What is environmental anthropology?

- Study of human-environment interactions and relationships
- Different approaches
  - Cultural ecology
  - Human behavioral ecology
  - Ethnoecology (TEK)
  - Historical ecology
  - Political ecology
What is “sustainability”?

http://computingforsustainability.com/2009/03/15/visualising-sustainability/
Three spheres of sustainability
Anthropological thinking: a valuable tool for sustainability

- **Anthropology**
  - Holistic approach
  - Culture concept
    - Culture is (mostly) integrated
  - Culture is dynamic
  - Cultural relativism
  - Mixed methods

- **Sustainability**
  - Systems approach
  - Resilience and adaptive management
  - Multiple stakeholder perspectives
  - Interdisciplinarity (e.g., natural sciences and humanities)
Barriers to interdisciplinarity

- Myra Strober and a colleague had their students work on an interdisciplinary project to understand how and why elementary education became a woman’s profession in U.S.
  - History students: diaries
  - Economics students: statistical regression analysis
Barriers to interdisciplinarity

- The difficulty “is coming to understand the way colleagues from different disciplines think -- their assumptions; concepts; categories; methods of discerning, evaluating, and reporting ‘truth’; and styles of arguing -- their disciplinary cultures and habits of mind.” (Strober 2010: 4)
Holism, interdisciplinarity & environmental anthropology

“"The very nature of ecological investigation demands the crossing of disciplinary lines and asserts a holism often honored but less frequently practiced in anthropology."” (Robert Netting, 1977)
Example: What are the causes of soil erosion?

- Analytic approaches in both Environmental Anthropology and Sustainability are not usually reductionistic, rather they are holistic.
- “Solutions” tend to be both context specific and dynamic.

http://ilri.org/infoServ/Webpub/fullDocs/WorkP25/Causes.htm
Opportunities on campus

- Programs of study
  - Integrated Certificate in Sustainability
    [http://ugs.utah.edu/sustainability-certificate/](http://ugs.utah.edu/sustainability-certificate/)
  - Environmental & Sustainability Studies Minor
    [http://envst.utah.edu/students/curriculum/minor.php](http://envst.utah.edu/students/curriculum/minor.php)
  - Global Change & Sustainability Center
    [http://environment.utah.edu/](http://environment.utah.edu/)

- Courses include
  - Healthy Communities (FCS)
  - Environmental Justice (ENVST)
  - Urban Ecology (BIOL)
  - SLC Workshop (CMP)
  - Human Ecology (ANTH)
Opportunities on campus

- Office of Sustainability
  http://sustainability.utah.edu/ (Also on Facebook & Twitter)
  - Internships
  - SCIF (Sustainable Campus Initiative Fund) projects
  - Edible Campus Gardens & U Farmers Market
  - Blog (sustainableutah.wordpress.com)
  - UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program)
Opportunities off-campus

- Study abroad through the U
  - Tongan Culture and the Island Environment (directed by Dr. Adrian Bell, Anthropology)
  - Environmental Conflict & Water Quality in Ecuador (directed by Dr. Bill Johnson, Geology & Geophysics)
  - Environmental and Sustainability Studies in Costa Rica (courses vary from year to year)
  - Sustainable Tourism in Fiji (directed by Dr. Kelly Bricker, Parks, Recreation & Tourism)
  - Urban Planning in Brazil (Fall Break; last year led by Stephen Goldsmith, University Professor for Campus Sustainability)

For more information: [http://learningabroad.utah.edu/](http://learningabroad.utah.edu/)
Opportunities off-campus

- Ethnographic field schools offered by other institutions
  - University of Rochester - Malawi - 3 weeks
  - North Carolina State University - Guatemala - 7.5 weeks
  - Northern Kentucky University - Belize - 24 days
  - Comitas Institute for Anthropological Study - NYC (but varies) - about 5 weeks
  - For graduate students: Organization for Tropical Studies - Costa Rica (Biodiversity Conservation through the Lens of Indigenous Peoples) - 2 weeks
Opportunities off-campus:
Climate and Culture Change in the Andes

- Center for Social Well Being
  - 3 week training program in Peruvian Andes (13th yr)
  - Interdisciplinary qualitative field methods + Spanish and Quechua language classes
  - Program emphasizes “Participatory Action Research and Andean Ethnography centered on themes of Climate Change with respect to Ecology, Health, Education, Community Organization and related topics”

http://www.socialwellbeing.org/fs2011fotos.htm
Employment opportunities

- Many environmental jobs require post-graduate education and/or experience
  - Solution? Additional degrees, research experience, or internships
- Rarely do non-academic environmental jobs specifically seek “anthropologists”
  - Solution? Awareness of your own skills and further development of them
    - Ethnographic methods
    - Statistics
    - Demography
    - GIS
    - Sustainability knowledge & skills


Dr. Jim Yong Kim,
President of the World Bank,
MD/PhD Anthropology
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Further education and internship options: some examples

- Graduate Education in Environmental Anthropology
  - University of Colorado, Denver
    - MA concentration in Anthropology of Health and the Environment
  - University of Georgia
    - PhD in Anthropology and Integrative Conservation
  - University of Maine
    - PhD in Anthropology & Environmental Policy
- Graduate Education in Sustainable Development
  - University of Arizona
  - Columbia University
- NGOs
  - The Nature Conservancy
  - World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
  - Worldwatch Institute
- Government
  - EPA
- Intergovernmental
  - United Nations Environment Programme