Panelist Bios

Robin Scully Boucher, earned her B.A. from Christopher Newport University in Fine and Performing Arts, and her M.F.A. from Radford University. As a mentee of Suzi Gablik, Robin’s experiences as a visual artist, curator, and arts educator have been shaped by a philosophy rich in community activism and social justice. These experiences include teaching art to all age levels including public schools and university settings. Robin has won awards for her work in the arts, presented papers and workshops, and had her essays on nature broadcast on National Public Radio. She is currently the Art Program Director at Virginia Tech’s Student Engagement and Campus Life.

Mauro J. Caraccioli is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Core Faculty in the Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought (ASPECT) at Virginia Tech University. He writes on the interplay of faith, nature, and empire in Colonial Spanish America, highlighting texts and encounters that broaden the cultural boundaries of New World intellectual production. His work has appeared in both scholarly and activist journals, including History of Political Thought, ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies, and International Political Sociology. He is currently completing a book on the connections between Spanish Empire and naturalist narratives, entitled Of Nature and Other Demons, drawing on works of natural history by sixteenth century Catholic missionaries that sought to broaden Europeans’ empirical and moral knowledge of the New World.

Crystal Cook-Marshall finishes her PhD in Science and Technology Studies in Society at Virginia Tech fall 2017. Recently, she co-founded and became the director of a large agricultural and sustainable spirits economic and educational producer's cooperative project for the Southeast headquartered in the Appalachian coalfields region. With her husband, she is also in the process of starting a grass-based organic dairy in North Carolina, where they also have a homestead. She has a long history in education, non-profit, and working overseas.

Simin Davoudi is Professor of Environmental Policy and Planning at the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape and Director of the Global Urban Research Unit. Professor Davoudi is also Associate Director of Newcastle University Institute for Sustainability (2006 to date); Professor of Planning and Environment, Director of Centre for Urban Development and Environmental Management, Leeds Metropolitan University (2000-06); Lecturer, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL (1996-2000). Past President of the Association of the European Schools of Planning (AESOP); Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences; Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Coordinator of the UK Office of Deputy Prime Minister’s Planning Research Network (2003-07); member of Social Science Expert Panel for DEFRA and DECC; former member of Expert Panel on Housing and Planning for DCLG; former member of Expert Panels for EU Directorate Generals for environment and for regional policy. Former member of the ESRC Grant Assessment Panel; former member of Research Excellence Framework’s Sub-panel on built environment; served on research councils’ assessment panels in several European countries. Visiting professorships at the universities of: Amsterdam, BTH, Nijmegen, Virginia Tech and RMIT; Co-editor of Journal of Environmental Planning and Management; founding member of editorial board of Contemporary Social Science, member of editorial boards of 7 international refereed

Anna Erwin is a PhD candidate in the Virginia Tech School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA). Her research focuses on questions of labor, justice, participation, and the alternative agri-food movement. For her dissertation, she conducted a case study using ethnographic methods of a participatory project conducted with a faith-based organization that serves farmworker in North Carolina. She is currently a graduate assistant in the VT Senior Office for Resource Development where she conducts research for the university’s “Think Tank” Beyond Boundaries. In the past, she assisted with distance learning curriculum development and program creation and taught courses in the departments of Political Science and Urban Affairs and Planning at Virginia Tech and the Department of Technology and Environmental Design at Appalachian State University. She also is part of the Community Voices team, which works with the VT Institute for Policy and Governance to bring community leaders to Blacksburg to share their stories of social change.

Anthony Szczurek is PhD candidate in ASPECT. He works on international relations theory, the politics of climate change, and Indian politics. He works on how historical responsibility for climate change is distributed among states according to post-colonial histories.

Jennifer Wills has been an environmental lawyer for nearly 13 years, working to protect human health and the environment. She has done this through her work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency where her work involves examining the legal ramifications of EPA regulations and enforcement actions, directly contributing to the development of national environmental regulation and policy. She is also adjunct faculty with the Center for Leadership in Global Sustainability within the College of Natural Resources. She teaches international environmental law and policy. She recently completed her masters in leadership for sustainability at Virginia Tech. Jennifer is originally from Louisville, Kentucky. She moved to Lynchburg in 2014 from the DC area.

The Global Forum on Urban and Regional Resilience brings together university researchers and partner organizations to facilitate conversations about patterns and processes of urbanization and regional development, with a special emphasis on the long-term resilience of places and communities. The particular focus of the Forum is the evolutionary and transformational resilience of cities and the way that places adapt – or not – to flows of capital, people, resources, and ideas.