

**SOCIOLOGY 565/665**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY**  
**Spring Quarter 2019**

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Tuesdays, 2:00-4:50 pm  
Cramer Hall Rm. 265

Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30am-12:30pm  
(or by appointment)  
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This course is designed to provide graduate students with an understanding of the key theories and the scope of literature in the subfield of environmental sociology. It is most appropriate for Ph.D. students seeking further research in environmental sociology, as well as for graduate students with a strong interest in studying the nexus of environment and society.

By the end of the course, students will be expected to have achieved the following:

- Demonstrate familiarity of the motivating context in which environmental sociology emerged as a professional subfield of sociology.
- Define the major theoretical traditions within environmental sociology.
- Synthesize the multiple subareas within environmental sociology and understand their origins, connections, and divergences, as well as their linkages with other areas of sociology and other disciplines.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1. WEEKLY RESPONSE POSTINGS:**

For seven (7) class sessions during the quarter, you should write a thoughtful response/reaction to that week's assigned readings. **These reactions should be very short essays/papers, between 600-800 words (see below for more detail). They should be posted to our course D2L site no later than 8:30 am on the day of class**, so that everyone in the class can read each others' comments and begin the discussion online before we meet. Note: Posting a reading response is *required* for weeks 2 and 3.

- **Posting a Response:** (under "Course Content," click on "Activities," then "Discussions," then on the forum for the appropriate date, and then "Compose" to start a new posting), so that everyone in the class can read each others' comment before we meet. *NOTE: Please do NOT attach your file to the posting; instead, please compose your response in a word processing program, then select the text of your response, copy it, and paste it into the text window for the posting.*
- **Responding to Others' Postings:** In order to facilitate an online discussion, please read all of the other postings, and *write/post at least one reply to another student's posting*, before we arrive in class. *To respond to a posting, click on that posting, then click "Reply," and type your response into the box.*

The reading response postings should both provide a brief overview of the key ideas and/or arguments in the required readings, and offer your critical assessment of, or response to, those readings. As part of this critical assessment, you may criticize or praise the authors' approach, address points of divergence or convergence between them, question key ideas or arguments, propose alternative approaches or clarifications, point out weaknesses, relate them to your own experience, examine or question their theoretical or methodological approach or underlying values and assumptions, pose questions they raise for you, etc. *The key point is to give evidence of having critically and thoughtfully engaged with all of the required readings. Quotes from and references to specific passages in the readings (with page references) will be necessary evidence of your engagement. In your posting, please also include one or two questions, in bold font, which will help frame our discussion in class. *Regardless of the specific topics you choose to reflect on in writing, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the readings.* I will read your responses, and respond to you via D2L with one of these comments:*

- ++ Especially strong response—keep it coming!
- + Good response; you interacted meaningfully with the readings.
- Unsatisfactory; you didn't seem to engage with the readings.

All reactions that receive either + or ++ will count equally toward this portion of the course grade.

## 2. SCHOLARLY BOOK REVIEW or RESEARCH PAPER

You can choose one of two options for your substantial written project:

### A. Scholarly Book Review:

This assignment is a review of a recently published book (2016 or later), either in environmental sociology or focused on some aspect of the nexus of environment and society, which will be submitted for publication to an academic journal by the end of the term. Your choice of book should reflect your own research interests/goals, as well as perspectives from the course. Note: Two lists of journals related to environmental sociology can be found at <http://envirosoc.org/wordpress/scholarly-journals/> and at [https://www.esf.edu/es/sonnenfeld/envsoc\\_journals.htm](https://www.esf.edu/es/sonnenfeld/envsoc_journals.htm) . These lists and additional resources for the assignment are posted on the D2L course site.

In the first two weeks of the term, you should: 1) download and read a number of published book reviews in several relevant journals to familiarize yourself with the approach and format; and 2) identify both the book you wish to review and the journal to which you would like to submit the review. I strongly encourage you to consult with me in person or by email about choosing an appropriate book and journal. By **Monday, April 15** at the latest, you should email me with a definitive choice of both a book and journal. I will respond and possibly offer feedback/suggestions, after which you should promptly contact the book review editor of your target journal to confirm that they are open to your submitting a review. By **Tues., May 21**, a complete initial draft of the review will be due. I will then ask you to engage in a peer review process, reading and giving written comments on two other students' draft reviews. The final book review (with proof of journal submission) will be due on **Saturday, June 8**. We will discuss this assignment further in the first weeks of the quarter. Please consult with me individually if you have any questions about book or journal selection, or the assignment in general.

### B. Research Paper:

This is a substantial (roughly 5,000-7,000 words, double spaced) individual research paper. Depending on the stage and focus of your graduate work, the paper could be structured as either part of a master's thesis, a dissertation proposal or a dissertation chapter, a conference paper, a draft journal article, a research

report for a non-governmental organization, or some other format (upon consultation). The paper should focus either on one specific environment/society issue or topic, or potentially an issue cutting across multiple areas, that is relevant to your own research interests/goals. The paper should incorporate both readings from the course and additional bibliographic resources, and it should demonstrate critical engagement with the key course themes and analytical frameworks. If you choose this option, please meet with me individually within the first two weeks to discuss the topic and format.

**For both options**, there will be a set of **sub-deadlines**:

- Paper Proposal (2-3 pages) or Email identifying book & journal: due by **Mon., April 15**, 5:00pm (by email).
- Initial Paper or Review Draft\*: due by **Tues., May 21**.
- Peer Review Responses: due by **Tues., May 28**.
- In-Class Presentations: **Tues., June 4**.
- Final Review or Paper: due by **Saturday, June 8**, 5:00 pm (on D2L, *and* emailed to me).\*

During the final course meeting (**June 4**), students will present the results of their research paper or a summary of their book review to the entire class, in approximately 8-10 minutes. Students choosing the research paper option are encouraged to use Powerpoint or other visuals to accompany their presentation. We will discuss these assignments further during the quarter. Feel free to consult with me individually about the paper/book review. \*Note: Draft and final book reviews/papers should be sent as email attachments in Word format (.docx), not as PDFs or Google documents.

### **3. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE**

This is a small, discussion-based seminar. Your presence and active participation are essential for the learning experience of everyone in the course. You are expected to attend all class sessions, and actively participate in discussion. *Everyone should arrive in class having completed all of the required readings, and having read all of the other students' postings.* Incomplete preparation deprives everyone of the benefit of your insights and analysis, and in a small seminar such as this one, that is especially detrimental. Participation includes helping to facilitate one class discussion (more info to be provided).

### **EVALUATION**

The final course grade will weigh the above assignments/requirements in the following way:

**Reading Response Papers/Postings: 35%**

**Class Attendance and Discussion Participation (includes facilitation): 30%**

**Book Review or Research Paper Assignment: 35%**

### **READINGS**

**There are no assigned textbooks for the course. All course readings are posted on the course D2L site, under "Course Readings."** Note: The reading list below is subject to change.

**Supplementary Readings:** The readings listed as "supplementary" are optional, for those who want to read more deeply into a topic, or as potential research sources. If you are unfamiliar with the topic or theory covered, you may benefit from reading one or more of these pieces. Most of these will be posted on D2L, but if they are not I am happy to make copies available to you.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Note: Readings with an asterisk (\*) are also required, but including them in your response posting is optional.

### **APRIL 2 (Week 1): Introduction to Environmental Sociology**

Pellow, D.N., and H.N. Brehm. 2013. "An Environmental Sociology for the Twenty-First Century." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39: 229-50.

Goldman, M. and R.A. Schurman. 2000. "Closing the 'Great Divide': New Social Theory on Society and Nature." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26:563-584.

#### **Supplementary:**

William R. Catton Jr. and Riley E. Dunlap. 1978. "Environmental Sociology: A New Paradigm." *The American Sociologist* 13: 41-49.

### **APRIL 9 (Week 2): Theoretical Foundations (I): Political Economy and Neo-Marxist Approaches**

\*Luiz C. Barbosa. 2015. "Theories in Environmental Sociology." 28-50 in Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis (eds.), *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Oxford.

Kenneth Gould, David Pellow, and Allan Schnaiberg. 2004. "Interrogating the Treadmill of Production: Everything You Wanted to Know About the Treadmill, But Were Afraid to Ask." *Organization & Environment*. 17(3): 296-316.

E.O. Wright. 2004. "Interrogating the Treadmill of Production: Some Questions I Still Want to Know About and Am Not Afraid to Ask." *Organization and Environment* 17(3): 317-322.

James O'Connor. 1994. "Is Sustainable Capitalism Possible?" 152-175 in Martin O'Connor, (ed.), *Is Capitalism Sustainable?*

John Bellamy Foster, Brett Clark, and Richard York. 2010. *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth*. 13-49 (Introduction).

#### **Supplementary:**

Michael Bell. 2004. *An Introduction to Environmental Sociology* (2nd ed.). "The Treadmill of Consumption," "The Treadmill of Production," and "The Social Creation of Treadmills."

Fred Magdoff and John Bellamy Foster. 2011. *What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know About Capitalism*. 95-122, "Can Capitalism Go Green?"

John Bellamy Foster. 1999. "Marx's Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundations for Environmental Sociology." *American Journal of Sociology*. 105(2): 366-405.

### **APRIL 16 (Week 3): Theoretical Foundations (II): Ecological Modernization and Risk Society**

Blowers, A. 1997. "Environmental Policy: Ecological Modernisation or Risk Society?" *Urban Studies* 34(5-6): 845-871. \*Note: Read pp. 852-859; the rest is optional.

Arthur P.J. Mol, Gert Spargaaren, and David Sonnenfeld. 2014. "Ecological Modernisation Theory: Where Do We Stand?" 35-66 in M. Bemmman, B. Metzger, and R. von Detten (eds.), *Ecological Modernization: On the History and Present of a Concept in Environmental Policy and the Social Sciences*. Campus Verlag.

Dana R. Fisher and William R. Freudenberg. 2001. "Ecological Modernization and its Critics: Assessing the Past and Looking Toward the Future." *Society and Natural Resources* 14: 701-709.

\*Michael Bell. 2016. "A Risk Society?" and "Risk and Democracy." 245-252 in *An Introduction to Environmental Sociology* (4th ed.).

Cable, S., T.E. Shriver and T.L. Mix. 2008. "Risk Society and Contested Illness: The Case of Nuclear Weapons Workers." *American Sociological Review* 73: 380-401.

Rob Davis. 2019. "Polluted by Money: How Corporate Cash Corrupted One of the Greenest States in America." *The Oregonian*. (Note: Read Parts 1, 2, and 3)

#### **Supplementary:**

Richard York, Eugene A. Rosa and Thomas Dietz. 2003. "Footprints on the Earth: The Environmental Consequences of Modernity." *American Sociological Review* 68(2): 279-300.

### **APRIL 23 (Week 4): Consumption, Individualism, Inequality, and Neoliberalism**

Michael Maniates. 2001. "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" *Global Environmental Politics* 1(3): 31-52.

Margaret M. Willis and Juliet Schor. 2012. "Does Changing a Lightbulb Lead to Changing the World? Political Action and the Conscious Consumer." *AAPSS* 644(1): 160-190.

Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett. 2011. "Equality and Sustainability." 215-228 in *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*. Bloomsbury Press.

Johanna Bockman. 2013. Neoliberalism. *Contexts* 12(3):14-15.

Pérez, Fernando; Esposito, Luigi. 2010. The Global Addiction and Human Rights: Insatiable Consumerism, Neoliberalism, and Harm Reduction. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 9: 84-100.

#### **Supplementary:**

Johnston, Josee and Michelle Szabo. 2010. "Reflexivity and the Whole Foods Market Consumer: The Lived Experience of Shopping for Change." *Agriculture and Human Values* 28:303-19.

Andrew Szasz. 2007. *Shopping Our Way to Safety: How We Changed From Protecting the Environment to Protecting Ourselves*. University of Minnesota Press.

## **APRIL 30 (Week 5): Environmental Justice: Race, Class, and Toxics; Environmental Concern**

Julie Sze and Jonathan K. London. 2008. "Environmental Justice at the Crossroads." *Sociology Compass* 2(4): 1331-1354.

Gwen Ottinger. 2013. *Refining Expertise: How Responsible Engineers Subvert Environmental Justice Challenges*. New York: NYU Press. 1-28, "The Battlefield."

Laura Pulido. 2016. "Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism." *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 27(3): 1-16.

Gregory Hooks and Chad L. Smith. 2004. "The Treadmill of Destruction: National Sacrifice Areas and Native Americans." *American Sociological Review* 69(4): 558-575.

\*Michael M. Bell. 2016. "Social Status and Environmental Concern" and "Three Theories of Environmental Concern." *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology* (5th ed.), 237-250.

### **Supplementary:**

David N. Pellow. 2016. "Toward a Critical Environmental Justice Studies: Black Lives Matter as an Environmental Justice Challenge." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 13(2): 221-236.

Agyeman, Julian, David Schlosberg, Luke Craven and Caitlin Matthews. 2016. "Trends and Directions in Environmental Justice: From Inequity to Everyday Life, Community, and Just Sustainabilities." *Annual Review of Environmental Resources* 41:321-40

David N. Pellow and Robert J. Brulle. 2006. *Power, Justice & Environment: Toward Critical Environmental Justice Studies*. 1-19.

Bullard, R.D., P. Mohai, R. Saha, and B. Wright. 2007. *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty: 1987-2007*. Report Prepared for the United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries.

## **MAY 7 (Week 6): Environmentalism in the Global South; Food, Agriculture, and Environment**

Ramachandra Guha and Joan Martinez-Alier. 1997. "The Environmentalism of the Poor." 1-21 in *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South*. London: Earthscan.

Rob Nixon. 2011. "Pipedreams." 101-127 in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University Press.

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Sean Gillon. 2018. "Food and the Environment." In J. Konefal and M. Hatanaka (eds.), *Twenty Lessons in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. Oxford University Press.

Jason Konefal. 2012. "Environmental Movements, Market-Based Approaches, and Neoliberalization: A Case Study of the Sustainable Seafood Movement." *Organization & Environment* 26(3): 336-352.

\*GRAIN. 2011. "Food and Climate Change: The Forgotten Link" (Report).

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## **Supplementary:**

### Documentary Films:

“A Fierce Green Fire” (History of US environmental movement);

“Drowned Out” (Narmada anti-dams movement, India);

“Small-Scale Farmers Cool the Planet” [YouTube]; “Food, Inc.”

Duncan McLaren. 2003. “Environmental Space, Equity, and the Ecological Debt.” 19-38 in Ageyman et al. (eds.), *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*.

Ramachandra Guha. 2006. “The Indian Road to Sustainability.” 53-70 in *How Much Should a Person Consume?* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rachel Schurman and William Munro. 2010. *Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists Versus Agribusiness in the Struggle Over Biotechnology*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Brian Mayer, Phil Brown, and Rachel Morello-Frosch. 2010. “Labor-Environmental Coalition Formation: Framing and the Right to Know.” *Sociological Forum* 25(4): 746-768.

## **MAY 14 (Week 7): Global Commons, Commodification and Decommodification; Water**

Karl Polanyi. 1944 (2001). *The Great Transformation*. vii-xxxiii and 71-80 (Introduction by Fred Block, and “The Self-Regulating Market”).

Daniel Jaffee and Soren Newman. 2013. “A Bottle Half Empty: Bottled Water, Commodification, and Contestation.” *Organization and Environment* 26(3): 318-335.

Michael Goldman. 2007. “How ‘Water for All!’ Policy Became Hegemonic: The Power of the World Bank and its Transnational Policy Networks.” *Geoforum* 38: 786-800.

Dennis Soron and Gordon Laxer, eds. 2006. *Not For Sale: Decommodifying Public Life*. Garamond/Broadview. 15-37, “Thematic Introduction: Decommodification, Democracy, and the Battle for the Commons.”

## **Supplementary:**

Documentary Films: “FLOW: For Love of Water”; “Leasing the Rain” (YouTube)

Susan Spronk and Jeffery R. Weber. 2007. “Struggles Against Accumulation by Dispossession in Bolivia: The Political Economy of Natural Resource Contention.” *Latin American Perspectives* 34 (2): 31-47.

Maude Barlow. 2013. *Blue Future: Protecting Water for People and the Planet Forever*. New York: New Press. 67-101.

John Vail. 2010. “Decommodification and Egalitarian Political Economy.” *Politics & Society* 38(3) 310-346.

## **MAY 21 (Week 8): Conservation and Land Grabs; Gender and Environment**

Michael Goldman. 2005. *Imperial Nature: The World Bank and Struggles for Social Justice in the Age of Globalization*. 181-220, "Eco-Governmentality and the Making of an Environmental State."

Fred Pearce. 2012. *The Land Grabbers: The New Fight Over Who Owns the Earth*. Boston: Beacon Press. vii-16.

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Emily Huddart Kennedy and Liz Dzialo. 2015. "Locating Gender in Environmental Sociology." *Sociology Compass* 9(10): 920-929.

Bell, Shannon Elizabeth and Yvonne A. Braun. 2010. "Coal, Identity, and the Gendering of Environmental Justice Activism in Central Appalachia." *Gender & Society* 24(6): 794-813.

### ***And choose one of the following two articles:***

Yvonne A. Braun and Assitan Sylla Traore. 2015. "Plastic Bags, Pollution, and Identity: Women and the Gendering of Globalization and Environmental Responsibility in Mali." *Gender & Society* 29(6): 863-887.

Christina Ergas and Richard York. 2012. "Women's Status and Carbon Dioxide Emissions: A Quantitative Cross-national Analysis." *Social Science Research* 41(4): 965-976.

### **Supplementary:**

Damayanti Banerjee and Michael M. Bell. 2007. "Ecogender: Locating Gender in Environmental Social Science." *Society and Natural Resources* 20(1): 3-19.

Bram Buscher, Sian Sullivan, Katja Neves, Jim Igoe and Dan Brockington. 2012. "Towards a Synthesized Critique of Neoliberal Biodiversity Conservation." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 32(2): 4-30.

## **MAY 28 (Week 9): Climate Change, Climate Denial, and Climate Justice**

Naomi Klein. 2014. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*. Simon & Schuster. 31-63. Chap. 1, "The Right is Right: The Revolutionary Power of Climate Change."

Juliet Schor. 2015. "Climate, Inequality, and the Need for Reframing Climate Policy." *Review of Radical Political Economics* 47(4): 525-536.

Kari Norgaard. 2013. "Climate Denial and the Construction of Innocence: Reproducing Transnational Environmental Privilege in the Face of Climate Change." *Race, Gender & Class* 19(1/2): 80-103.

Aaron McCright and Riley Dunlap. 2011. "Cool Dudes: The Denial of Climate Change Among Conservative White Males in the United States." *Global Environmental Change* 21(4): 1163-1172.

Andrew Jorgensen. 2012. "The Sociology of Ecologically Unequal Exchange and Carbon Dioxide Emissions, 1965-2005." *Social Science Research* 41(2): 242-252.

**OVER→**



## **Supplementary:**

### Documentary Film: “Merchants of Doubt”

Kari Norgaard. 2011. *Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life*. MIT Press. 179-229, “Climate Change as Background Noise in the United States” and Conclusion.

Aaron McCright, Sandra T. Marquart-Pyatt, Rachael L. Shwom, Steven R. Brechin, and Summer Allen. 2016. “Ideology, Capitalism, and Climate Change.” *Energy Research & Social Science* 21: 180-189.

Richard York and Julius Alexander McGee. 2017. “Does Renewable Energy Development Decouple Economic Growth from CO2 Emissions?” *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World* 3: DOI 10.1177/2378023116689098.

John Foran and Richard Widick. 2013. “Breaking Barriers to Climate Justice.” *Contexts* 12(2): 34-39.

## **JUNE 4 (Week 10): Ecological Debt; Ecologically Unequal Exchange Degrowth; Green New Deal**

J. Timmons Roberts and Bradley C. Parks. 2009. “Ecologically Unequal Exchange, Ecological Debt, and Climate Justice: The History and Implications of Three Related Ideas for a New Social Movement.” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 50(3-4): 385-409.

F. Demaria, F. Schneider, F. Sekulova, and J. Martinez-Alier. 2013. “What is Degrowth? From an Activist Slogan to a Social Movement.” *Environmental Values* 22(2): 191-215.

Plus: Readings on the Green New Deal (TBA)