

## Fall 2017 Lunch & Learn Schedule

September 7, 2017

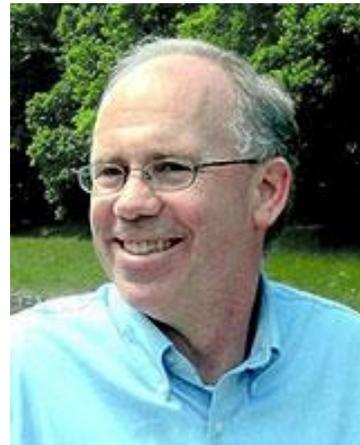
12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

**'They didn't even speak French!':  
Indigenous people, the environment, and the problem of sovereignty in  
modern Québec**

James Rice, Walter S. Dickson Professor, Department of History, Tufts University

Many people in New England and New York get their power from Hydro-Québec, a public utility that is closely associated with Québécois nationalism and with the colonization of Cree and Inuit lands through its massive James Bay hydroelectric project. This presentation will focus on environmental changes at James Bay resulting from dam-building, on competing assertions of local sovereignty within Québec linked to the James Bay Project, and on the ways in which these provincial events are connected to New England and points beyond.

**James Rice** (Walter S. Dickson Professor of History, Tufts University), specializes in early American, Native American, and environmental history. He is the author of *Nature and History in the Potomac Country: From Hunter-Gatherers to the Age of Jefferson* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); *Tales from a Revolution: Bacon's Rebellion and the Transformation of Early America* (Oxford University Press, 2012), and numerous articles and book chapters. He is currently writing an environmental history of Native America from the first human habitation of North America to the present and from the Arctic to southern Mexico (Cambridge University Press), from which this presentation is drawn.



**September 14, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

### **Arctic Lab: an artist's trip to the North**

Isabel Beavers, Master of Fine Arts program, Museum of Fine Arts, Tufts University

Arctic Lab will explore environmental science in the Arctic through the eyes of an artist. Through personal observations, notes, paintings and drawings she charted her journey to the far north. Her experience in the long dark night inspired a year-long artistic research project to understand through art how subtle shifts in light drives life in the Arctic Ocean. Isabel Beavers uses drawing, sculpture, sound and animation as starting points from which to unpack the relationship between sea ice melt and the structure of the Arctic marine ecosystem, as well as implications for the future.

[Isabel Beavers](#) lives and works in Boston, MA. She visualizes scientific research through immersive installations that utilize a range of media. Isabel is interested in the philosophy of science, the intersecting histories of art and science, and how both are implicated in conceptions of nature and current cultural responses to climate change. Her work has been exhibited at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston's William Morris Hunt Memorial Library, Emerson Media Arts Center, the Waterworks Museum, Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and Mountain Time Arts in Bozeman, MT. She is the recipient of the National Service Corps MLK Drum Major for Service Award and a TIE Graduate Environmental Research Fellowship.



**September 21, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Risks and regulation of fracking: A brief history**

Kate Konschnik, Executive Director, Harvard Environmental Law Program

The United States has been the world's top producer of oil and natural gas for five straight years. The increased scale and intensity of oil and gas development in modern America ahead of a regulatory framework has raised concerns about a number of environmental and public health issues. This talk will touch on three areas of concern: the lack of transparency about the chemicals used in the hydraulic fracturing process; spills of chemicals and wastewater from oil and gas production sites; and earthquakes induced by production and wastewater disposal.

[Kate Konschnik](#) is the Executive Director of the Harvard Environmental Law Program, where she manages Harvard Law School's applied research and decision-maker outreach, in the areas of climate, clean energy, and environmental law. Previously, Kate was the founding Director of the Program's Environmental Policy Initiative, an independent policy shop delivering real-world legal analysis and policy-relevant talks, white papers, and evaluation tools. Kate is also a lecturer at Harvard Law School. Prior to joining Harvard, Kate served as Chief Environmental Counsel to U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), and directed his staff on the Oversight Subcommittee of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. From 2002 to 2009, Kate also served as a Trial Attorney in the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the United States Department of Justice. Kate holds a B.A. in political science from Tufts University and a J.D. with honors from UC Hastings College of the Law.



**September 28, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Thoughts from West Africa: Two decades of protecting human rights and the environment**

Alfred Brownell, Environmental attorney/Founder, Green Advocates

Increasing demand for land and resources is resulting in colossal foreign direct investments parachuting into very poor countries without the absorptive capacity to manage these investments and the sometimes egregious implications for human rights and the environment. Liberian environmental attorney and activist Alfred Brownell, who recently fled the country due to increasing threats, will take you through a journey on land grabbing in Liberia by two of the world's largest oil palm corporations under the pretext of foreign direct investment. He will argue this mode of investment is threatening not just the food security and livelihoods of indigenous and local communities but how it continues to undermine ecosystem integrity, peace and stability of Liberia, which has resulted into a series of conflicts.

Read more about Mr. Brownell's journey in this recent [article](#).



[Alfred Lahai Gbabai-Garbla Brownell Sr.](#) is the Founder of Green Advocates, Liberia's First Public Interest environmental law and human rights organization. Mr. Brownell started Green Advocates to work with impoverished, rural communities to ensure them a voice in decisions affecting their communities' natural resources and is one of the lead campaigners reforming Liberia's land and natural resources sectors. Between 2006 -2012, he

campaigns for the recognition of the customary land and property rights of indigenous communities throughout Liberia. Mr. Brownell is also widely recognized internationally for his leadership in the field of natural resource rights. Among others, he serves on the Steering Committee of the Corporate Accountability Working Group of the International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net) and coordinates inputs from African civil society organizations into to the drafting of a UN treaty on business and human rights. Regionally, he serves as Head of Secretariat and Facilitator of the Mano River Union Civil Society Natural Resources Rights and Governance Platform, which is planning on bringing a multi-state lawsuit at the ECOWAS Court against seven African governments for their failure to protect the rights of local communities Mr. Brownell holds an LLM in Environmental law and Energy from the University of Tulane Law School, an LLB/JD from the University of Liberia, and a B.Sc. in General Agriculture from the University of Liberia.

Photo credit: Adam Glanzman/Northeastern University

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**October 5, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Ten points of hope for progress on climate change**

Kate Troll, author and activist

Author and activist Kate Troll will share her stories, insights, and experience in dealing with the political difficulties of advancing conservation initiatives in a state dominated by extractive resource industries. In her new book “The Great Unconformity: Reflections on Hope in an Imperiled World,” Ms. Troll uses the power of adventure storytelling to convey key policy insights and ‘hope spots’ in dealing with the challenges of sustainability and climate change. To inspire and empower others, her talk highlights ten points of hope for progress on climate change; leading to a robust discussion of the most practical ways to make a difference both personally and professionally.

[Kate Troll](#), a long-time Alaskan, has more than 22 years' experience in climate and energy policy, coastal management and fisheries. She's been elected to local office twice and currently serves as an op-ed columnist for Alaska's only statewide paper, the *Alaska Dispatch News*. As Executive Director of the Alaska Conservation Voters, Kate helped draft the creation of the Alaska Renewable Energy Fund and lobbied for the Sustainable Energy Act, a comprehensive roadmap to generate 50% of Alaska's electrical energy from renewable sources by 2025. She served as Executive Director for United Fishermen of Alaska (nation's largest fishing organization). She also worked as a fisheries development specialist and policy analyst for the State of Alaska. Internationally, Kate was Regional Fisheries Director (North and South America) for the Marine Stewardship Council, a global eco-label program. She was also appointed by Governor Palin to serve on the Alaska Climate Mitigation Advisory Board, and was the only Alaskan invited to participate in Governor Schwarzenegger's 2008 Global Climate Summit.



**October 12, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Beyond borders: Environmental cooperation in Israel and Palestine**

Eve Tandler & Shadi Shiha, Arava Institute for Environmental Studies

In a region historically fraught with conflict and divisiveness, environmental concerns throughout Israel, Palestine, and Jordan are universal. Issues like water resource management, air pollution, and renewable energy technology transcend political borders and bridge the divide between Israelis and Palestinians. Hear from Israeli Eve Tandler and Jordanian Shadi Shiha, alumni of the cross-border Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, on transboundary initiatives aimed at utilizing environmental issues to build peace in the region.

**Eve Tandler** was born in Tel Aviv to parents of Israeli and German citizenship. She studied at the Arava Institute while pursuing a Bachelor of Arts at Ben Gurion University. Before that Eve lived in Nepal, teaching English and assisting in village rehabilitation after the Nepali earthquake of 2015. She completed her mandatory military service in the Education Unit of the Israel Defense Force, managing an after school program for at-risk children of different backgrounds. She is currently involved with Women Wage Peace, which promotes peace in the region.



**Shadi Shiha** graduated with a degree in Autotronics Engineering from Khawarizmi College in 2015. He was born to a Palestinian family in Amman -- his parents were born in Palestine under the British Mandate, but relocated in 1967 to Kuwait and ultimately traveled to Amman as refugees during the Gulf War. Shadi works as a dance instructor for children, including at a camp for orphans where he taught dance lessons from 2011-2014, and has also spent time working as an English translator.

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**October 19, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

**Discovering the Omura's whale: ecology and conservation of the newest baleen whale species**

The Omura's whale was first described from dead specimens in 2003, and not observed in the wild until 2013 off northwest Madagascar, making it the newest and most enigmatic member of the lunge-feeding baleen whales. Since then, the Madagascar research team has studied the species, describing for the first time its external appearance, feeding ecology, social behavior, seasonal and spatial distribution, acoustic and singing behavior and assessing potential anthropogenic threats. Dr. Cerchio will present this voyage of discovery, and what it means to work with a new species of whale in the 21st century.

Tufts alumnus [Salvatore Cerchio](#) is a marine mammal biologist who has worked with cetaceans around the world for over 30 years. Dr Cerchio's current geographic focus is in the Indian Ocean, particularly off Madagascar and the Arabian Sea. He has conducted research on several species of whales and dolphins, applying expertise in conservation biology, bioacoustics, molecular ecology and behavioral ecology. He's currently a visiting scientist at the New England Aquarium and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. He received a BS in Biology from Tufts University, a MS in Marine Sciences from San Jose State University and a PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Michigan.



**October 26, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

### **Housatonic river cleanup: 20+ years**

Jim Murphy, Leader of the Intergovernmental Relations and Community Involvement Team, Environmental Protection Agency

From 1932 through 1977, General Electric manufactured and serviced electrical transformers containing toxic, now banned, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Industrial chemical use and improper disposal led to extensive contamination around Pittsfield, MA as well as down the entire length of the Housatonic River, which runs from Massachusetts to the Long Island Sound. After decades of cleaning efforts, EPA issued a \$613 million Proposed Cleanup Plan in 2014 requiring GE to excavate most of the contaminated soil and transport it to an approved out of state location. This has resulting in an ongoing dispute between EPA and GE.

**Jim Murphy** is currently the Leader of the Intergovernmental Relations and Community Involvement Team at EPA's New England regional office in Boston. Over the past 20 years, Jim has worked on more than 70 Superfund and Emergency Response sites across New England including the GE-Pittsfield Housatonic River Site in western Massachusetts. Prior to coming to EPA in 1997, Jim directed the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program at a Boston area non-profit for eight years and served as Chair of the Massachusetts Energy Directors' Association. He worked as a civil rights and community organizer in North Carolina for five years during the 1970s, as director of the Connecticut Council of Senior Citizens, and as a congressional staff member for U.S. Congressman Bruce Morrison in New Haven, CT during the 1980s.



**November 2, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Natural gas: Turning a dead end into an off-ramp**

Nathan Phillips, Earth and Environment at Boston University

Natural gas has been framed as a bridge fuel to a renewable energy-based economy, but the bridge has been crossed and its time to find the offramp. In cities, there are two ways to think about winding natural gas dependency down: an orderly, gradual shift in the building sector to electrification, or a death spiral of defections from the gas grid leading to a collapse in the gas utility business. I will share an economic case for shifting toward building electrification that re-allocates an already-committed \$9.5B fund for gas pipeline replacement in Massachusetts.



[Nathan Phillips](#) is a professor of Earth and Environment at Boston University, where he directs the Earth House Living Learning Community. An ecologist and tree physiologist by training, Nathan led a first-of-its-kind study in 2013 mapping over 3,000 natural gas leaks in Boston. Gas leaks kill trees, waste money, degrade air quality and climate, and are safety hazards. This work has led to Boston and Massachusetts policy to fix the leaks.

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**November 9, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Who is an environmentalist? Making “nature” at urban parks**

Cathy Stanton & Shirley Wang, Department of Anthropology, Tufts University

Parks are paradoxical places where a sense of “nature” is carefully constructed, maintained, and regulated, often in ways that reinforce normative categories and behaviors. Through a pair of case studies at urban parks in coastal US cities, two anthropologists explore the ways that visitors, park staff and planners, state officials, and others express and negotiate what it means to be an environmentalist, and how that sits within often very different visions of parks as public or civic spaces. Cathy Stanton describes the tensions around her depiction of a Boston Harbor Island cottage community as environmentalists in a report commissioned by state officials overseeing the cottagers' displacement from a space being remade as “natural.” Shirley Wang presents a range of innovative understandings of environmentalism at two iconic San Francisco parks and asks about their potential to shift patterns of racial exclusion.

[Cathy Stanton](#) is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology and the academic advisor for the Food Systems & Nutrition minor at Tufts. For many years she produced ethnographic studies for the National Park Service, including a recent project on Peddocks Island in Boston Harbor on which this talk is based.



**Shirley Wang** is a fourth-year undergraduate student at Tufts University studying anthropology. She is a Tufts Summer Scholar and received a grant to conduct fieldwork in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Her research data will be used for a 3-part audio-documentary podcast series called *Neutral Grounds*, as well as her senior thesis.

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**November 16, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **Innovations to put solar power in the hands of every American**

Steph Speirs, CEO and co-founder, Solstice

More solar is installed every year compared to the last, yet it still only accounts for less than 1 percent of our electricity. Why isn't solar blanketing our towns and cities yet? Why have so many big solar companies gone bankrupt in the last few years? What innovations need to occur for the benefits of solar energy to be enjoyed by everyone in America? Join Solstice co-founder and CEO Steph Speirs in discussing the impediments--and innovations required--to realizing a truly democratized clean energy economy that works for all of us, not just some of us.

[Steph Speirs](#) is a social entrepreneur and community builder with management experience in the Middle East, South Asia, and the United States. She is currently the Co-Founder and CEO of Solstice, an enterprise dedicated to radically expanding the number of American households that can take advantage of solar power. She was selected as an Echoing Green Climate Fellow, a Global Good Fund Fellow, a Kia Revisionary, a Grist 50 Fixer, and an Acumen Global Fellow, all of which recognize emerging leaders in social enterprise. She previously led sales and marketing innovation in India at d.light, a solar products company powering areas without reliable electricity; spearheaded Acumen's renewable energy impact investment strategy in Pakistan; developed Middle East policy as the youngest Director at the White House National Security Council; and managed field operations in seven states for the first Obama presidential campaign. She holds a B.A. from Yale and a Master in Public Affairs (MPA) with distinction from Princeton, and is a recipient of the Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans.



**November 30, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **The quasi-legal challenge: Drug policy, *Cannabis* cultivation, and the environment**

Anne Short Gianotti, Earth and Environment, Boston University

The cultivation and trafficking of cannabis and other drugs can have dramatic effects on land use and the environment. The evolving (and often conflicting) legal status of cannabis shapes what we know and do about these environmental effects. In this talk, I will discuss the relationships between cannabis cultivation, drug policy, and the environment in California. I will review what is known about the environmental effects of cannabis cultivation, discuss how the unique challenges of studying and governing a quasi-legal practice, and reflect on ways that ongoing regulatory changes may re-shape the industry.



[Anne Short Gianotti](#) is Assistant Professor of Earth and Environment at Boston University. Her research investigates the social and political dimensions of conservation and natural resource management, and has spanned diverse topics including wildlife management, cannabis cultivation, and nonpoint source pollution. She holds a PhD and MS from UC Berkeley and a BS from Harvey Mudd College.

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**December 7, 2017**

12:00-1:00pm | Rabb Room, [Lincoln Filene Center](#)

## **The impact of airports on air and life quality in surrounding communities**

Neelakshi Hudda, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Tufts University

Aviation emissions impact air quality at global, regional and local spatial scales. What does the presence of airports close to home mean to communities living near airports? Neelakshi Hudda will review the impacts at local scale; the adversely impacted air quality or noise elevation zone may extend tens of kilometers downwind of the airports and encompass large populations in urban areas. She will also discuss the impacts of living in noisy vicinity of airports has on quality of life in residential communities around airport and associations with socioeconomic status.

**Neelakshi Hudda's** main area of research interest is urban air pollution with a particular focus on ultrafine particles. Her work on the full extent of elevated ultrafine particle concentrations in Los Angeles neighborhoods downwind of LAX caused an immediate change in the study of and health concerns for ultrafine particle concentrations near large airports. In Boston, she used several years of air pollution data and found a significant relationship between Logan aviation activities, wind direction and elevated neighborhood and residential pollution levels.

