Social Science scholarship explores complex, often interrelated, social, economic, environmental, and political processes—both contemporary and historical. It also researches ways to improve quality of life and make society more just, vibrant, and sustainable. Presentations in this symposium represent the wide range of inquiries that social scientists pursue: removal of land use conflicts to promote solar power generation; innovations in commercial fisheries for better economic outcomes; Silicon Valley technology companies’ embrace of the idea of Universal Basic Income; and the quiet, heroic efforts of African American slaves to be fathers and caretakers.

**Title: Adaptation to Uncertainty in West Coast Fisheries**

Ana Pitchon, Assistant Professor, Anthropology

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**Title: Utility-scale Solar Energy Development and Land Use Conflicts Across the American West**

Dustin Mulvaney, Associate Professor, Environmental Studies

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**Title: “Our Father”: Slavery and Fatherhood in the American South**

Libra Hilde, Associate Professor, History

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**Title: Working the Problem of Poverty: Universal Basic Income and Silicon Valley**

Lawrence Quill, Professor, Political Science
Ana Pitchon: Adaptation to Uncertainty in West Coast Fisheries

Current trends suggest that innovation in some commercial fisheries is critical to continued survival in today’s climate of heightened restrictions and increased regulatory pressure. Through an analysis of regulatory events as disturbances to the stability of fisheries, this talk explains how adaptation to uncertainty through diversification is an innovative strategy occurring in several West Coast fisheries. It also reviews individual adaptation strategies, describes how fisheries and market diversification leads to improved economic outcomes, notes barriers to diversification, and presents some models of success.

Dustin Mulvaney: Utility-scale Solar Energy Development and Land Use Conflicts Across the American West

Land use change from utility-scale solar energy development is an emerging source of social conflict across the American West. These new land uses reconfigure the distribution of environmental risks from electricity generation. This talk explains the root causes of land use conflict over utility-scale solar development across this region over the past decade and documents how lessons learned and a multi-agency collaborative spatial planning effort to minimize contestation over solar energy development has subsequently lessened land use conflict.

Libra Hilde: “Our Father”: Slavery and Fatherhood in the American South

This talk explores what it meant to be an enslaved man and a father and how former slaves evaluated these men (including their white fathers) and envisioned paternal duty. Despite a system that undermined their authority and divided families, a significant number of enslaved men sought to serve as caretakers and managed to exert influence in their children’s lives. By telling the story of the often quietly heroic efforts that enslaved men undertook to be fathers and by focusing on the function rather than structure of the household, this talk offers a counterpoint to the dominant narratives about the pathology of the African American family.

Lawrence Quill: Working the Problem of Poverty: Universal Basic Income and Silicon Valley

A Universal Basic Income (UBI) is an idea of the moment. It is regarded as a remedy to the inefficiencies of basic welfare provision and a means to release each person’s inner entrepreneur. This talk analyzes why technology companies have embraced this idea. Part of the reason is ideological. There remains a strong libertarian streak in Valley culture. Another reason is technocratic. As engineers moved from the suburbs to urban centers in the 1990s, social problems became a reality that required a remedy. Finally, UBI is progressive by offering consolation and empowerment to those displaced by an increasingly automated world.

RSVP by November 1, 2017
Questions? Contact shishir.mathur@sjsu.edu
*This event is open to the campus community*