

MINDS, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY

Seminar Series

UC MERCED, Spring 2018

Joe Brewer

Executive Director, Center for Applied Cultural Evolution

“Cultural Evolution—A Design Science for Planetary Crisis”

Abstract: Humanity is currently experiencing a convergence of threats with pace, scale, and complexity that are unprecedented in the history of our species. Challenges like exponential technological and population growth, the breakdown of social institutions, and climate change are deeply interconnected and riddled with “wicked problems” where intervention attempts are just as likely to make matters worse as help them get better. This talk explores how the field of cultural evolutionary studies can play a catalyzing role. This emerging field offers the prospects for much-needed synthesis between the biological and social sciences, bridging often-siloed disciplinary boundaries, and providing opportunities for intentionally planned cultural change.

Joe has straddled the worlds of academia and social change practice for nearly two decades and is in the process of launching a research center for applied cultural evolution. Its mission is to build a global network of culture design labs where researchers, practitioners, and community members engage in participatory processes that both (a) reveal how cultural and environmental systems are evolving and (b) strive to make their communities more healthy and resilient. There is great urgency for this grand synthesis of the biological and social sciences as an integrative practice in large-scale social change. Come learn how you can help to secure a safer future for humanity and get involved in this ambitious collective endeavor.

Joe Brewer is the Executive Director of the newly forming Center for Applied Cultural Evolution and is a co-founder of the Cultural Evolution Society. He is a pioneer and advocate for the field of culture design—applying insights from the cognitive, evolutionary, and social sciences to help facilitate large-scale social change in communities around the world.



Monday,

February 26, 2018

2:30 PM

COB 265

Please contact Paul Smaldino (psmaldino@ucmerced.edu) for more information.