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**Interview with Kristina Lyons, author of *Vital Decomposition: Soil Practitioners and Life Politics***

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In Colombia, decades of social and armed conflict and the US-led war on drugs have created a seemingly untenable situation for scientists and rural communities as they attempt to care for forests and grow non-illicit crops. In her new book *Vital Decomposition: Soil Practitioners and Life Politics* (Duke University Press, 2020), Kristina M. Lyons presents an ethnography of human-soil relations. By following the practical engagements of soil scientists and peasants across labs, forests, and farms, the book attends to the struggles and collaborations between multiple actors over the meanings of peace, productivity, rural development, and sustainability in contemporary Colombia. (Source: [New Books Network](#) )

In this episode of *New Books in Environmental Studies*, Alejandro Ponce de Leon interviews Kristina Lyons, author of *Vital Decomposition: Soil Practitioners and Life Politics*.

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**Related links:**

- Excerpt from *Vital Decomposition*  
<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/9156>
- New Books Network  
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/>
- *Vital Decomposition: Soil Practitioners and Life Politics* at Duke University Press  
<https://www.dukeupress.edu/vital-decomposition>

**Websites linked in this text:**

- <https://newbooksnetwork.com/kristina-m-lyons-vital-decomposition-soil-practitioners-and-life-politics-duke-up-2020>