

Burning Stories:

The Displacement of People, Spirits, and Blame in Southeast Asia's Haze Crisis

Julia Cassaniti, Washington State University

In person and on zoom: Open to public, No registration necessary

October 14th (Friday) 6pm

Venue: Room 301, 3F, Building 10, Sophia University Yotsuya Campus

Zoom information: <https://sophia-ac-jp.zoom.us/j/93559716664>

Meeting ID: 935 5971 6664

Passcode: 014424

Karen woman with her child by Steve Evans via Wikimedia Commons



In this talk Dr. Cassaniti unpacks narratives circulating about upland agricultural burning practices in Thailand, in order to argue for a changing cosmopolitical landscape in the region. The rapid increase in contract farming may be one of the biggest culprits of the haze problem, but stories of slash-and-burn 'hill tribe' upland minority peoples continue to obscure the effects of agribusinesses' policies. By tracking historical narratives about marginalized and displaced Karen, Lawa, and Hmong communities, and connecting these narratives to spirit rituals that accompany past farming techniques, Dr. Cassaniti suggests an unrecognized, potent cosmopolitics of capital at play in the current crisis.

Julia Cassaniti is Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology: Psychological/Medical Anthropology at Washington State University. Julia's research interests include Psychological and Medical Anthropology, Mental Health, Religious Experience, Gender/Sexuality; Contemporary Society in Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Japan, and across Transnational South/East Asia. She is the author of numerous articles and books <https://anthro.wsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/julia-cassaniti/>. These include *Living Buddhism: Mind, Self, and Emotion in a Thai Community* (Cornell U. Press); *Remembering the Present: Mindfulness in Buddhist Asia* (Cornell U. Press). She is also the editor of *Universalism Without Uniformity: Explorations in Mind and Culture* (U. Chicago Press).

• This event is organized by David H. Slater (Professor of Anthropology, FLA, Sophia University) for the ICC Collaborative Research Unit “[Digital Social Science and Oral Narrative Research](#)”.

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