

JESSIE K. LUNA

Department of Sociology
Colorado State University
Sociology Clubhouse, 1100 Meridian Ave, Fort Collins, CO 80523

jessie.luna@colostate.edu
www.jessieluna.com
[ResearchGate](#)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2024 - present Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Colorado State University
2018 - 2024 Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Colorado State University
Faculty Affiliate, Center for Environmental Justice
Faculty Associate, Center for Fair and Alternative Trade
[Parental leave, spring 2020]

EDUCATION

2018 PhD, Sociology, University of Colorado Boulder.
Dissertation: *Capitalism, Culture, and Cotton: New Agricultural Technologies in Burkina Faso*
Committee: Jill Lindsey Harrison, Lori Hunter, Liam Downey, Emily Yeh, Mara Goldman
Comprehensive Exams: Environmental Sociology, Development, Food and Agriculture
Certificate in Development Studies

2012 MA, Development Studies; specialization in Global Ecology and Sustainable
Development, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies,
Geneva, Switzerland

2006 BA, International Relations and Film Production, University of Southern California, Los
Angeles, *magna cum laude*

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Environmental Sociology, Food and Agriculture, Agrarian Political Economy, Development, Science and
Technology Studies, Race and Racism, Political Ecology, Qualitative Methods, Health and Embodiment

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed journal articles (student authors are underlined, * denotes equal authorship)

Korbéogo, Gabin* and Jessie K. Luna.* 2025. "Inégalités Environnementales en Afrique de l'Ouest."
Mande Studies, 27: 111-138.

Spooner, Sarah, et al. (34 authors). [2025](#). "The Zoo Sphere of Influence Model." *Biological Conservation: Perspectives*, 111429.

McKay, Ben, Georgina Catacora-Vargas, Antonio Castellanos Navarrete, Rachel Bezner Kerr and Jessie
Luna. [2025](#). "Challenging Agroecology - Promise and Pitfalls for Agrarian Studies," *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 25(3).

- Luna, Jessie K. [2023](#). “Why are there African huts at the zoo? The racialized spectacle of conservation.” *Environmental Sociology* 9(4): 427-444.
- Luna, Jessie K., [Becca Chalit Hernandez](#), and Abdoulaye Sawadogo. [2021](#). “The paradoxes of purity in organic agriculture in Burkina Faso.” *Geoforum* 127:46-56.
- Stein, Serena* and Jessie K. Luna.* [2021](#). “Toxic sensorium: Agrochemicals in the African Anthropocene.” *Environment and Society* 12:87-107.
- Luna, Jessie K.* and Brian Dowd-Uribe.* [2020](#). “Knowledge politics and the Bt cotton success narrative In Burkina Faso.” *World Development* 136(105127).
- Luna, Jessie K. [2020](#). “Peasant essentialism in GMO debates: Bt cotton in Burkina Faso.” *Journal of Agrarian Change* 20(4): 579-597.
- Luna, Jessie K. [2020](#). “‘Pesticides are our children now’: Cultural change and the technological treadmill in the Burkina Faso cotton sector.” *Agriculture and Human Values* 37(2): 449-462.
- Luna, Jessie K. [2019](#). “The ease of hard work: Embodied neoliberalism among Rocky Mountain fun runners.” *Qualitative Sociology* 42(2): 251–271.
- Luna, Jessie K. [2019](#). “The chain of exploitation: Intersectional inequalities, capital accumulation, and resistance in Burkina Faso’s cotton sector.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 46(7):1413-1434.
- Luna, Jessie K. [2018](#). “Getting out of the dirt: Racialized modernity and environmental inequality in the cotton sector of Burkina Faso.” *Environmental Sociology* 4 (3): 221-34.
- Hunter, Lori M., Jessie K. Luna, and Rachel M. Norton. [2015](#). “The environmental dimensions of migration.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 41: 377-97.

Peer-reviewed book chapters

- Luna, Jessie K. and Gabin Korbéogo. [2023](#). “Environmental inequality in West Africa,” chapter in the *Handbook of Inequality and the Environment*, edited by Michael J. Lynch, Michael A. Long, and Paul B. Stretesky. Edward Elgar Publishers.

Book reviews

- Luna, Jessie K. [2025](#). “Decolonizing African Agriculture: Food Security, Agroecology and the Need for Radical Transformation, by William G. Moseley.” In the *AAG Review of Books*.
- Luna, Jessie K. [2025](#). “Seeding Empire: American Philanthrocapital and the Roots of the Green Revolution in Africa, by Aaron Eddens.” In *Antipode*.
- Luna, Jessie K. 2022. “A Man Among Other Men: Racial Capitalism and the Crisis of Black Masculinity, by Jordanna Matlon.” In *Perspectives*, the Sociology Theory section newsletter.

Manuscripts in press

Luna, Jessie K. *The Upright Farmer: Racial Capitalism and Agricultural Modernization in Burkina Faso*. Book manuscript **in press** with Duke University Press (Release date: September 2026).

Manuscripts in preparation

Sithole, Samantha, Jessie K. Luna, Gretchen Walters, Nicolas Bancel, Katherine Stevick, and several zoo practitioners. “Racial and colonial representations of human cultures in zoo exhibits: A systematic review.” In preparation for submission to *Conservation Science and Practice* (Drafted, in the process of revisions between authors).

Stevick, Katherine, Heidi Hauserman, and Jessie Luna. “‘The dam’s weed’: Green grabbing as socio-ecological transformation.” In preparation for the *Journal of Peasant Studies*.

Kees Jansen, Marion Werner, Nathalie Jas, and Jessie K. Luna. “Introduction to Special Issue on the Global Pesticide Complex.” To be completed with the special issue we are editing for *Journal of Agrarian Change* for 2026.

RESEARCH GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

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| 2025 | Howard Foundation Sabbatical Fellowship, from the George A. and Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation, “Knowledge Politics and Pesticides in West Africa” |
| 2024 | Ann Gill Faculty Development Grant, Colorado State University, “Pesticide Politics in West Africa” |
| 2022, 2024 | CSU College of Liberal Arts Professional Development Grants) |
| 2017- 2018 | American Association of University Women American Dissertation Fellowship |
| 2016 | National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, Sociology (\$9,500) |
| 2016 | U.S. Student Fulbright to Burkina Faso |
| 2016 | CU Boulder Dean’s Graduate Student Research Grant (\$10,000) |
| 2014 | NSF Scholarship to summer seminar “Science and Technology Studies and Environmental Sociology and Policy,” Vanderbilt University, with David Hess |

AWARDS

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| 2024 | Provost’s Teaching Scholar Award for Faculty Excellence, Colorado State University |
| 2024 | Award for Outstanding Contribution to Academic Excellence from the CSU Rams Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary (student nominated) |

- 2023 College of Liberal Arts Excellence in Teaching Award, Colorado State University
- 2017 Ralph and Barbara Dakin Award, Dept of Sociology, CU Boulder. Awarded for outstanding scholarship that contributes to peace, intercultural understanding, resolution of conflict, or the amelioration of important social problems
- 2017 Honorable Mention, ASA Environment and Technology Section Marvin E. Olsen student paper award for “The Color of Progress: Racialized Narratives and Environmental Inequality in the Cotton Sector of Burkina Faso”
- 2016 Honorable Mention, ASA Body and Embodiment Section graduate student paper award for “The Ease of Hard Work: Distinction, Boundary Work, and Embodied Neoliberalism”
- 2015 Outstanding Research Paper Award, Dept of Sociology, CU Boulder for “The Ease of Hard Work: Distinction, Boundary Work, and Embodied Neoliberalism”

INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2024 “Vers une décolonisation du développement agricole en Afrique de l’ouest,” for the Cercle Francais at Colorado State University
- 2024 “Challenges and opportunities for research on pesticides in contemporary Africa,” for Green Science from the South conference, University of Ghent, Belgium (virtual)
- 2023 “Seeing like an agronomist: Racial capitalism and the episteme of agricultural modernization in West Africa.” Dirty Histories Workshop at University of Georgia
- 2022 “White gold, Black debt: Racial capitalism and agricultural modernization in West Africa.” Department of Geography, University of Colorado Boulder
- 2022 “Naturalized race and racialized nature at the Denver Zoo.” Department of Geography and the Environment, University of Denver
- 2022 “Le défi des pesticides en Afrique de l’Ouest,” Virtual talk for an event on Food and Pesticides in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, “La Campagne Conscience AlimenTERRE: Un an après son lancement,” African Institute for Economic and Social Development
- 2020 “Is it natural? Is it earned? Sociological insights on justifying inequality.” Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Colorado State University
- 2019 Invited panelist for a College of Liberal Arts “Great Conversations” event on the topic: “Does technology heal or harm partisan divides?” Colorado State University
- 2019 Invited panelist for College of Liberal Arts Featured Scholarship Symposium, “Systems and Spaces: Institutions, Inequity, and Cultural Responses.” Colorado State University

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Conference panels organized

- 2023 “Food, Environments, and Agricultural Politics.” Invited co-chair of sessions at the African Studies Association Conference, San Francisco, Nov. 2023
- 2021 “Political Ecology and New Green Revolutions in Africa.” Co-organized with Joeva Rock and Brian Dowd-Urbe. Association of American Geographers Conference (virtual)
- 2019 “Intersections of interventions: On development, difference, dispossession, and discourse.” Dimensions of Political Ecology Conference, Lexington, Kentucky
- 2019 Invited member of the scientific committee for the conference “Pesticide Politics in Africa,” Arusha, Tanzania

Invited discussant or panelist at an academic conference

- 2025 Author Meets Critics panelist for Bill Moseley’s *Decolonizing African Agriculture*, Association of American Geographers Conference, Detroit
- 2023 Invited panelist, “Postcolonial ethnographies of racial capitalism: A view in/from Africa.” International Sociological Association Conference in Melbourne, Australia, June 2023 (virtual participation). Panel moderated by Michael Burawoy
- 2022 Invited workshop participant at *Genome Editing and its Alternatives in Africa*, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 2021 Keynote speaker, “Réguler l’invisible : Les compromis et paradoxes au sein des politiques relatives aux pesticides en Afrique,” at Pesticides and Public Policies in the Global South International Conference at Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké, Côte d’Ivoire
- 2021 Discussant, “Contradictions et antagonismes au carrefour des espaces agricoles, sanitaires, économiques, environnementaux ou écologiques,” at Pesticides and Public Policies in the Global South International Conference at Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké, Côte d’Ivoire
- 2021 Author Meets Critics panelist for Matthew Schnurr’s *Africa’s Gene Revolution: Genetically Modified Crops and the Future of African Agriculture*, Association of American Geographers Conference (virtual)
- 2021 Discussant, “Political Ecology and New Green Revolutions in Africa,” Panel 2, Association of American Geographers Conference (virtual)
- 2019 Discussant, “Pesticide uses and their drivers” at the Pesticide Politics in Africa Conference, Arusha, Tanzania

Conference papers presented

- 2025 “The Upright Farmer: Racial Capitalism and Agricultural Modernization in Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference in Chicago
- 2024 “Technicité contre les savoirs paysans: Capitalisme racial, la science de l’agronomie, et le cas du coton OGM au Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the Mande Studies Association Meeting on Decolonizing African Knowledges, Bamako, Mali
- 2023 “Strategic ignorance: Dilemmas of knowing, unknowing, and blame in the West African pesticide landscape.” Paper presented at Association of American Geographers Conference in Denver
- 2022 “White Gold: Racial capitalism and colonial history in Burkina Faso.” Part of a session on “Racial articulations across spatial regimes.” Social Science Historical Association Conference, Chicago
- 2022 “Lions and tigers and Malthus, oh my! Naturalized race and racialized nature at The Denver Zoo.” Roundtable at the American Sociological Association Conference in Los Angeles
- 2020 “Clean white cotton: Race and the paradoxes of organic agriculture in Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference (virtual)
- 2019 “Peasant imaginaries in the debate over GMOs: Evidence from Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Food and Society and the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society Conference, Anchorage, Alaska
- 2019 “Cultural and economic treadmills driving pesticide use in Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the Pesticide Politics in Africa Conference, Arusha, Tanzania
- 2019 “Quantified Deservingness: A comparative political ecology of technological healthism.” Paper presented at Dimensions of Political Ecology Conference, Lexington, Kentucky
- 2018 “‘Pesticides are our children now’: Changing labor dynamics and agricultural modernization in Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the Association of American Geographers Conference in New Orleans
- 2017 “The color of progress: Race, status, and technology in the cotton sector of Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference in Montréal
- 2017 “Who is capital and who is the peasant? Chains of exploitation and intersectional inequalities in the cotton sector of Burkina Faso.” Paper presented at the Association of American Geographers Conference in Boston
- 2015 “The paradox of ease: Bodies, boundaries, and distinction in contemporary America.” Paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference in Chicago

- 2015 “Disciplining neoliberal bodies: Runners, fitness tracking, and the reproduction of meritocracy.” Paper presented at the Association of American Geographers Conference in Chicago
- 2014 “The political ecology of vulnerability: Climate change and food security in West Africa.” Paper presented at the Critical Geography Conference in Boulder, Colorado

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Colorado State University (2018-present)

SOC 205: Sociology of Race and Racism
 SOC 220: Environment, Food, and Social Justice
 SOC 220: Global Environmental Issues
 SOC 380: Science, Technology, and Society
 SOC 668: Environmental Sociology

University of Colorado Boulder

Instructor of Record (2015-2018)

SOCY 2077: Environment and Society	(60 students; taught twice)
SOCY 4117: Food and Society	(60 students; taught once)

Teaching Assistant (2012-2018)

SOCY 1001: Intro to Sociology	(one semester, three recitations)
SOCY 1004: Deviance in U.S. Society	(one semester, three recitations)
SOCY 4017: Animals and Society	(one semester, without recitations)
SOCY 4117: Food and Society	(four semesters, two recitations)

Teaching workshops organized

- 2022 “Teaching in a time of radical flux.” Moderated and co-organized teaching event for American Sociological Association Environmental Sociology Section, April 2022
- 2021 “Navigating Difficult Classroom Conversations.” Organized workshop for the Department of Sociology, Colorado State University, 2021

Selected invited guest lectures in course seminars

- 2023 “The dilemma of pesticides in West Africa” In Dr. Jill Harrison’s Geographies of Food and Agriculture course, Department of Geography, CU Boulder.
- 2021 “Genetically modified crop debates in Burkina Faso,” In Dr. Laurel Bellante’s course “Food fights: debates over the future of Food,” Food Studies, University of Arizona
- 2020 “Power relations and knowledge: Challenges of communicating social science research outside the discipline,” In Dr. Lindsey Schneider’s Global Environmental Justice course, Ethnic Studies Department, Colorado State University
- 2019 “Cotton and the production of global inequalities” In Dr. KuoRay Mao’s Green Criminal course, Department of Sociology, Colorado State University
- 2018 “The political ecology of cotton in Burkina Faso.” In Dr. Mara Goldman’s Political

- 2014-2016 Ecology course, Geography Department, University of Colorado Boulder
 “From the Green to the Gene Revolution” In Dr. Jill Harrison’s Food and Society course, Department of Sociology, University of Colorado Boulder
- 2015 “Doing Ethnography,” in Dr. Jill Harrison’s graduate Qualitative Methods course, Department of Sociology, University of Colorado Boulder

Teaching development activities

- 2023 Webinar on “Teaching Race and Ethnic Relations Today,” with Dr. Marisela Martinez Cola, organized by Oxford University Press
- 2021 Webinar on “Teaching about White Nationalism,” organized by Repair for Justice
- 2020 ASA Webinar on “Confronting the Canon: Decolonizing and Diversifying Your Department’s Curriculum”
- 2020 Online Course Design, 16-hour course with CSU Online, 2020, with training in Quality Matters and Universal Design
- 2020 Intergroup Relations Institute (3 day workshop on inclusive pedagogy)
- 2019 ASA Webinar on “Incivility in the Classroom,” with Chavella T. Pittman
- 2018-2020 Series of Inclusive Pedagogy workshops, Colorado State University

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION

Masters

- Tom Chittenden, 2025 (Anthropology): *Land reform, liberalization, and livelihoods: Negotiated transformations in Vietnam’s northern mountain region*
- Oso Oluwafunto, 2025 (Political Science): *Intrastate conflict and humanitarian aid obstruction*
- Sarah Kubiak, 2025 (Journalism and Media Communication): *“What Makes a Successful Science Influencer: A Discourse Analysis of Neil Degrasse Tyson’s Tweets”*
- Katherine Stevick, 2024 (**chair**): *“It was a disaster for us:” 15 years of farming in the shadow of Bumbuna Dam*”
- Bailey Mellot, 2024: *“Understanding first-generation, low-income, Latinx student networks: An exploration of student support at a modern Land-Grant University”*
- Coralie Dorville, 2024 (Journalism and Media Communication): *“The Role of Master and Counter-narratives in Conceiving a Carbon-neutral Society, a Discourse Analysis of a French Podcast.”*
- Jacob DeBruin, 2023: *“International Trade of Electric Vehicle Batteries and Lithium: A Network Approach to Trade Structure and Structural Inequality”*
- Juliet Seibel, 2023: *“Transforming Conservation: An Analysis of Conservation Collaboratives’ Structure and Ability to Create Change”*
- Benja Kromash (**chair**), 2022: *“Growing Gardens JEDI Initiatives: Feedback and Directions on Enacting Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion”*
- Elijah Thunell, 2022: *“Understanding Contemporary Conservative Environmentalism in the United States Using a Mixed Methods Approach”*
- Micaela Truslove, 2022: *“Resilience for All/ Resiliencia para Todos: Achieving Justice for Latinx Communities Following the 2013 Colorado Floods”*

PhD

- Sneha Kadyan, 2025: *Enhancing workplace standards in cotton garment manufacturing: Analyzing fairtrade and global organic textile standards in India*

Currently chairing:
km barnhardt

Current committee membership:

Parker Arnold
Becca Chalit-Hernandez (served on exam committee; proposal defense)
Emilia Ravetta (served on proposal defense)
Adam Snitker (served on exam committee)
Nefratiri Weeks (served on proposal defense)
Seunghyun Woo (Anthropology; served on proposal defense)

Undergraduate honors theses supervised

Antonella Torres Peralta (2025)
Jennie Rieher (2019)
Kayla McCurry (2019)

OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The Audit Podcast, Colorado State University. [2024](#). “Beyond ‘The Lion King:’ Why are cultural stereotypes still found at so many zoos, museums?”

Workshop discussant and contributor. [2024](#). “PRETAG (Pesticide Reduction for Tropical Agriculture). Compte-rendu de l'atelier ImpresS ex ante : réduction des pesticides en maraîchage périurbain en Côte d'Ivoire.” Yamoussoukro, Ecole Supérieure d'Agronomie (ESA), June 11-13

Luna, Jessie and Brian Dowd-Urbe. [2020](#). “How power shaped the ‘success story’ of genetically modified cotton in Burkina Faso.” *The Conversation*. Aug 20.

- Republished across dozens of media outlets, including Quartz, U.S. Right to Know, and Source (the Colorado State Magazine)

Field Notes Podcast. [2022](#). The Africa Center at Colorado State University.

Signatory and contributor to [The Arusha Call for Action on Pesticides](#), issued at the Pesticide Politics in Africa Conference, Tropical Pesticides Research Institute, Arusha, Tanzania, May 2019

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY AND SERVICE

Service to the Profession

Editor, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 2024-present

Advisory Board, Mande Studies Association, 2024-present

Council Member-At-Large of the ASA Environmental Sociology Section, 2020-2022

Nominations Committee for the ASA Environmental Sociology Section, 2020-2023

Colorado State University

Executive Committee, 2023-spring 2025
Social Justice and Equity Working Group for Dept of Sociology, founder and chair, 2020-2022
College of Liberal Arts Equity Committee, 2021-2022
Undergraduate Committee, Dept of Sociology, 2021-2023
Undergraduate Scholarship Committee for Sociology and the College of Liberal Arts, 2020-2023
Faculty Search Committees, Dept of Sociology, fall 2021, fall 2022
AKD Honors Society Undergraduate Advisor, Dept of Sociology, 2019-2021
Graduate Committee, Dept of Sociology, 2018-2019

Professional Affiliations

American Sociology Association

Member of sections: Environmental Sociology, Racial and Ethnic Minorities, Sociology of Development, Global and Transnational Sociology, Science Knowledge and Technology, and Political Economy of the World-System

American Association of Geographers

Member of sections: Cultural and Political Ecology, Development Geography, Food and Agriculture, Africa, Black Geographies, Human Dimensions of Global Change

Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society

Mande Studies Association

African Studies Association

Academic Journal Reviews

Average of 6-10 reviews a year. African Geographical Review, Agriculture and Human Values, Annals of the American Association of Geographers, American Journal of Sociology, American Sociological Review, Antipode, Cahiers Agricoles, Climate and Development, Climatic Change, Development and Change, Elementa, Environmental Sociology, Environment and Planning E, Environmental Humanities, Health and Place, Human Geography, International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability, Journal of Agrarian Change, Journal of Environment and Development, Journal of Ethnobiology, Journal of Rural Studies, Population and Environment, Qualitative Sociology, Society and Natural Resources, Sociology of Race and Ethnicity, Social Problems, Theory and Society

Grant Reviews

External tenure packet review (2025)

National Science Foundation (2022)

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2009 Video editor, Forestry Media Center, Corvallis, Oregon. Edited videos on sustainable animal agriculture in the Pacific Northwest

2007- 2009 Agriculture and Environment Volunteer, Peace Corps Mali, West Africa
- Facilitated a Farmer Field School to conduct farmer-led field experiments in collaboration with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics

- Co-hosted a weekly radio show in Bambara on environmental and social issues for one year, broadcast in Southern Mali
- Facilitated the founding of a women's regional shea butter cooperative
- Produced educational videos on shea for Malian National Television (ORTM)

- 2006, 2009 Research Technician, Department of Horticulture, Oregon State University, with Dr. Vaughn Walton. Field and lab work for Integrated Pest Management research on grape and hazelnut pests in Oregon.
- 2005- 2006 Assistant to film director, Bal-Maiden Films, Los Angeles. Worked on labor-rights and union oriented films: *No Sweat: Inside American Apparel* (2006), and *Eye of the Storm: The story of the ILWU lock-out* (2007)
- 2004, 2005 Research Assistant for vegetable breeding program, Department of Horticulture, Oregon State University, with Dr. Jim Myers, Professor of Vegetable Breeding
- 2003- 2005 Research Assistant, School of Social Work, University of Southern California, with Dr. Bruce Jansson, Professor of Social Work
- 2004 Production assistant, Greenfire Productions, Oregon. Worked on wildlife conservation films: *Wild Connections: The Hells Canyon-Wallowa Ecosystem*, and *Common Ground: Oregon's Ocean*

LANGUAGES

English (native)

French (nearly fluent; professional proficiency of IRL level 4)

Bambara/Dioula (highly proficient; professional proficiency of IRL level 3+)