



## Darren Ranco, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Maine*

*Chair of Native American Programs and Director of Native American Research,  
University of Maine*

*Researcher and Research Committee Member, Sustainability Solutions Initiative*

### Profile:

Darren Ranco is a faculty member with the University of Maine's Department of Anthropology, as well as the Chair of Native American Programs and Coordinator of Native American Research. His research focuses on the ways in which indigenous communities in the United States resist environmental destruction by using indigenous diplomacies and critiques of liberalism to protect cultural resources, and how state knowledge systems continue to expose indigenous peoples to an inordinate amount of environmental risk. Ranco is a member of the Penobscot Nation, and is particularly interested in how better research relationships can be made between universities, Native and non-Native researchers, and indigenous communities.

Ranco's SSI project (Mobilizing to Fight an Invasive Insect) is the first such project in the nation to bring together diverse groups to try to prevent, curb, and respond to a potential ash borer invasion. Collaborators include members of the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance, tribes, university researchers, state and federal foresters, and others. His team seeks to develop a proactive, coordinated response on a statewide level in order to save culturally and artistically essential brown ash tree resources from the invasive emerald ash borer. Part of this response involves mapping Maine's ash tree populations, learning how to identify a borer attack, educating the public, and establishing a seed bank should the beetle strike. The team's findings will lead to new strategies for protecting Maine's three species of ash trees, inform public policy, and establish effective methods to bring together diverse groups to address threats from invasive species.

As part of his SSI work, Ranco is also involved in developing mentoring programs for Native American students at the University of Maine and developing a statewide STEM education program for Native American students.

### Degrees:

Harvard University, Ph.D. (Social Anthropology)

Vermont Law School, MSEL (Studies in Environmental Law)

Dartmouth College, B.A. (Anthropology and Classical Studies)

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### Research Interests:

Native American/American  
Indian Cultural and Natural  
Resources

Tribal Sovereignty

Environmental Justice

Environmental Risk

Research Ethics

Collaborative Research



## Media Expertise:

Tribal/Native American Issues  
Environmental Justice  
Research Collaboration

## SSI Projects:

Mobilizing to Fight an Invasive  
Insect

## Courses:

Tribal Governance  
Indigenous Intellectual Property Rights  
Environmental Justice  
Research Ethics

## Selected Publications:

Darren Ranco, Amy Arnett, Erika Latty, Alysa Remsburg, Kathleen Dunckel, Erin Quigley, Rob Lilieholm, John Daigle, Bill Livingston, Jennifer Neptune, and Theresa Secord, "Two Maine Forest Pests: A Comparison of Approaches to Understanding Threats to Hemlock and Ash Trees in Maine," *Maine Policy Review* 21, no. 1 (2012): 76-89.

Darren J. Ranco, Catherine O'Neill, Jamie Donatuto, and Barbara L. Harper, "Environmental Justice, American Indians and the Cultural Dilemma: Developing Environmental Management for Tribal Health and Well-being," *Environmental Justice* 4, no. 4 (2011): 221-230.

Jaclyn Johnson and Darren J. Ranco. "Risk Assessment and Native Americans at the Cultural Crossroads: Making Better Science or Redefining Health?" in *Technoscience and Environmental Justice: Transforming Expert Cultures through Grassroots Engagement*, eds. Gwen Ottinger and Benjamin R. Cohen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 179-199.

Darren J. Ranco. "Power and Knowledge in Regulating American Indian Environments: The Trust Responsibility, Limited Sovereignty, and the Problem of Difference," in *Environmental Crisis or Crisis of Epistemology? Working for Sustainable Knowledge and Environmental Justice*, ed. Bunyan Bryant (Garden City, NY: Morgan James Publishing, 2011), 107-131.

Darren Ranco and Dean Suagee, "Tribal Sovereignty and the Problem of Difference in Environmental Regulation: Observations on 'Measured Separatism' in Indian Country," *Antipode* 39, no. 4 (2007): 691-707.

Darren J. Ranco. "The Indian Ecologist and the Politics of Representation: Critiquing the Ecological Indian in the Age of Ecocide," in *Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian*, eds. Michael Harkin and David Rich Lewis (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 32-51.

Darren J. Ranco, "Toward a Native Anthropology: Hermeneutics, Hunting Stories, and Theorizing From Within," *Wicazo Sa Review* 21, no. 2 (2006): 61-78.

Anna Fleder and Darren J. Ranco, "Tribal Environmental Sovereignty: Culturally Appropriate Protection or Paternalism?" *Journal of Natural Resources and Environmental Law* 19, no. 1 (2005): 35-58.

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