

Critical Physical Geography in Practice:

Our depth perception improves when we combine
biophysical and social lenses

Abstract

The widening gap between critical human and physical geography raises concerns about the long-term viability of our field and spurs regular calls for reintegration. Even a brief review of these calls makes two points glaringly clear: this discussion has been going on for a long, long time and, given its regular reoccurrence, it would seem we have little to show for it. I argue here that there is already a strong and growing body of work that draws together critical human and physical geography: critical physical geography (CPG). Individually or in teams, critical physical geographers are bridging the gap, combining insights from climatology, geomorphology, biogeography and remote sensing with approaches from political economy, feminist geography, STS, and environmental justice. The key characteristics that unify this work are 1) its emphasis on treating biophysical processes and unequal social power relations with equal seriousness, 2) its acknowledgement of the politics of knowledge production, and 3) its normative agenda of promoting eco-social transformation. Using examples from CPG research, I argue that combining critical human and physical geography lenses allows us to see eco-social issues differently and more deeply than current environmental narratives.

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TIME: SEPTEMBER 22 (THU)
2022 4:05 PM–5:20 PM
LOCATION: WALTERS
ACADEMIC BUILDING (WAB)
ROOM -M 309



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