

## PhD Course:

### Sense of place and resilience in social-ecological systems

(3 hp)

October to December 2014

Course leader: Richard Stedman, Cornell University, visiting researcher at the SRC

Co-convenor: Maria Tengö, SRC

#### Course outline

##### Brief description of course

The aim of this course is to explore a number of crucial potential intersections between theory and method related to sense of place and social-ecological systems (in general) and resilience concerns. Especially if we take seriously the material environment as underpinning sense of place, sense of place represents a potential key—and underappreciated—“coupling” mechanism in coupled SES and as such relevant for understanding dynamics of social-ecological systems and implications for resilience, in particular in relation to “reconnecting to the biosphere” and transformation. However, the literatures around these areas rarely intersect (a startling lack of intersection, as a matter of fact). In the course, we will discuss the sets of literature, how their different disciplinary positions/standpoints contributed to the gaps. Are there fundamental differences that make reconciliation difficult? What are potentially useful bridges and what are key cross-fertilization goals? The course will be seminar-based with strong emphasis on student participation. The course will initiate with a seminar, presented by Richard Stedman, that provides a foundation in sense of place theory and method. This will be required for seminar participants but will be open to a wider SRC audience as well. Following this, the course will explore sense of place in the context of resilience and social-ecological systems, focusing on key issues and topics, and have a strong component of student-led discussions.

##### Topics

The initial seminar will include include an introduction to sense of place theory and a critical overview/analysis of sense of place methods and their historical evolution, in the context of data considerations and comparisons with SES. This will be presented in a public seminar as described above..

The following part, which is the major element of the course will address key points of intersection/core questions between the sense of place and SES perspectives, and include topics identified by students and course conveners. Example topics include the relationship of sense of place and:

- transitions: responding to and facilitating social-ecological change
- scale: can we be “attached” to the biosphere?
- “undesirable states”: who decides what is desirable?
- cultural ecosystem services, social ecological memory, and stewardship
- types of capacity...adaptive, restorative, transformative
- shifting baseline hypothesis and the erosion of ecological quality

Note that it is NOT the case that there are core readings (or at least not very many of them) that explicitly engage these intersections. Rather, the intent is that we create a dialogue between sense

of place literature/theory/method (the expertise of course leader Richard Stedman) and resilience literature/theory/method. This better reflects the state of current literature and leaves room to make a new contribution during the course.

## Course structure

The course will be a once a week “reading group” with 2hrs per meeting, beginning in early October and ending in early December. In addition to the 16 hours of in-course instruction time, around 4hrs per week of reading will be required, plus time to prepare seminars and prepare a draft paper. The ideal class size for constructive discussions is 5-8 (10 at the most). The role of the course instructors (Stedman and Tengo) will be to co-facilitate discussion. Students will share responsibility in providing materials, co-leading discussion within the general framework and example topics discussed.

Student expectation:

Active and well prepared participation in all seminars, preparation of one seminar, and written contribution to review/synthesis paper of ~15p that addresses a key question of interest, or potential group meta synthesis paper as collectively agreed upon; possibility of smaller group papers to reflect student interests.

## Learning objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will:

- 1) **Be familiar with theory and methods of sense of place literature**
- 2) **Have an overview of the intersection of sense of place with key questions in the social-ecological resilience literature.**
- 3) **Be able to analyze potentials and pit-falls for cross-fertilization in the interface**
- 4) **Identify key areas for potential cross-fertilization**
- 5) **Contribute to the realization of such potential through a joint paper**

## Assessment and grading:

| Component   | Learning Outcomes | Weighting (%) |
|---|-------------------|---------------|
| Active participation in seminars                  | 1-4               | 25%           |
| Planning and leading one seminar                  | 1-4               | 25%           |
| Writing up (summarizing/synthesizing) one seminar | 1-4               | 15%           |
| Contribution to joint draft paper                 | 3-5               | 35%           |
|   |                   | 100%          |

## Criteria for assessment:

The following grades are issued, the lower limits for each grade is expressed as a percentage of the maximum points available:

**P Pass** – student shows proficiency in stipulated goals, and has full attendance

**F Fail - Below 50% Poor or insufficient conduct**

**Initial (fundamental) readings from the sense of place perspective:**

Devine-Wright, P. 2013. Think global, act local? The relevance of place attachments and place identities in a climate changed world. *Global Environmental Change*, 23(1), 61-69.

Heise, Ursula K. 2008. *Sense of place and sense of planet: The environmental imagination of the global*. Oxford University Press (selections)

Jacquet, J. B., & Stedman, R. C. 2013. The risk of social-psychological disruption as an impact of energy development and environmental change. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, (ahead-of-print), 1-20.

Kudryavtsev, A., M.E. Krasny, and R.C. Stedman. 2012. The impact of environmental education on sense of place among urban youth. *Ecosphere* 34(29): 1-15.

Lewicka, Maria. 2011. Place attachment: How far have we come in the last 40 years?." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 31.3: 207-230.

Manzo, Lynne C., and Patrick Devine-Wright, eds. 2013. *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*. Routledge. (selections)

Stedman, R. C. (2003). Is it really just a social construction?: The contribution of the physical environment to sense of place. *Society & Natural Resources*, 16(8), 671-685.

Stedman, R.C., and N. Ardoin. 2013. Mobility, power, and scale in place-based environmental education. Pp. 231-252 in M.E. Krasny and J. Dillon (Eds.). *Trading Zones in Environmental Education*. New York: Peter Lang.

Stedman, R. C., & Hammer, R. B. 2006. Environmental perception in a rapidly growing, amenity-rich region: The effects of lakeshore development on perceived water quality in Vilas County, Wisconsin. *Society and Natural Resources*, 19(2), 137-151.

Stokowski, P. A. 2002. Languages of place and discourses of power: Constructing new senses of place. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 34(4), 368-382.

Tuan, Y. F. 1977. *Space and place: The perspective of experience*. U of Minnesota Press (selections).

Patterson, M. E., & Williams, D. R. 2005. Maintaining research traditions on place: Diversity of thought and scientific progress. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 25(4), 361-380.

Zukin, S. 1991. *Landscapes of power: from Detroit to Disney World*. Univ of California Press.