

About Maria Fadiman Continued

I work with the human/environmental aspect of conservation. I received my Ph.D. in Geography at the University of Texas at Austin, an M.A. in Latin American Studies from Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana and a B.A. from Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. I was named one of National Geographic's Emerging Explorers in 2006. My research focuses on ethnobotany, the study of the relationship between people and plants. I work primarily in rural areas with indigenous people and subsistence agriculturalists. The majority of my research is in the rainforests of Latin America, mostly Ecuador.



Projects include researching oil exploration in the Amazon; organic coffee production in the Galápagos; and the comparative use of rainforest palms and vines. I have also researched with Mayan weavers in the Yucatan and studied medicinal plants with the Lacandon people in Chiapas, Mexico. I have explored alternative livelihoods in Africa for those who depend on tree poaching from the national parks in the savanna; explored house construction from natural materials in the Philippines; studied the Maori utilization of the Kauri tree in New Zealand; worked with Tibetan children in teaching them to record their own ethnobotanical traditions: Created an ethnobotanical booklet with the Ha tribe in Tanzania Africa; and looked at globalization in reference to the Omegot (Ngasech, First Born) ceremony on Palau, Micronesia. I am currently working on a global scale cross cultural study of people's use of a cultural keystone species (the flora and fauna that are deemed important to the survival of a culture), and how these plants can act as larger ecosystem preservation incentives.

I give public lectures to: university students, school children, teachers of middle and grade school, skype lectures to high schools in Australia and New York, Science Museums, Language and Science Teachers in Mexico and South America, Hotel Employees and the Rotary Club.

My writings include academic journal articles and book chapters, adventure/environmental essays and I am currently working on a jungle memoir.

As an associate professor at Florida Atlantic University in the department of Geosciences I love teaching my students; who keep me inspired to continue researching and putting out the message of the how humans and the environment connect and what we can all do.

