

Topics in Environmental Justice

TUESDAY
1:00-3:50

KROON 319

FES 846B

SPRING 2014



Course Description

In this seminar we will explore domestic and international environmental issues from a perspective that foregrounds questions of social justice. The field of environmental justice asks for fair treatment of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, economic capacity, national origin, and education level with respect to environmental policies and their implementation. In this and other aspects, the environmental justice perspective differs from traditional environmental philosophies in that it

"It is no longer possible to separate environmental concerns from those of social justice. Equitable access to a stable climate, clean air, potable water, and safe food are core human rights and civil liberties currently at risk for all humans on the planet -- threats to these basic rights are an unparalleled humanitarian challenge."

~ <http://www.uuvisalia.org/justice/green.html>

seeks to combine a concern for the natural world with a consciousness of ethnic, class, and gender discrimination. From this vantage point it is argued that throughout the world there are marked and increasing disparities between those who have access to clean and safe resources and those who do not. Often poor and minority communities bear a disproportionately large burden of toxic contamination and suffer the health problems that result from it, while the elite and powerful tend to control the valuable resources. These disparities may be the result of historical circumstances, contemporary economic and trade

relations, and inadequate or inappropriate governmental regulation. They may also be the result of deliberate targeting of disenfranchised communities or weak nations to bear the burden of powerful communities' and nations' unsustainable consumption patterns.

Format

This will be a seminar course capped at a maximum of 18. We meet once a week for 2 hour 50 minute discussion with a 10 minute break in the middle.

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Discussion Participation–20%

You are expected to complete all readings before class in preparation for discussion. Discussion is an important part of this course. Regular attendance, therefore, is essential. You should keep notes, annotations and questions on the class readings and bring them to class for discussion.

Weekly Reading Response–15%

Weeks 2-12: one page reading reflections are due Monday at noon, the day before each class (unless you are the discussion leader). Reading responses should be either typed or cut and pasted (not uploaded as documents) into the **"forums"** section on classes v2 and will be accessible by everyone in the class to enhance collaborative learning. These short papers should reflect critically on a principal thesis of one or more of the readings of particular interest to you (don't summarize the readings) and should include with at least **two questions for group discussion**. The primary purpose of the reading reflections is to motivate you to interact with the readings and to prepare you to discuss them with your classmates. Be sure to read other student's reflections the evening or morning before class.

Reading Response for Week 13: Wrap up Essay–5%

This final reading response will take a different form than the previous ones. Read through all your previous response papers and reflect on the intellectual growth you see in your understanding of environmental justice. Word limit 500-750.

Discussion Leader–20%

Sign up for **one session**. You do not write a reading response if you are the discussion leader. The discussion leader's role will be to raise questions about the readings, to challenge others to think about the readings in a new way, to compare and contrast different author's positions, or to critique the arguments of the authors. The discussion leaders may, for example, list questions and/or issues for the whole group to discuss, break the class into small groups, lead the class in an exercise that demonstrates a particular point, organize a debate, play a game, etc. Be creative.

Final Research Paper–40%

- Refer to the text when needed during the discussion. A seminar is not a test of memory.
- You are not "learning a subject"; your goal is to understand the ideas, issues and values reflected in the text
- Do not participate if you are not prepared. A seminar is not a bull session
- Do not stay confused; ask for clarifications
- Stick to the point currently under discussion; make notes about ideas you want to come back to
- **Do not raise hands; take turns talking**
- Listen carefully
- Speak up so others can hear you
- Talk to each other not the leader or teacher
- Discuss ideas rather than just opinions

Week 2:
Theories of
Justice and
the EJ
movement

January 21

Readings

Rechtschaffen, C., E. Gauna, C. O'Neill. 2009. "Chapter One: Overview of the Environmental Justice Movement." In *Environmental Justice: Law, Policy & Regulation*. Carolina Academic Press: Durham, North Carolina. Pp. 1-33.

Schlosberg, David. 2009. "Part I: Justice in Theory and Practice". In *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp 1-41.

Pendersen, Ole. 2010. "Environmental Principles and Environmental Justice". *Environmental Law Review* 12(1): 26-49.

Readings

Rolston, Holmes, III. 1996. "Hunger and the Environment: Feeding People versus Saving Nature?" In William Aiken and Hugh LaFollette, eds., *World Hunger and Morality*, Englewood Cliffs; NJ: Prentice-Hall. Pp 248-267.

Atfield, Robin. 2003. "Saving Nature, Feeding People, and the Ethics," In Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston, III. eds., *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*. New York: Blackwell Publishing. Pp 463-471.

Rolston, Holmes, III. 1998. "Saving Nature, Feeding People, and the Foundations of Ethics," *Environmental Values* 7: 349-57.

Siurua, Hanna. 2006. "Nature Above People: Rolston and "Fortress" Conservation in the South". *Ethics & the Environment* 11(1): 71-96.

Video: Listen to portions of Hallsworth Plenary Debate: "Justice for people must come before justice for the environment" : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oldnTYMx-k>

- 6:00-19:00 - Amita Baviskar, Delhi University
- 1:17-1:33 - Veronica Strang, Durham University
- 1:34-1:41 - Baviskar response
- 1:52-1:57 - Strang response

Readings

Schlosberg, David. 2009. "Part II: Movement Definitions of Environmental Justice". In *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp 45-102.

Langman, Lauren. 2005. "From Virtual Public Spheres to Global Justice: Critical Theory of Internetworked Social Movements". *Sociological Theory* 23(1): 42-74.

Taylor, Dorceta. 2000. "The Rise of The Environmental Justice Paradigm: Injustice Framing And The Social Construction Of Environmental Discourses". *American Behavioral Scientist* 43(4): 508-566.

Week 3:
Ethical
Debate:

Saving
Nature vs.
Feeding
People

January 28

Week 4:
Theorizing
Social
Movements

February 4

Week 5:
Structural
Racism

February 11

Readings

McIntosh, P. 1988. "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming To See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies". Working Paper 189. Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. 11 pages

Gladwell, Malcolm. 1996. "Black Like Them". The New Yorker. April 29, 1996. 9 pages.

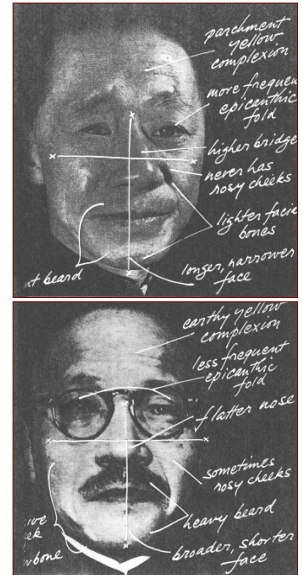
Pulido, Laura. 2000. "Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90(1): 12-40.

Mohai, Paul, David Pellow and Timmons Robert. 2009. "Environmental Justice". *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*. 34:405-30.

Walker, Gordon. 2012. "Making Claims: Justice, Evidence and Process." In *Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics*". Routledge: New York. Pp.39-76

How to distinguish "Japs from Chinese"

Life Magazine, December 1941



Week 6:
Risk
Perception

"70kg white
male
problem"

February 18

Readings

O'Neill, Catherine. 2003. "Risk Avoidance, Cultural Discrimination, and Environmental Justice for Indigenous Peoples". *Ecology Law Quarterly* 30: 1-68.

Flynn, James, Paul Slovic and C.K. Mertz. 1994. "Gender, Race and Perception of Environmental Risk". *Risk Analysis* 14(6): 1101-1108.

Cabrera, Nolan and James Leckie. 2009 "Pesticide Risk Communication, Risk Perception, and Self-Protective Behaviors Among Farmworkers in California's Salinas Valley". *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 31: 258-272.

Cerrell Associates. 1984. *Political Difficulties Facing Waste-to-Energy Conversion Plant Siting*. <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/cerrell.pdf>



"Sun Mad", a controversial painting by Ester Hernandez representing her anger about chemicals workers are exposed to in the grape industry (from the Smithsonian American Museum of Art)

Week 7:
Impact
Assessment

February 25

Readings

Morello-Frosch, Rachel et al. 2011. "Understanding Cumulative Impacts Of Inequalities In Environmental Health: Implications For Policy". *Health Affairs* 30(5): 879-887.

Alexeeff, George, et al. 2012. "A Screening Methods for Assessing Cumulative Impacts". *International Journal of Environmental Resources and Public Health* 9:648-659.

Sadd, James, et al. 2011. "Playing It Safe: Assessing Cumulative Impact and Social Vulnerability through Environmental Justice Screening Methods in the South Coast Air Basin, California" *International Journal of Environmental Resources and Public Health* 8:1141-1159

Walker, Gordon. 2010. "Environmental justice, impact assessment and the politics of knowledge: The implications of assessing the social distribution of environmental outcomes". *Environmental Impact Assessment* 30: 312-318.

Readings

Rechtschaffen, C., E. Gauna, C. O'Neill. 2009. "Responding to the Challenge of Climate Justice". In *Environmental Justice: Law, Policy & Regulation*. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press. Pp. 355-388.

Polack, Emily, 2008. "A Right to Adaptation: Securing the Participation of Marginalised People". *IDS Bulletin* 39 (4): 16-23.

Farris, Melissa. 2010. "The Sound of Falling Trees: Integrating Environmental Justice Principles into the Climate Change Framework for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)". *Fordham Environmental Law Review* 20: 515.

Doolittle, Amity, 2010. "The Politics of Indigeneity: Indigenous Perspectives on Climate Change Negotiations". *Conservation and Society* 8(4): 256-261.

Bjornberg, Karin and Sven Hasson. 2013. "Gendering Local Climate Adaptation. *Local Environment* 18(2): 217-232

Week 8:
Climate
Justice

March 4



Faces of Climate Justice

Indigenous Leaders blocked from entering the United National Framework Conventions Climate Change meetings on a new proposal called REDD

Photo: AP/Ed Wray

Week 9:
Immigrants,
Mobility
and Labor
Justice

March 25

Readings

Quach T, Gunier R, Tran A, Von Behren J, Doan-Billings PA, Nguyen D, Okahara L, Lui B, Nguyen M, Huynh J, Reynolds P. Characterizing Workplace Exposures in Vietnamese Women Working in California Nail Salons. *Am J Public Health*. 2011;101 (Suppl 1): S271-6.

Smith-Nonini, Sandy. 2011. "The Illegal and the Dead: Are Mexicans Renewable Energy?" *Medical Anthropology* 30(5): 454-474.

Arcury , Thomas A. and Sara A. Quandt . 2009. "Pesticide Exposure Among Farmworkers and Their Families in the Eastern United States: Matters of Social and Environmental Justice". In Thomas Arcury and Susan Quandt, eds. *Latin Farmworkers in Eastern United States*. Springer: New York. Pp. 103-130.

Pena, Devon. 2011 "Structural Violence, Historical Trauma, and Public Health: The Environmental Critique of Contemporary Risk Science and Practice". In Burton, Linda et al., eds. *Communities, Neighborhoods and Health: Expanding the Boundaries of Place*. Springer: New York. Pp 203-218.

Cesar Chavez, an American farm worker, labor leader and civil rights activists, who founded National Farm Workers Association. In 1984, Chavez started a peaceful protests, the table grapes boycott in McFarland, CA, then known as "cancer town," because of its childhood cancer clusters caused by pesticides and fertilizers.



Week 10:
Community-
Based
Research
and
Community-
Academic
Partnerships

April 1

Readings

Cashman, Susan, et al. 2008. "The Power and the Promise: Working With Communities to Analyze Data, Interpret Findings, and Get to Outcomes". *American Journal of Public Health* 98(8):1407-1417.

Gonzalez, Princilla, et al. 2011. "Community-Based Participatory Research and Policy Advocacy to Reduce Diesel Exposure in West Oakland, California". *American Journal of Public Health* 101 (S1): 166-175.

Minkler, Meredith. 2010. "Linking Science and Policy Through Community-Based Participatory Research to Study and Address Health Disparities". *American Journal of Public Health* 100 (S1): 81-87.

Downs, Timothy J., et. al. 2010. "Participatory Testing and Reporting in an Environmental-Justice Community of Worcester, MA: A Pilot Project". *Environmental Health* 9:34-49.

Corburn, Jason. 2007."Community knowledge in environmental health science: co-producing policy expertise".*Environmental Science & Policy*10(2): 50-61.

Check out: Website for We Act: <http://www.weact.org/Programs/EJAdvocacyGovtAccountability/tabid/192/Default.aspx>



CALL FOR PROPOSALS: The progressive "Sage Foundation" dedicated to social and environmental justice is seeking research proposals aimed at further our understanding of environmental justice. \$50,000 will be awarded to the top 2 proposals for a research period of 12 months.

Final Research Proposal—40%

Your final paper for this course will take the form of a research proposal that will be evaluated by a panel of experts (your classmates). You will both complete your own proposal, and evaluate the proposal of three of your classmates. This is how the process will be managed:

- The class will be divided into teams of three expert evaluators. We will have a maximum of 3 panels and 9 presentations per week
- April 5th: ALL students will submit a near-final draft of their proposal for evaluation to their assigned panel.
- Half the class will present their proposal and be evaluated on April 15th, the other half will present their proposal and be evaluated on April 22nd
- Prior to class on April 15th (and 22nd) the evaluators will meet in their teams and discuss the proposals and determine a tentative ranking (based on a pre-determined rubric).
- At this time the panel will draft a memo to each student with feedback and ideas for strengthening their proposals.
- April 15th (and 22nd) each student will be given 10 minutes to present their proposal, followed by 5 minutes of questions from the panel. After the student presentations the 3 panels will deliberate and determine the one proposal they will fictionally fund at \$50,000 for 12 months.
- All students have until April 28th to incorporate any of their evaluators comments into their proposals for their final grade.

Proposals should include the following:

- A cover page with the title of the project, the applicants name, institutional affiliation, and date.
- A 10-page narrative
 - introduction or problem statement, (1 page)
 - research questions or hypothesis (>1 page)
 - research framework and methods (3-4 pages)
 - literature review providing context and significance of the research (3-4 pages)
 - conclusion with expected outcomes, including projected community impacts (> 1page)

All proposals will be considered regardless of the scale the project, the nature of the problem, or the geographic region of the proposed research. Proposals will be evaluated based on intellectual merit, rigorous methods, understanding of the relevant literature, innovation and interdisciplinarity.

**Final proposals
due April 28 at
Noon**