

Sociology 4047: ENVIRONMENT AND JUSTICE

Professor Jill Harrison

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Class: Tues/Thurs 2:00-3:15

in Helles 141

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

We require a thick commitment to justice, one that entails questioning fundamental concepts and one that steers clear of righteousness. We need a justice that elevates us at the same time that it keeps us grounded, attentive to the specific “cuts” that our enactments of it make: the lives that are made and lost (Barad 2007). This justice, as Maria Puig de la Bellacasa teaches us, comes not only from victories—from what is gained. It comes also from recognizing the other possible worlds never pursued, as well as those that might still be enacted (Puig de la Bellacasa 2011). “[I]t might have been otherwise,” Leigh Star wisely reminded us (Star 1991, 53). We must stay with both the trouble and the power of that possibility. (Reardon, 2013, pp. 191-192)

The overarching goal of this course is to take seriously the connection between environment and justice: What might ‘environmental justice’ look like? How do we get there? Who should help make such decisions? We will begin the course with a brief introduction to the major strands of the environmental movement in the United States in the 20th century. We then turn to cracking open the black box of ‘justice’. We will do so by drawing on major concepts from the field of political philosophy, whose scholars have outlined numerous different political theories of justice – normative positions about what the government’s responsibilities should be. Throughout the course, we apply these theories to environmental case studies to determine which specific theories of justice pervade environmental politics today and/or are bolstered by predominant trends in environmental policy, activism, and practice. To orient the abstract theories of justice toward the sociological goal of understanding social life, we will also draw on core concepts from environmental sociology, social movement theory, gender studies, and critical race theory throughout the semester. As we discuss the implications of the different conceptions of justice and how they manifest in contemporary environmental politics, I will challenge each of you to evaluate your own beliefs about what ‘environmental justice’ should look like.

I want to be clear from the beginning that this is a theory-driven course and will require a significant time commitment from each student. Also, the problems we will confront throughout this course are incredibly complex and daunting, defying simple, ‘silver bullet’ solutions. You should be prepared to grapple with, struggle with, consider, and deliberate multiple and often conflicting perspectives about the causes of serious environmental problems, as well as equally varied (and inconclusive) debates about how these problems should be solved. I am more concerned with posing difficult questions (and showing why they matter) than with offering definitive answers. My primary goals are to help you develop your critical thinking skills, to become better equipped to engage in environmental problem solving in a way that takes justice seriously, and to become a more compassionate and engaged citizen.

REQUIRED READINGS

The following book is REQUIRED for all students and can be purchased from the campus bookstore:

Lisa Sun-Hee Park and David Pellow. 2011. *The Slums of Aspen: Immigrants Vs. the Environment in America's Eden*. New York: NYU Press.

All other readings, some lecture materials, and other key information will be available through Desire2Learn (D2L). You should log on to D2L regularly (i.e., at least weekly) to stay informed of changes to the schedule and new materials.

ASSIGNMENTS

Your final grade for this course will be based on the following requirements (1000 points total):

1. **Participation** (100 points)

This course requires active participation. You need not always have something to say, but your consistent and informed participation in class is a course requirement. To get full credit for your participation, you must attend regularly, show up on time, be prepared to discuss required readings, and participate regularly in class discussions, small group discussions, and/or office hours. Students who participate only occasionally and/or are often absent or late will receive 75 points, and students who rarely participate but regularly attend and show up on time will receive 50 points. Students who rarely attend class will receive fewer than 50 points, to be determined on a case-by-case basis. I highly recommend keeping an eye on how the news media covers current course-related issues, and bringing your observations and questions to class and/or office hours.

2. **Quizzes** (50 points total)

I will periodically conduct pop quizzes *at the beginning of class*. Doing so will help compel you to keep up with the readings and will help me gauge your comprehension of the readings. I will drop your lowest quiz score. If you are not present for a quiz, you will receive a zero. Keeping up with the readings, attending regularly, and arriving to class on time will help you do well on the quizzes and better in the class in general.

3. **Short Essays** (5 at 50 points each = 250 points total)

This semester, I will assign five short essays. I have designed the assignments to get you to engage with particular course concepts and readings and to be ready to discuss them together in class. Each assignment poses one or more questions relating to a required reading, film, or course concept, and instructs you to write a short essay in response to the question(s). Each essay is worth a maximum of 50 points. The number of points you receive for each essay depends on how accurately and how meaningfully you address the specific questions/tasks for each assignment, and the degree to which you adhere to the assignment guidelines. You will not be judged on how well you adhere to what you believe my point of view is.

Assignment guidelines: Essays must be 2-3 double spaced pages, professionally composed, coherently organized, proofread, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, and formatted with 1-inch margins and page numbers. Be sure to put your name at the top of the document. If you decide to use direct quotations from the readings, do so sparingly, and *do not allow quotations to replace your own statements*. Within your essay, be sure to cite your sources using the following in-text citation format: (lecture 9/2/11), (Smith 2007), or (Smith 2007: 1). You do not need an end-of-text references list (bibliography) unless you reference a source not assigned for this course. You **must** submit each essay to the appropriate dropbox on D2L by the date and time listed below, and you must also bring a hard

copy to class on the due date. You are welcome to print your essay double-sided; be sure to staple your essay before you come to class. Please submit your paper to D2L as a PDF or Word file.

Late policy for short essays: If both the online and hard copies are late, your essay will automatically lose 50% of the points. If the hard copy is submitted on time but the D2L version is late, or vice versa, your essay will lose 10% of the points. I will waive a late penalty only for documented cases of serious illness, injury, family emergency, etc.

Short Essay #1: due Thursday 9/12 in class
Short Essay #2: due Tuesday 9/24 in class
Short Essay #3: due Thursday 10/10 in class
Short Essay #4: due Thursday 10/31 in class
Short Essay #5: due Thursday 11/14 in class

4. **Tests** (2 at 200 points each = 400 points total)

This semester, there will be two in-class tests. Each will include of a combination of multiple-choice and short essay questions.

Test #1: 10/1 in class
Test #2: 11/21 in class

Make-up policy for tests: If you miss one of the tests due to a death in your family, a medical emergency, a court date, a religious conflict, or your participation in a university-supported activity in which you are obligated to participate, you must provide me with written documentation of that conflict in order to take the make-up exam. Such documentation must be provided prior to your absence. Or, if the situation is an emergency that prohibits prior notice, you must provide documentation within one week of your absence. I will then allow you to take a make-up exam during the scheduled final exam period (December 14 from 1:30-4:00). The make-up final exam will be an essay exam that will test your comprehensive understanding of *all* course material.

5. **Debate** (200 points total)

The last two weeks of the semester will be devoted to preparing for and conducting a debate. Students will work in groups, each representing a different conception of justice, to debate the justice implications of the current hydraulic fracturing (fracking) boom in Colorado. We will discuss the specific requirements of the debate and form groups in November. Students will be graded according to the following:

Group's statement (due on 12/10 in class): 50 points
Group's response to questions and challenges (on 12/12 in class): 25 points
Individual's active participation in debate (on 12/10 and 12/12 in class): 25 points
Individual's questions for other groups (due on 12/12 in class): 25 points
Individual's final essay (due by 5pm on 12/17 to D2L): 100 points

Late policy for debate-related written assignments: Any debate-related written assignment submitted late will be docked 10% per day late (or any portion thereof). The assignment will not be considered 'submitted' until I receive it in both hard copy and to D2L; the only exception is the individual's final essay, which is only due to D2L (i.e., not in hard copy). I will waive a late penalty only for documented cases of serious illness, injury, family emergency, etc.

GRADES

In sum, your final grade will be based on the following:

100 points	Participation
50 points	Quizzes
250 points	Short essays (5 @ 50 points each)
400 points	Tests (2 @ 200 points each)
<u>200 points</u>	Debate
<i>1000 points total</i>	

Your total points earned will correspond to the following final letter grades:

930-1000	A	800-829	B-	670-699	D+
900-929	A-	770-799	C+	630-669	D
870-899	B+	730-769	C	600-629	D-
830-869	B	700-729	C-	0-599	F

COURSE POLICIES

Grades: I will grade your work very carefully and try to be as transparent as possible about my grading decisions. If you want to discuss with me the grade you received on one of your essays or exams, you must put your concerns into writing and make an appointment to see me in office hours. If you decide to dispute a grade, I reserve the right to alter the grade as I see fit (i.e., either *up or down*).

Preparation: I expect each student to come to class with the reading done on the day it is listed on the syllabus. "Doing the readings" well means carefully reading, taking notes about the main arguments and evidence, jotting down your questions, and re-reading. Please bring the reading materials and your notes with you to class and be prepared to ask questions or make comments that occurred to you while doing the readings. I expect you to actively engage with the readings in class, so preparation is essential. You are expected to spend an average of six hours per week preparing for this course (outside of our time together in the classroom).

Attendance: To do well in this course, you will need to regularly attend class. When you are absent, you are responsible for taking the initiative to find out what you missed. You should obtain notes from a fellow classmate; you may then come ask me about updates to the syllabus, clarifications on specific points that you do not understand, and copies of handouts. I will not generally post or otherwise share my slides or lecture notes.

Punctuality: It is very important that you arrive to class on time, as arriving late is disruptive and distracting. Come see me ASAP if you anticipate that you will regularly be late.

Incapacitating illness: If a serious illness or injury disrupts your ability to complete assigned work on time, please come see me with a doctor's note.

Laptops, cell phones, and other electronic communication devices: Because the use of laptops, cell phones, and other such devices distracts both the user and other students, I generally do not allow their use in the classroom and require that they be stored out of sight during class. If I see you checking your cell phone, I will ask you to leave. There are two exceptions to this rule. First: If you believe that you must use a laptop during class, please talk to me privately about this, bring documentation from the appropriate authority (e.g., Disability Services, or your doctor) stating that you need to use a laptop every day, and keep in mind that, if I decide to permit you to use it, you may only do so for taking notes. Second: When we are discussing a particular required reading, and you have that available in electronic form instead of in hard copy, you may use your laptop or other electronic communication device to view the required reading while we are discussing it as a group. I will revoke this right if I find that students are abusing this policy.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Disability accommodations: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that we can figure out how to address your needs. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Center for Community N200, and <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see guidelines at <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/go.cgi?select=temporary.html>.

CU-Boulder Honor Code: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. We encourage all students to review the University of Colorado Honor Code booklet. The Honor Code mission reads as follows: "As citizens of an academic community of trust, CU-Boulder students do not lie or cheat whether they are on campus or acting as representatives of the university in surrounding communities. Neither should they suffer by the dishonest acts of others. Honor is about academic integrity, moral and ethical conduct, and pride of membership in a community that values academic achievement and individual responsibility. Cultivating honor lays the foundation for lifelong integrity, developing in each of us the courage and insight to make difficult choices and accept responsibility for actions and their consequences, even at personal cost."

Plagiarism is one important aspect of this honor code. All work that you submit for this class must be your own work, and you are required to quote and cite all references properly. Although this mandate appears straightforward, I am well aware of how murky the task can be. Wherever you are unsure about quoting and citing, please come see me to figure out the best strategy. If you want to cite an idea I proposed in lecture, cite it accordingly with an in-text citation such as (lecture 1/31/13). If you want to cite a direct quote from a powerpoint slide, put it in quotes.

Discrimination and harassment: Any student who believes he or she has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

Classroom behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. As a member of the faculty, I have a professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which we express opinions in the classroom. All of us in the classroom must exercise courtesy and sensitivity with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Note that class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Observance of religious holidays: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled examinations, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, I will make every effort to accommodate all students who have such conflicts with scheduled examinations, assignments, or attending class; students must notify me well in advance of the scheduled conflict.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, REQUIRED READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Please note: I will periodically assign additional short readings and make other small changes to the syllabus.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Written Work
1	8/27	Introduction to the Course	Mills 1959	
	8/29		Cronon 1998, Cole and Foster 2000	
2	9/3	Utilitarianism: Background	Kymlicka 2002a (pp. 1-7), Brighouse 2004a (pp. 1-8), Swift 2001a (pp. 9-18)	
	9/5	Utilitarianism in Environmental Politics	Low and Gleeson 1998a (pp. 72-78), Bryner 2002	
3	9/10	Distributive-Egalitarian Justice: Background	Mantsios 2007, This American Life 2013	
	9/12	Distrib-Egal Cont.: Ecological Marxist Variations	Swift 2001b (pp. 98-106), Bell 2009 Optional: Brighouse 2004b (pp. 30-66)	Short Essay #1 due
4	9/17	Neoliberalization and Libertarianism	Steger and Roy 2010, Kymlicka 2002b (pp. 88-96)	
	9/19		Cox 2007	
5	9/24		Szasz 2007	Short Essay #2 due
	9/26		Low and Gleeson 1998b (pp. 79-84), Swift 2001c (pp. 30-39), Libertarian Party Website 2013	
6	10/1	Test #1 in class		Test #1 in class
	10/3	EJM: Reviving the Distrib-Egal Charge	Morello-Frosch 2002	
7	10/8	EJM: Justice as Recognition	Staggenborg 2008, Young 1990	
	10/10		Johnson 2006	Short Essay #3 due
8	10/15		Sze 2006, Allen 2013	
	10/17		Malin and Petrzalka 2010	
9	10/22	EJM: Justice as Participatory Parity	Brown 2000	
	10/24		Schlosberg 2004	
10	10/29		Harrison 2011	
	10/31		Bell and Braun 2010, Mooney 2013	Short Essay #4 due
11	11/5	Climate Justice	Walker 2012	
	11/7		Mulvaney 2013, Ottinger 2013	
12	11/12	Population and Environmental Privilege	Park and Pellow book: first half	
	11/14		Park and Pellow book: second half	Short Essay #5 due
13	11/19		[Prepare for debate]	
	11/21	Test #2 in class		Test #2 in class
Week of November 25th: Thanksgiving Break				
14	12/3	Fracking (guest lecturer)	Ethics Watch 2013, Food & Water Watch 2011, Healy 2012	
	12/5		Bateman 2010, Malin 2013	
	12/5**	6pm: Film Night (Muenzinger E126)		
15	12/10	Debate		Group statement due
	12/12			Individual questions due
	12/17	[No class; final essay due by 5pm]		Individual final essay due

LIST OF REQUIRED READINGS
(not including required book)

C. Wright Mills. [1959]. The sociological imagination. Reprinted in *The Meaning of Sociology*.

William Cronon. 1998. The trouble with wilderness, or, getting back to the wrong nature. In *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, ed. J. Baird Callicott and Michael P. Nelson. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Luke Cole and Sheila Foster. 2001. A history of the environmental justice movement. In *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement*. New York: NYU Press.

Will Kymlicka. 2002. *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (selections)

Harry Brighouse. 2004. *Justice*. Cambridge: Polity. (selections)

Adam Swift. 2001. *Political Philosophy: A Beginner's Guide for Students and Politicians*. Malden, MA: Polity Press. (selections)

Nicholas Low and Brendan Gleeson. 1998. *Justice, Society, and Nature: An Exploration of Political Ecology*. London: Routledge. (selections)

Gary C. Bryner. 2002. Selections from "Assessing claims of environmental justice: conceptual frameworks." In *Justice and Natural Resources: Concepts, Strategies, and Applications*, ed. Kathryn M. Mutz, Gary C. Bryner, and Douglas S. Kenney. Washington, DC: Island Press. (pp. 40-42)

Gregory Mantsios. 2007. Class in America – 2006. In *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*, ed. Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: Worth Publishers, pp. 182-197.

This American Life. 2013. Trends with benefits: Act One." March 22. <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/490/trends-with-benefits?act=1#play> (Act One starts at 7:20 and runs for 22 minutes.)

Adam Swift. (as above)

Michael Mayerfeld Bell . 2009. *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. Los Angeles, CA: Pine Forge Press, pp. 58-67.

Harry Brighouse. (as above)

Manfred B. Steger and Ravi K. Roy. 2010. Selections from *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (pp. 1-20)

Will Kymlicka. (as above)

J. Robert Cox. 2007. Golden tropes and democratic betrayals: Prospects for the environment and environmental justice in neoliberal 'free trade' agreements. In *Environmental Justice and Environmentalism: The Social Justice Challenge to the Environmental Movement*, ed. Ronald Sandler and Phaedra C. Pezzullo. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 225-250.

Andrew Szasz. 2007. *Shopping Our Way to Safety: How We Changed from Protecting the Environment to Protecting Ourselves*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (selections)

Nicholas Low and Brendan Gleeson. (as above)

Adam Swift. (as above)

Libertarian Party. 2013. Libertarian Party Website. www.lp.org.

Rachel Morello-Frosch. 2002. Discrimination and the political economy of environmental inequality. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 20: 477-496.

- Suzanne Staggenborg. 2008. *Social Movements*. Oxford University Press. (selections)
- Iris Marion Young. 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton University Press, pp. 3-38.
- Allan G. Johnson. 2006. *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. Second Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill. (selections)
- Julie Sze. 2006. Toxic soup redux: Why environmental racism and environmental justice matter after Katrina. SSRC. June 11. <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Sze/>.
- Barbara L. Allen. 2013. Justice as measure of nongovernmental organization success in postdisaster community assistance. *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 38(2): 224-249.
- Stephanie A. Malin and Peggy Petrzalka. 2010. Left in the dust: Uranium's legacy and the victims of mill tailings exposure in Monticello, Utah. *Society and Natural Resources* 23(12): 1187-1200.
- Phil Brown. 2000. Popular epidemiology and toxic waste contamination: Lay and professional ways of knowing. In *Illness and the Environment: A Reader in Contested Medicine*, ed. Steve Kroll-Smith, Phil Brown, and Valerie J. Gunter. New York: New York University Press.
- David Schlosberg. 2004. Reconceiving environmental justice: global movements and political theories. *Environmental Politics* 13(3): 517-540.
- Jill Lindsey Harrison. 2011. Parsing 'participation' in action research: Navigating the challenges of lay involvement in technically complex participatory science projects. *Society and Natural Resources* 24(7): 702-716.
- Shannon Elizabeth Bell and Yvonne A. Braun. 2010. Coal, identity, and the gendering of environmental justice activism in Central Appalachia. *Gender & Society* 24(6): 794-813.
- Chris Mooney. 2013. How science can predict where you stand on Keystone XL. *Mother Jones*. April 17. <http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2013/04/keystone-xl-protesters-science-joe-nocera-bill-mckibben>
- Gordon Walker. 2012. *Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence, and Politics*. London: Routledge. (selections)
- Dustin Mulvaney. 2013. Opening the black box of solar energy technologies: Exploring tensions between innovation and environmental justice. *Science as Culture* 22(2): 230-237.
- Gwen Ottinger. 2013. The winds of change: Environmental justice in energy transitions. *Science as Culture* 22(2): 222-229.
- Ethics Watch. 2013. Spend baby spend: How oil and gas controls Colorado.
- Food and Water Watch. 2011. The case for a ban on gas fracking.
- Jack Healy. 2012. With ban on drilling practice, town lands in thick of dispute. *New York Times*. November 25. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/26/us/with-ban-on-fracking-colorado-town-lands-in-thick-of-dispute.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0
- Christopher Bateman. 2010. A colossal fracking mess. *Vanity Fair*. June. <http://www.vanityfair.com/business/features/2010/06/fracking-in-pennsylvania-201006>
- Stephanie Malin. Forthcoming 2013. There no real choice but to sign: Neoliberalization and normalization of hydraulic fracturing on Pennsylvania farmland. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*.