Greening Ecuador: International Funding and the Rise, Fall and Revision of Ecuador’s Environmentalism

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Date: Wednesday, February 12th, 2014
Time: 12:30 to 2:00 pm
Location: Blake Hall, Room 131, Cook Campus

This talk will look at the effects of transnational funding during four periods from 1978 to 2013 in Ecuador to illustrate its consequences for the national environmental organizations, and the secondary effects it has on the state’s development trajectory. Transnational environmental funding has significantly affected Ecuador’s national environmental organizations, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social movement actors (together “environmentalists”). NGOs’ strength ebbs and flows with transnational funding. The national environmental agenda shift to reflect the purposes of the transnational funding. During times of low transnational funding, grassroots social movement actors, who have operated independently from the transnational funding structure, have been able to shape the national environmental agenda. Environmentalists have differed in their agendas and in their support of the state’s plans for natural resource use. Through environmental organizations, transnational funding affects the state’s environmental and resource development policies.

Dr. Lewis is Professor of Sociology and Directory of Macaulay Honors College at Brooklyn College, and Professor of Sociology and Earth & Environmental Sciences at the CUNY Graduate Center. She teaches courses on urban sustainability, social movements, environmental sociology, and research methodology. Her research examines the effects of globalization on social movements and sustainability, with a focus on Latin America. Closer to home, she examines the processes of urban greening in Brooklyn. Her work has appeared in Conservation Biology, Mobilization, Social Science Quarterly, and Teaching Sociology, among others. She has been a council member of the Environment and Technology section of the American Sociological Association and served on the board of the Society for Conservation Biology’s Social Science Working Group.