GCSC Seminar Series

Tuesday, April 16, 2019
4:00-5:00 PM

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“Toward a critical environmental justice: exploring state violence and the settler colonial conflicts”

Environmental Justice scholarship and politics have opened up highly significant avenues of research and social change possibilities, but they must expand and be transformed in order to address the urgent challenges of the 21st century.
Abstract
In this presentation I consider some of the central themes linking my research across various sites of environmental justice conflicts, including hazardous workplaces and residential sites of environmental racism, to spaces of environmental privilege, and modes of state repression against movements for environmental justice. These sites reveal key intersections among major social categories of difference (such as gender, race, nationality/citizenship) that are often coursing through environmental justice struggles, and they suggest productive methods for approaching environmental justice research and social change efforts in the 21st century. Toward that end, I draw from more recent work on Critical EJ Studies to consider what the field might look like if we broaden and deepen our spatial and conceptual reach into spaces that allow for a greater emphasis on theorizing state violence, a stronger embrace of multiscalar analyses, and an expansion of the social categories of difference under consideration in our methods, theory, and practice.

Bio
David N. Pellow is the Dehlsen Chair and Professor of Environmental Studies and Director of the Global Environmental Justice Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara where he teaches courses on social change movements, environmental justice, human-animal conflicts, sustainability, and social inequality. His teaching and research focus on environmental and ecological justice issues in the U.S. and globally. His books include: What is Critical Environmental Justice?; Total Liberation: The Power and Promise of Animal Rights and the Radical Earth Movement; The Slums of Aspen: Immigrants vs. the Environment in America’s Eden (with Lisa Sun-Hee Park); Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice; The Silicon Valley of Dreams: Environmental Injustice, Immigrant Workers, and the High-Tech Global Economy (with Lisa Sun-Hee Park); and Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago. He has served on the Boards of Directors for Global Response, the Global Action Research Center, the Center for Urban Transformation, the Santa Clara Center for Occupational Safety and Health, Greenpeace USA, and International Rivers.