

PATRICK JAMES DILLON

p.j.dillon@exeter.ac.uk

I am an Emeritus Professor in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Exeter. My research is in cultural ecology, about how people engage with the affordances, resources, and constraints of the environments in which they live, work, and learn.

Cultural ecology is a cross disciplinary field of enquiry with a broad academic base. I have developed a framework for cultural ecology over many years in parallel with my academic career, which started in the natural sciences, moved through the humanities, and, most recently, has settled in the social sciences. I began working life as a trainee analytical chemist before taking my first degree (University of Bristol, 1975). I then taught for six years in schools and colleges. I became a university academic in the 1980s, teaching ecology whilst researching landscape history (PhD, University of Exeter, 1990). A two-year secondment with the BBC Open University Production Centre (1985-86) gave me experience in media production.

From 1990-2000, I taught undergraduate courses on technological education at the University of Reading and carried out research on contemporary and traditional crafts. From 2008, I extended my work on a cultural ecological framing of craft practice while working at universities in Finland. Most recently, my association with the Estonian Native Crafts Department of the Viljandi Culture Academy at the University of Tartu, and their academic journal *Studia Vernacula*, has been a source of enrichment and a focus for consolidation.

I left Reading in 2000 to take up a professorial chair at the University of Exeter. Here I directed the Telematics Centre, researching educational applications of information and communication technologies. I took on a similar role in Finland at the Research and Development Centre for Information Technology in Education at the University of Joensuu (which, from 2010, became the University of Eastern Finland), where I undertook further research on digital and virtual environments as cultural ecologies.

International experiences brought home to me the tremendous diversity of cultural ecologies worldwide. I benefitted from visiting positions at the School of Economics at La Trobe University, Australia in 1985, The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, which was the base for an ecological history study tour of the eastern states of America in 1986, and The Center for Comparative Research in History, Society and Culture, University of California, Davis, in 1992. These were formative experiences through which my ideas about cultural ecology took shape. More recently, funded research projects have taken me to countries in Europe, the Middle East, Mongolia, and the Far East, where I encountered different relationships between people and the land. Since 2000, I have held professorial positions in universities in the UK and Finland, consolidating my work in the social sciences

(Honorary DPhil, University of Joensuu, Finland, 2004) and refining the theoretical foundations of cultural ecology and exploring its practical applications.

I have supervised to completion 24 doctoral dissertations in the UK and Finland, and examined 27 in the UK, Ireland, Finland, Sweden, Australia, and South Africa.

I was elected Fellow of the Linnean Society of London in 1981 and Fellow of the Society of Biology in 2004.