

Study Questions, Week 7

Topics for the Week:

Land; Soil Erosion and Control

Readings for the Week:

John McPhee. 1989. *The Control of Nature*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. pp. 183–272.

Questions:

- (1) What is a “debris flow?” What causes them, and what are some effects?
- (2) Why are debris flows a problem in the San Gabriel Mountains?
- (3) What role do various management agencies play in controlling debris flows? What measures have they taken to achieve this goal?
- (4) Why are most residents oblivious to the hazards posed by debris flows?
- (5) What are some of the important characteristics of the natural vegetation types and other environmental conditions in Southern California? In what ways does the natural environment facilitate debris flows? In what ways do humans facilitate debris flows?
- (6) In what ways does the story of debris flows in the San Gabriel Mountains illustrate the concept of “the enduring conflict” as described by Schnaiberg and Gould?