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Education

- 1998 - 04 University of Washington, Seattle, WA
PhD, "Between the Rivers and Tides: A Hydraulic History of the Mekong Delta, 1820-1975"
(Fields: Southeast Asian History, Vietnamese History, Environmental History, GIS)
- 1996 - 98 University of Washington, Seattle, WA
Master of Arts, History, June 1998 (Fields: Southeast Asian History, Environmental History)
- 1988 - 92 University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
B.A. with Honors, May 1992 (Major: American History)

Selected Publications

- Forth. *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta* (University of Washington Press), 288 pp.
- Forth. "Aerial Photography and its Role in Shifting Colonial Discourse on Peasants and Land Management in Late-Colonial Indochina 1930-1945" in Karen Oslund, Niels Brimnes, Christina Folke Ax, Niklas Thode Jensen, Eds. *Cultivating the Colony: Colonial States and their Environmental Legacies* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press), 29 mss. pp.
- 2009 "Americans in An Giang: Nation Building and the Particularities of Place in the Mekong Delta, 1966–1973," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 4:3 (October 2009), 139-172.
- 2009 David Biggs, Fiona Miller and Hoanh C. Thai. "Making and Unmaking the Vietnamese Mekong Delta: Water Management in Historical and Contemporary Perspective" in Francois Molle, Tira Foran, Mira Kakonen, Eds. *Contested Waterscapes in the Mekong Region Hydropower, Livelihoods and Governance* (London UK: Earthscan, 2009), 203-226.
- 2008 "Water Power: Machines, Modernizers, and Meta-Commoditization on the Mekong River in Joseph Nevins, Nancy Lee Peluso, Eds. *Taking Southeast Asia to Market: Commodification in a Neoliberal Age* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 108-123.
- 2008 "Breaking from the Colonial Mold: Water Engineering and Nation-Building in the Plain of Reeds, Vietnam," *Technology and Culture* 49: 3, July 2008.
- 2006 "Reclamation Nations: The US Bureau of Reclamation and Nation-Building in the Mekong Valley: 1945-1972," *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society* 4:3 (December 2006), 225-246.
- 2005 "Managing a Rebel Landscape: Conservation, Pioneers, and the Revolutionary Past in the U Minh Forest, Vietnam," in *Environmental History*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (July 2005), pp. 448-476.

2003 "Problematic Progress: Reading Environmental and Social Change on the Vinh Te Canal in the Western Mekong Delta." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, February 2003.

Selected Presentations

- 2010 "Small Machines in the Garden: Motorized Pumps and a Technological Revolution in the Mekong Delta" Warwick University, Mar 19-20 2010.
- 2009 "Militarized Environments: Social and Environmental Histories of Militarization in Vietnam," Yale University, November 2, 2009.
- 2009 "Situating "Tá Điền" and "Cải Cách Đất" in Southern Vietnam, 1930-1954," Harvard University, May 24, 2009.
- 2009 "Americans in An Giang: The Importance of Place in Histories of Counterinsurgency and Nation-Building," Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Chicago IL, Mar 27, 2009.
- 2008 "American Forays in Construction, Destruction, and Disruption: An Environmental History of the Vietnam War, 1952-1975," Yale University, September 17, 2008.
- 2008 "Dredging Up the Past: Development Politics and Historical Waterscapes in the Mekong Delta," SE Asian Studies Summer Institute Keynote Lecture, July 7, 2008.
- 2007 "Reading Insurgency In The Landscape: Environmental Legacies Of Insurgency In Vietnam," American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, April 17, 2007.
- 2007 "Machines in Colonial Gardens: Paths of Disruption, Destruction and Invention in Vietnam's Modern Past," Colloquium on Technology and the Colony, Harvey Mudd College, March 9-10, 2007
- 2006 "Riding on the Rivers and Tides: Modern Vietnam from a Watery Perspective in the Mekong Delta" Hobart & William Smith College, March 25, 2006.
- 2005 "Spaces of War: The Vietnam War, Autonomous Landscapes and Spatial History," Southeast Asia Lecture Series, Yale University, September 21, 2005.
- 2005 "Colonizing the River: Converting Water into Property and Power in the Mekong Basin," UC Berkeley Center for Southeast Asian Studies 22nd Annual Conference, Berkeley CA Feb 3-6, 2005.
- 2004 "Building from a Colonial Mold: American Assistance and Vietnamese Water Management in the Plain of Reeds (1954 – 1975)." Society for the History of Technology Annual Meeting, Amsterdam, October 7-10, 2004.

Employment

- 2004 Assistant Professor. History Department, University of California. Riverside, CA. (on research leave at Harvard University 2009-10)
- 2003 Lecturer. "Southeast Asian History," History Department, University of Washington, Seattle.
- 1997-99 Historian and Website Developer. "Historic Seattle Research Database, GIS, and Photo Archives". Cultural Resources, National Park Service, Seattle.

1995-96 ESL Instructor. National Political Academy and Foreign Affairs Commission of the Central Committee. Hanoi, Vietnam.

1993-94 ESL Instructor. Economics University. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Awards

2009-10 Harvard History of Science/East Asian Languages and Civilizations Visiting Fellowship

2009 Pac-Rim Faculty Development Grant

2007 NEH Summer Stipend

2006-07 UC Presidential Research Fellowship in the Humanities

2004 Graduate School Dissertation Fellowship

2002 Fulbright-Hayes Fellowship – Viet Nam

2001 Fulbright Travel Fellowship – Viet Nam

2000 SSRC International Pre-Dissertation Fellowship (declined)

1999 Blakemore Foreign Language Grant – Viet Nam

1997- 99 Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship – UW

Languages

Vietnamese (Advanced Reading, Writing, and Speaking)

French (Advanced Reading, Basic Speaking and Writing)