

INTD497: Experts, Science, and the Politics of Development

McGill University, Fall 2022

Lecturer: Dr. Jonathan Wald (he/him) (jonathan.wald@mcgill.ca)

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday 8:35AM-9:55AM in Trottier Building 1080

Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30AM to 12:30PM in Leacock 822A

Course Description: Given that a central premise of development is that the proper application of knowledge can improve living conditions, the role of scientific expertise is fundamental to understanding development. However, science does not arise out of a vacuum. It is composed and applied by particular communities with specific ideals, objectives, and worldviews. Understanding the sometimes strained relationships between unique scientific communities, state authorities, and broader publics is therefore vital, especially as scientists are sometimes depicted as estranged from matter of public concern. In light of this, the goal this class is to train *expertise on expertise*. Drawing on the multidisciplinary approach of Science and Technology Studies (STS), students will be encouraged not to be able to situate the practices of expertise in sociohistorical context, and to become *experts in formation* themselves, able to self-reflect on the roles of education and expertise in their experiences at McGill.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Understand the academic literature regarding questions of the politics of expertise in development contexts.
- Critically evaluate research programs with regards to their values and potential applications.

Course Content:

Readings to be completed each day before class.

The assigned readings are either published articles or chapters from books. All readings are available as pdfs on MyCourses. Each day's assigned readings include "key questions" intended to help you focus your attention on the broad contributions of this article to the overall course. The goal of the readings is to provide tools for thought rather than an exhaustive bibliography of relevant literature.

Lectures will review and expand upon the readings.

Lectures which will provide an overview and contextualization of the week's topics will take place each Tuesday. Student participation in discussion is *strongly* encouraged. To ensure that the classroom remains a safe and

welcoming space for all students, **wearing a procedural mask in class is recommended.**

“**Labinars**” (a portmanteau of “lab” and “seminar”) will be a setting for applying the course content collaboratively and practically. Each Thursday, you will meet with a group of your peers to create a group project that applies, tests, and reformulates the topics we discuss in class. The professor and teaching assistant will be on-hand to assist in these practices.

Evaluation (More details on MyCourses)

Case Proposal: 14 September (5%)

To begin the process of collaboration, you will need to produce a short summary of a question about expertise that interests you. The topics will be uploaded to the MyCourses “discussion” page.

4 Progress Reflections: (15% each)

At the ends of week 5, 7, 9, and 11, you will write a short (2 page double spaced) reflection on your group’s work. In the first half of the assignment, you will summarize what you have done in the previous 2 weeks. In the second half of the assignment, you will reflect on the challenges, successes, experiences, or surprises you have encountered.

Final Project: 5 December (35%)

The final product of the labinar will be up to you and your group. *However*, you will be required to separately submit a reflection paper explaining *why* this form of final product was selected and how it addresses your group’s questions. Projects will be evaluated based on these individual reflection papers and on the merits of the project itself.

Email Policy: I will do my best to respond to your emails in a timely manner. To help me do this, I ask that you please include “INTD497” in the subject lines of your emails. This will help me find your questions amidst my other emails and respond to them faster.

Mental Health Resources: Please take care of yourselves. Take walks, drink water, eat healthy, or do whatever else you need to feel well. It is also okay to feel unwell, especially now. If you feel that you need support, please reach out. You can access support through the McGill Wellness Hub (<https://www.mcgill.ca/wellness-hub/>) or by contacting your local Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CLSC) (<https://sante.gouv.qc.ca/en/repertoire-ressources/votre-cisss-ciuss/>). Keep.meSAFE is available to all MCGill Students 24/7 through the MySSP app (<https://ssmu.ca/blog/2020/03/mental-health-resource-available-keep-mesafe/>). Crisis support is available 24/7 through various crisis centers (<https://santemontreal.qc.ca/en/public/support-and-services/crisis-centres/>) or from

Suicide Action Montreal, which you can find at <https://suicideactionmontreal.org/en/> or by calling 1 866 277 3553.

General Accommodations Policy: My goal is to ensure that everyone is able to engage with the course material as thoroughly as possible. If events external to the class make this unduly difficult, please feel free to let me know so that we can create a strategy to allow you to continue to engage with the course.

Notice for Students with Disabilities: I will do my best to accommodate students with disabilities. If this pertains to you, I encourage you to contact the office for Student Access and Achievement (formerly the Office for Students with Disabilities) (514-398-6009, access.achieve@mcgill.ca) as soon as possible so that we can provide necessary accommodations.

Land Acknowledgment: McGill University is located on unceded indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather. Tiotiá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community. I encourage you to think of the history of the land on which you are living now as part of this course. (This territorial acknowledgement was adapted from Concordia University's Indigenous Directions Leadership Group [2017]. To read the entire territorial acknowledgment and to learn more about how it was written, please visit <https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html>.)

Academic Integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information) (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)

Assignment Languages: In accordance with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

Reading Schedule

Schedule may shift due to unforeseen circumstances
or though consultation with the class.

31 August: Introduction

Read class syllabus

Email Jonathan with (1) preferred name and pronouns, (2) what you hope to gain from this class, and (3) anything else I should know to help you get the most from this course.

5 September: Reflexivity

Beck, Ulrich. 1992. "On the Logic of Wealth and Risk Distribution." In *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, translated by Mark Ritter, 19–34. London: Sage Publications.

Latour, Bruno. 2004. "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern." *Critical Inquiry* 30 (2): 225–48.

Fortun, Kim. 2012. "Ethnography in Late Industrialism." *Cultural Anthropology* 27 (3): 446–64.

Further Readings:

On Reflexivity: *Reflections on Modernity* by Nikolas Luhman, *Marking Time* by Paul Rabinow, "What First Order-Observers Can Learn From Second-Order Observations" by Niklas Langlitz

On Science and Technology Studies (STS): *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* by Donna Haraway, *Laboratory Life* by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, *The Normal an the Pathological* by Georges Canguilhem, *An Epistemology of the Concrete* by Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, "Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation" by Michel Callon"

On Problem-based Inquiry: "Matters of Care in Technoscience" by Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, "Dewey and Foucault: What's the Problem?" by Paul Rabinow, *On Doubt* by Vilém Flusser, "Why Study Problematizations? Making Politics Visible" by Carol Bacchi

Key Questions: What does it mean to reflect on knowledge itself? Why does it matter *now*?

7 September: *Raison d'état*

Foucault, Michel. 2009. "15 March 1978." In *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978*, edited by Michel Senellart, François Ewald, and Alessandro Fontana, translated by Graham Burchell, 255–83. New York: Picador.

Foucault, Michel. 2016. "9 January 1980." In *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1979-1980*, edited by Michel Senellart, François Ewald, and Alessandro Fontana, translated by Graham Burchell, 1–21. New York: Picador.

Further Readings:

How Reason Almost Lost its Mind by Paul Erikson et al, *Reason and Revolution* by Herbert Marcuse, *Critique and Crisis* by Reinhart Koselleck

Key Questions: What is *raison d'état*? How did knowledge come to be a guiding principle for European states?

12 September: Colonial Expertise

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. 2021. "Colonizing Knowledges." In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 3rd ed., 67–90. London; New York: Zed Books.

Pratt, Mary Louise. 2007. "Science, Planetary Consciousness, Interiors." In *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed., 15–36. London: Routledge.

Rabinow, Paul. 1992. "France in Morocco: Technocosmopolitanism and Middling Modernism." *Assemblage*, no. 17: 53–57.

Further Readings:

On Early Modern Science: *Wonder and the Order of Nature* by Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston, *Wonder & Science* by Mary Blaine Campbell, *Marvelous Possessions* by Stephen Greenblatt

On Colonialism and Science: *The Road to Botany Bay* by Paul Carter, *Orientalism* by Edward Said, *Science and Colonial Expansion* by Lucile Brockway, *Race and the Education of Desire* by Ann Stoler, *On the Postcolony* by Achille Mbembe

Key Questions: What was and is the relationship between expertise and colonialism?

19 September: Economics as Science of Development

Foucault, Michel. 2010. "14 February 1979." In *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, 129–57. New York: Picador.

Escobar, Arturo. 2012. "Economics and the Space of Development: Tales of Growth and Capital." In *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, 55–101. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Mitchell, Timothy. 2002. "Principles True in Every Country." In *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*, 54–79. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Further Readings:

On Economics: *The Real Economy* edited by Federico Neiburg and Jane I. Guyer, *The Economization of Life* by Michelle Murphy, *The End of Capitalism (As We Know It)* by J.K. Gibson-Graham, "Wanted: Worldly Philosophers" by Roger Backhouse and Bradley Bateman

On Neoliberalism: *Neoliberalism as Exception* by Aihwa Ong, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* by Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, "Neoliberalism as Big Leviathan or...?" by Stephen Collier,

Key Questions: How does economics ground its inquiry? What objects and worldviews does it require?

26 September: Technical Anti-Politics

Ferguson, James. 1994. "The Anti-Politics Machine." In *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, 251–78. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Li, Tania Murray. 2007. "Rendering Technical?" In *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*, 123–55. Durham: Duke University Press.

Harvey, Penny, and Hannah Knox. 2015. "Corruption and Public Works." In *Roads: An Anthropology of Infrastructure and Expertise*, 134–60. Expertise: Cultures and Technologies of Knowledge. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Further Readings:

Undoing the Demos by Wendy Brown, *The Return of the Political* by Chantal Mouffe, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* by Jürgen Habermas, *Disagreement* by Jacques Rancière, *Harmony Ideology* by Laura Nader

Key Questions: How is expertise understood as being "at odds" with genuine politics? What might it mean to understand expertise as political?

3 October: Infrastructural Expertise

Hetherington, Kregg. 2017. "Surveying the Future Perfect: Anthropology, Development and the Promise of Infrastructure." In *Infrastructures and Social Complexity: A Companion*, edited by Penny Harvey, Casper Bruun Jensen, and Atsuro Morita, 50–59. London: Routledge.

Carse, Ashley. 2014. "Making the Panama Canal Watershed." In *Beyond the Big Ditch: Politics, Ecology, and Infrastructure at the Panama Canal*, 37–58. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Ballesterio, Andrea. 2015. "The Ethics of a Formula: Calculating a Financial–Humanitarian Price for Water." *American Ethnologist* 42 (2): 262–78.

Further Readings:

"Technological Zones" by Andrew Barry, "The Ethnography of Infrastructure" by Susan Starr, "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure" by Brian Larkin, *Democracy's Infrastructure* by Antina Von Schnitzler, *Infrastructure, Environment, and Life in the Anthropocene* edited by Kregg Hetherington

Key Questions: How do infrastructure projects mobilize expertise and modernism to shape public and environmental life?

13 October: Elite Capture of Science

Kirsch, Stuart. 2014. "Corporate Science." In *Mining Capitalism: The Relationship between Corporations and Their Critics*, 127–58. Oakland, California: University of California Press.

Fuentes, Carola, and Rafael Valdeavellano, dirs. 2015. *Chicago Boys*. Icarus Films. <https://docuseek2-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/if-boys>.

Further Readings:

The German Ideology by Karl Marx, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* by Louis Althusser, *The Prison Notebooks* by Antonio Gramsci, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Peru: Elite Power and Political Capture* by John Crabtree and Francisco Durand.

Key Questions: How can expertise be used as a strategy of exploitation?

17 October: Brazilian Critiques of Expertise

Rajão, Raoni, and Ricardo B. Duque. 2014. "Between Purity and Hybridity: Technoscientific and Ethnic Myths of Brazil." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 39 (6): 844–74.

Monteiro, Marko. 2020. "Science Is a War Zone: Some Comments on Brazil." *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society* 3 (1): 4–8.

Tesh, Sylvia N., and Eduardo Paes-Machado. 2004. "Sewers, Garbage, and Environmentalism in Brazil." *The Journal of Environment & Development* 13 (1): 42–72.

Further Readings:

Cry of the People, Cry of the Earth by Leonardo Boff, *The Philosophy of Liberation* by Enrique Dussel, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire

Key Questions: How do perspectives from the global South, here exemplified by Brazil, challenge Northern preconceptions of expertise?

24 October: Brazilian Climate Institutions

Nunes, Felipe, Raoni Rajão, and Britaldo Soares-Filho. 2016. "Boundary Work in Climate Policy Making in Brazil: Reflections from the Frontlines of the Science-Policy Interface." *Environmental Science & Policy* 59 (May): 85–92.

Lahsen, Myanna. 2011. "Knowledge, Democracy, and Uneven Playing Fields: Insights from Climate Politics in - and between - the US and Brazil." In *Knowledge and Democracy: A 21st Century Perspective*, edited by Nico Stehr, 163–82. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Guimarães, Roberto P. 1991. "Echoes of Stockholm: The Creation of SEMA." In *The Ecopolitics of Development in the Third World: Politics and Environment in Brazil*, 143–71. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Further Readings:

Greening Brazil by Katheryn Hochstetler and Margaret Keck, *Stockholm, Rio, Johannesburg: Brazil and the Three United Nations Conferences on the Environment* by André Aranha Corrêa do Lago, *Brazil and Climate Change* by Eduardo Viola and Matías Franchini

Key Questions: How does the case of Brazilian institutions highlight the potential and challenges of incorporating expertise into democratic institutions?

31 October: Decolonizing Expertise

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. 2021. "The Indigenous People's Project: Setting a New Agenda." In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 3rd ed., 123–43. London ; New York: Zed Books.

Liboiron, Max. 2021. "An Anticolonial Pollution Science." In *Pollution Is Colonialism*, 113–56. Durham: Duke University Press.

Further Readings:

"Decolonization is Not a Metaphor" by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, *Decolonizing Extinction* by Juno Salazar Parreñas, *Native DNA* by Kim TallBear, "Alterlife and Decolonial Chemical Relations" by Michelle Murphy

Key Questions: How might expertise be separated from its colonial history? How would expertise need to change?

7 November: Quantifying Populations

Biruk, Cal. 2018. "When Numbers Travel: The Politics of Evidence-Based Policy." In *Cooking Data: Culture and Politics in an African Research World*, 166–99. Durham: Duke University Press.

Cohen, Lawrence. 2019. "The 'Social' De-Duplicated: On the Aadhaar Platform and the Engineering of Service." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 42 (3): 482–500.

Further Readings:

The Taming of Chance by Ian Hacking, *The Mirage of China* by Liu Xin, *No Aging in India* by Lawrence Cohen

Key Questions: How do phenomena change once converted into data? Why does it matter if data is quantified?

14 November: Citizen Science

Jasanoff, Sheila. 2003. "Technologies of Humility: Citizen Participation in Governing Science." *Minerva* 41 (3): 223–44.

Monteiro, Marko, and Raoni Rajão. 2017. "Scientists as Citizens and Knowers in the Detection of Deforestation in the Amazon." *Social Studies of Science*, January, 1–19.

Further Readings:

Acting in an Uncertain World by Michel Callon, Pierre Lascoumes, and Yannick Barthe, *Naked Science* edited by Laura Nader, *Against Method* by Paul Feyerabend

Key Questions: Can expertise be democratized? What happens to scientific practice when it is carried out outside of academic institutions?

21 November: Composing Ecologies

Ogden, Laura. 2008. "The Everglades Ecosystem and the Politics of Nature." *American Anthropologist* 110 (1): 21–32. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1433.2008.00005.x>.

Lyons, Kristina Marie. 2014. "Soil Science, Development, and the 'Elusive Nature' of Columbia's Amazonian Plains." *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 19 (2): 212–36.

Further Readings:

A Vast Machine by Paul N. Edwards, *Nature in Translation* by Shiho Satsuka, "Encountering Bio-Infrastructure" by Maria Puig de la Bellacasa

Key Questions: What is an ecosystem? How does it emerge as a scientific object?

28 November: Biopolitics and Beyond

Benton, Adia. 2015. "For Love of Country: Model Citizens, Good Governance, and the Nationalization of HIV." In *HIV Exceptionalism: Development through Disease in Sierra Leone*, 117–37. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816692422.001.0001>.

Nguyen, Vinh-Kim. 2004. "Antiretroviral Globalism, Biopolitics, and Therapeutic Citizenship." In *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, edited by Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier, 124–44. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Further Readings:

Life Exposed by Adriana Petryna, "Artificiality and Enlightenment" by Paul Rabinow, *Life in Crisis* by Peter Redfield, *Empire of Trauma* by Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman, *Casualties of Care* by Miriam Ticktin, *Life Besides Itself* by Lisa Stevenson

Key Questions: How does medical expertise shape development?