

Picasso (2018)

1. Pg 264: "...we can draw lessons about how interdisciplinary science can contribute to improve scientific research quality and relevance". What do you think of the current state of affairs for scientific research quality and relevance? What tangible ways can we improve them?
2. Picasso discusses the controversy when biodiversity-ecosystem functions were generalized for public policy. How do we communicate science to the general public while avoiding costly generalizations?
3. Pg 268: Ecologists argued that agroecosystems have too low diversity and too high nutrient concentrations to be considered in understanding natural ecosystems. Agree or disagree with the ecologists?
4. How would a biogeographer approach agroecosystems?
5. Pg 269-270: Darwin pointed out the usefulness of domesticated systems to provide analogies for natural systems. Did scientists forget this or was it just skipped over in favor of the finches beaks?

Bettencourt & Kaur (2011)

1. This paper suggests that the field of sustainability science has been intentionally willed into existence to meet a need. Is this how most new fields emerge, or does this normally happen more organically?
2. Do their metrics for measuring the emergence of this field (such as number of distinct authors, number of citations, etc.) make sense?
3. What does the concentration of sustainability work in political and economic capitals rather than academic centers mean for the field? Do you see this as a positive or a negative?
4. What is important about the unification of the field they are trying to represent graphically in Fig. 4? Does unification ever really occur across disciplines or other barriers?
5. Should we be studying other fields this way?