragen, IZB (Institute for International Cooperation in Education)

Is the school of the migration society a school for all? – Considering inherent processes of social boundary making in educational institutions in Switzerland

Public lecture: Tue, 14 November, 4-5pm, Room Y25-H-79

Prof Katherine Brickell, Professor of Urban Studies, King's College London, UK

The Debt-Trap: Women's Stories of Navigating Family Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation

Public lecture: Tue, 12 December, 4-5pm, Room Y25-H-79

Workshop: Tue, 12 December, 9-10:15am Room Y25-L-40

(For details and to register for the workshop, please write to ifigenia.dimitrakou@geo.uzh.ch before 20 Nov.)



Tue, 3 October 2023 | **Dr Carlos Zepeda**

Integral Ecology in Research Practice: Methodological Insights for Transformative Change

Contemporary social and ecological injustices, such as those caused by climate change, biodiversity loss, poverty, and inequality, are systemic and interlinked. For that reason, many argue that conventional modes of knowledge production and conventional research are, at best, insufficient for addressing these challenges and, at worst, can help perpetuate them. This raises serious questions for researchers' current practices. How can researchers overcome the limitations of conventional research methodologies and modes of knowledge production? Could the emerging 'integral ecology' paradigm help provide a better framework for research? What methodologies and ethical underpinnings should researchers practise so that their research better aligns with care for our living planet?

In this paper, we seek to understand how the paradigms of transdisciplinarity and integral ecology could answer the above questions. In so doing, we hope to illuminate what integral ecology research could look like and how it might be practised. The analysis proceeds in three parts. First, we highlight the ways in which integral ecology challenges dominant epistemologies and modes of research. Second, we provide a selective review of developments in transdisciplinary research that respond to those challenges. Finally, we reflect on a recent attempt to put integral ecology into practice through a research initiative focusing on climate change adaptation in food systems in Africa.

Dr Carlos Zepeda is Assistant Director of Policy and Practice at the Laudato Si' Research Institute, based at Campion Hall, University of Oxford. His research interests span the politics of sustainable development and integral ecologies beyond anthropocentric frameworks in the global South, especially the power dynamics shaping Latin American and African social and ecological exclusion and injustice in the governance of society and its natural resources. At LSRI, Carlos works as a catalyst to network and translate the Institute's cutting-edge research on integral ecology into action. He mediates between the Institute's academic research on integral ecology, on the one hand, and national and global policy actors, global civil society actors, indigenous and faith-based communities, and the public at large, on the other.

Tue, 14 November 2023 | **Prof Dr Carola Mantel**

Is the school of the migration society a school for all? – Considering inherent processes of social boundary making in educational institutions in Switzerland

Equal educational chances and social belonging for all students are core objectives of public schools in Switzerland. However, these aims are far from being achieved which raises the question of who does and who does not benefit and for what reasons. And while much attention is directed towards the students, there is also the question about the teachers: What about *their* sense of belonging, particularly if they are used to being addressed as someone "with immigrant background"? Carola Mantel will talk about the challenges of referring to social categorisations such as "with immigrant background" that tend to be understood as a 'given' and that may be unreflectedly reproduced in educational studies.



She proposes to consider the theory of social boundary making (Barth; Wimmer) and shows how these boundary making dynamics can be seen as an inherent part of educational institutions in Switzerland, affecting students as well as teachers. She will also share some ideas of how the problems of precarised belongings, stereotyping and social positioning can be addressed in teacher education.

Dr Carola Mantel is head of the Institute for International Cooperation in Education at PH Zug and holds a doctoral degree from the University of Zurich in Social Anthropology on the topic of “teachers with a so-called immigrant background”. Formerly, she has pursued anthropological studies in the post-tsunami region of Indonesia and formerly again, she has been a primary school teacher in the canton of Zurich for ten years.

Tue, 12 December 2023 | **Prof Katherine Brickell**

The Debt-Trap: Women’s Stories of Navigating Family Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation

As the housing crisis in England deepens and the number of private rental evictions rise, family homelessness has become an urgent challenge. In England, almost 100,000 households, including over 125,000 children, reside in temporary accommodation (Shelter 2023). Described as the ‘hidden homeless’, it is mainly single women raising children who live in these typically insecure, confined, and substandard form of accommodation. The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated a rent-arrears crisis, particularly in towns and cities of Northern England, as households face threats to their incomes and private debt-taking (e.g. personal loans and credit cards) has exploded. In this context, the talk aims to amplify the stories of homeless single women with children from Oldham, Greater Manchester. Through their journeys the talk argues that debt not only causes, lengthens, but also outlives family homelessness. These insights are currently being developed into the monograph *A Feminist Geography of Debt and Housing Precarity* which aims to reveal how debt is intimately tied to precarious housing in a political economy context of austerity-driven welfare roll-back and the financialisation of social reproduction.

Prof Katherine Brickell is research lead for the Urban Futures group at King’s College London. Her feminist-oriented research seeks to understand gendered experiences of precarious home and working lives in Cambodia, the UK, and Ireland.