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"Storying Monocrop Infrastructure: A Conversation on Governance, Scale, and Failure"

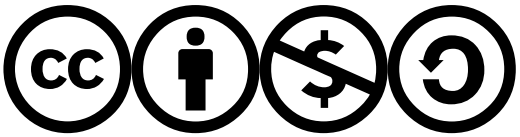
Chao, Sophie, and Kregg Hetherington

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Plantations have recently become the focus of renewed empirical and conceptual inquiry across the social sciences, arts, and humanities. Scholarship in this interdisciplinary space calls on us to reckon with industrial monocultures' enduring role in shaping contemporary structural inequalities, dominant technoscientific regimes, uneven divisions of labor, environmental violence, and struggles for justice, recognition, and repair. This Engagement piece contributes to these emerging currents by bringing into dialogue two scholars conducting research on monocrop systems in Latin America (Kregg Hetherington as interviewee) and Southeast Asia (Sophie Chao as interviewer). Anchored in Hetherington's concept of "agribiopolitics," the interview approaches monocrops through the two interrelated themes of governance and failure. Governance brings us to consider the forms of control, management, monitoring, and accountability that undergird agribiopolitical regimes, the institutions, practices, and mechanisms that make them possible, and the structures of exclusion, oppression, and violence on which they often depend. Failure brings us to attend to the limits or tipping points of governance as system and process—it's rough edges, its unexpected failings, its uneven distribution, and how failure can be both productive and an opportunity for flight. In reflecting on ways of storying monocrops otherwise, we invite theoretical and methodological dialogue around the form and effects of anthropocenic infrastructures more broadly across the fields of science and technology studies, anthropology, critical race studies, political ecology, agrarian studies, and the environmental humanities. This interview is a revised and expanded version of an Author-Meets-Critic conversation that took place at the Society for Social Studies of Science, (4S) meeting in Cholula, Mexico, where Hetherington's monograph, *The Government of Beans*, received the 2022 Rachel Carson Award. (Abstract)

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