

Sociology 4047: ENVIRONMENT AND JUSTICE

Professor Jill Harrison

Office: 218 Ketchum Hall

Office hours: Wednesdays 12:00-2:00 and by appointment

jill.harrison@colorado.edu

(303) 492-5955

University of Colorado at Boulder

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Class: Tues/Thurs 11:00-12:15

in Ramaley N1B31

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

In the past forty years, the environmental movement has radically transformed how we think about the interrelationships between social and ecological systems. The *environmental justice* (EJ) movement that has emerged and grown since the 1980s has pushed the mainstream environmental movement's critique further, arguing that meaningfully confronting environmental problems requires addressing the fact that the world's most vulnerable and marginalized social groups bear a disproportionate share of environmental burdens (like pollution) and have disproportionately lower access to environmental goods (like parks). Levying their charge at the state, industry, and the mainstream environmental movement itself, the activists of the EJ movement have shown that environmental inequalities are political problems that illustrate the need to bring justice into environmental politics.

The overarching goal of this course is to take seriously this 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 survey of the environmental justice movement: its primary arguments, key moments of activism, and major trends in research on the subject. 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 are, how to design public institutions, and about what constitutes the most appropriate set of relationships between the state, the economy, and civil society. Throughout the course, we apply these theories to environmental case studies in order to determine which specific theories of justice pervade environmental politics today and/or are bolstered by predominant trends in environmental policy, activism, and practice. As we will see, numerous conflicting notions of justice shape environmental politics today. Some of these ideas of justice help us deal with environmental inequalities, while others actually help produce them. Through interrogating environmental politics through the lens of justice in this way, students will be better equipped to engage in environmental problem solving in a way that takes justice seriously.

Students should understand from the beginning that this course is a writing-intensive, reading-intensive, theory-oriented 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. Students 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. Students should understand that I am more concerned with posing difficult questions (and showing why they matter) than with offering definitive answers. My primary goals are to help students generally develop their critical thinking skills and to be more compassionate and engaged citizens.

REQUIRED READINGS

The following two books are REQUIRED for all students and can be purchased from the campus bookstore:

David Schlosberg. 2007. *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Will Kymlicka. 2002. *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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

GRADES

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

1. **Participation** (150 points)

Your active engagement with the course material is required in this course. You need not always have something to say, but your consistent and informed participation in class is a course requirement. 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. I also suggest that you take notes throughout class. Do not expect that simply copying down the terms and diagrams I present on the board or screen to be sufficient.

I will conduct quizzes periodically if I get the impression that students have not been keeping up with the readings. I really do not enjoy giving quizzes. If you all kindly keep up with the readings, none of us will have to suffer. Your quiz scores will influence your participation grade.

2. **Reading Reflections** (200 points total)

You are required to write regular reading reflections (RRs) for this course. They are due on the dates specified in the Schedule of Assignments (p. 6 of this syllabus). You must submit them to the appropriate assignment link in CULearn by 6:00am of the due date. NOTE: *I do not accept any late reading reflections.*

Points: You will receive 0, 10, or 20 points for each reading reflection. You have 14 opportunities to submit reading reflections this semester. I will drop your 4 lowest scores. Therefore, you can earn a maximum of 200 points (10 @ a maximum of 20 points each) for your reading reflections. The number of points you receive for each reading reflection depends on whether you follow the assignment guidelines and how much your work demonstrates that you have meaningfully engaged with the assigned reading(s). You will not be judged on how well you adhere to what you believe my point of view is.

Assignment guidelines:

First, in one or two sentences *of your own words*, summarize the main argument for each reading due that day. This is usually not an easy task! Be sure to do this task carefully.

Then, reflect upon the reading(s) in one or more of the following ways: Discuss the reading(s) in relation to recent course concepts; discuss how various readings differ from or overlap with each other; critically evaluate the evidence that the author(s) use to back up their arguments; list

your own questions about the reading(s); describe how the readings affected you personally; and/or suggest topics or discussion questions for class. Please reference specific passages or ideas to help substantiate your comments.

Reading reflections must be 1-2 double spaced pages, coherently organized, proofread, typed in 12-point font, formatted with 1-inch margins and page numbers, and submitted to CULearn by 6:00am the day they are due. You do not need a bibliography unless you reference a source not assigned for this course. Within your essay, be sure to cite your sources using the following in-text citation format: (lecture 9/2/11) or (Smith 2007: 1).

3. **Take-Home Exams**

- a. Exam #1. Due November 8. (300 points) The first exam will be distributed in class on November 1, and it will be due on November 8 in class. It will cover all materials and course concepts covered in August, September, and October.
- b. Exam #2. Due December 12. (150 points) The second exam will be distributed in class on December 8, and it will be due by 5:00pm on December 12 in my office (218 Ketchum Hall). It will cover materials and course concepts introduced in November and December.

Note that there is no comprehensive final exam for this course.

4. **Research Paper: Environmental Justice Case Study** (200 points total)

You are required to write a research paper on an environmental justice case study of your choosing. The assignment includes the following two components:

- a. Research Proposal. Due October 20 in class. (40 points)

Prepare a research proposal in which you (a) describe the environmental justice case study you plan to address in your research paper, (b) explain why you chose this case study, (c) identify five resources you will draw on in your research, and (d) briefly note what you find to be valuable about each of those resources. Your proposal should be 1-2 double spaced pages, coherently organized, proofread, typed in 12-point font, formatted with 1-inch margins and page numbers, and submitted in class on October 20. Before and/or after you submit your proposal, please come see me in office hours to discuss your research interests.

- b. Research Paper. Due December 8 in class. (160 points)

Write a research paper in which you (a) describe your environmental justice case study, (b) explicitly situate it in reference to the broader environmental justice movement, (c) identify and critically evaluate the notion(s) of justice evident in the case (drawing explicitly on one or more of the philosophical theories of justice that we have studied this semester: egalitarianism, marxism, recognition, participation, capabilities, utilitarianism, libertarianism, and communitarianism), and (d) use your findings to at least briefly comment on the arguments that Kristen Shrader-Frechette makes in her chapter, "Taking action: Public responsibility for environmental justice" (the reading assigned for December 8).

Your research paper must be 8-10 double spaced pages, coherently organized, proofread, typed in 12-point font, formatted with 1-inch margins and page numbers, and submitted in class on December 8. Within your essay, be sure to cite your sources using the following in-text citation format: (lecture 9/2/11) or (Smith 2007: 1). Also be sure to include a complete bibliography and use a standard citation format.

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

150 points	Participation
200 points	Reading Reflections (10 @ 20 points each)
300 points	Exam #1 (take-home; due Nov 8)
150 points	Exam #2 (take-home; due Dec 12)
40 points	Research Proposal (due Oct 20)
<u>160 points</u>	<u>Research Paper (due Dec 8)</u>
<i>1000 points total</i>	

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

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

COURSE POLICIES

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 and clarifications on specific points that you do not understand. I will not post or otherwise share my slides or lecture notes.

Punctuality: Please be sure to arrive at class on time. Come see me ASAP if you anticipate that you will regularly be late.

Late work: **I will not accept any late reading reflections.** All other written assignments (exams, research proposal, research paper) will be penalized 10% for each day that they are submitted late. Please save us both a lot of pain and suffering and turn your work in on time.

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.

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 papers or exams, you must: put your concerns into writing and make an appointment to see me in office hours.

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 do not allow their use in the classroom and require that they be stored out of sight during class. 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.

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. (C4C N200; www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices; 303/492-8671)

CU-Boulder Honor Code: The university has asked us to remind you that academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and you are encouraged 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.

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. 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. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. You can find information about the university's policies about classroom behavior here: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>.

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.

Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Written Work
8/23	Introduction to a Sociological Investigation of Environment and Justice		
8/25		Mills 1959 Muir 1998 (1901) Cronon 1998	RR1 due
8/30	Introducing Environmental Justice Movement and Scholarship	Bullard 1993 Cole and Foster 2001 (Ch. 1)	RR2 due
9/1	<i>Guest lecture: Professor Liam Downey</i>	Mohai, Pellow, and Roberts 2009 Downey 2005	
9/6		Szasz and Meuser 2000 Pellow 2004	RR3 due
9/8		Sze and London 2008	
9/13	Introduction to Political Philosophy	Swift 2001 (pp. 9-18) Kymlicka book Chs. 1 and 2	RR4 due
9/15	Egalitarianism and Distributive Justice	Kymlicka Ch. 3	
9/20		Swift 2001 (pp. 21-29, 91-93, 98-106) Sklar 1998	RR5 due
9/22		Cole and Foster 2001 (Ch. 3)	
9/27	Marxism	Kymlicka Ch. 5	RR6 due
9/29		Gould et al. 2004 Hooks and Smith 2004	
10/4	Recognition and Participation	Kymlicka book pp. 327-335 Young 1990 McIntosh 1988	RR7 due
10/6		Fraser 2000 Jaggar 2009	
10/11		Delegates... 2001 Bullard 2005 Pulido 2000	RR8 due
10/13		Romm 2002 Mills 2001	
10/18		Brown 2000	RR9 due
10/20		Faber 2008 Young 2001	Research Proposal due in class
10/25	Defining the 'Justice' of the EJ Movement	Schlosberg book pp. 3-41	
10/27		Schlosberg book pp. 45-99	RR10 due
11/1	Justice to Nature	Schlosberg book pp. 103-162	Distribute Exam #1 in class RR11 due
11/3		Schlosberg book pp. 165-212	
11/8	Utilitarianism	(Re-read Kymlicka book Ch. 2) Bryner 2002 Shrader-Frechette 2002a	Exam #1 due in class
11/10	Libertarianism	Kymlicka book Ch. 4	RR12 due
11/15		Cox 2007 Harrison 2011	
11/17		Szasz 2011	RR13 due
11/21-25	FALL BREAK		
11/29	Communitarianism	Kymlicka book Ch. 6	
12/1		Berry 2001 Guthman 2011	RR14 due
12/6	Institutionalizing Environmental Justice	Holifield 2004 US EPA 2011	
12/8	Wrap-Up (last day of class)	Shrader-Frechette 2002b	Research Paper due today in class Distribute Exam #2 in class
12/12	(no class)		Exam #2 due (in my office)

FULL LIST OF REQUIRED READINGS

- C. Wright Mills. [1959]. The sociological imagination. Reprinted in *The Meaning of Sociology*.
- John Muir. 1998 (1901). Selections from *Our National Parks*. In *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, ed. J. Baird Callicott and Michael P. Nelson. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- 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.
- Robert D. Bullard. 1993. Anatomy of environmental racism and the environmental justice movement. In *Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots*, ed. R.D. Bullard and B. Chavis. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, pp. 15-40.
- 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.
- Paul Mohai, David Pellow, and J. Timmons Roberts. 2009. Environmental justice. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 34: 405-430.
- Liam Downey. 2005. Assessing environmental inequality: How the conclusions we draw vary according to the definitions we employ. *Sociological Spectrum* 25: 349-369.
- Andrew Szasz and Michael Meuser. 2000. Unintended, inexorable: The production of environmental inequalities in Santa Clara County, California. *American Behavioral Scientist* 43(4): 602-632.
- David Pellow. 2004. The politics of illegal dumping: An environmental justice framework. *Qualitative Sociology* 27(4): 511-525.
- Julie Sze and Jonathan K. London. 2008. Environmental justice at the crossroads. *Sociology Compass* 2(4): 1331-1354.
- Adam Swift. 2001. Selections from *Political Philosophy: A Beginner's Guide for Students and Politicians*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Holly Sklar. 1998. Imagine a country. In *Race, Class and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, ed. Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 192-201.
- Luke Cole and Sheila Foster. 2001. Beyond the distributive paradigm. In *From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement*. New York: NYU Press.
- Kenneth A. Gould, David N. Pellow, and Allan Schnaiberg. 2004. Interrogating the treadmill of production: Everything you wanted to know about the treadmill but were afraid to ask. *Organization and Environment* 17(3): 296-316.
- Gregory Hooks and Chad L. Smith. 2004. The treadmill of destruction: National sacrifice areas and Native Americans. *American Sociological Review* 69(4): 558-575.
- Iris Marion Young. 1990. Selections from *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton University Press.
- Peggy McIntosh. 1988. White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. Wellesley College Center for Research on Women.
- Nancy Fraser. 2000. Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review* 3: 107-120.
- Alison M. Jaggar. 2009. *L'Imagination au pouvoir*: Comparing John Rawls's method of ideal theory with Iris Marion Young's method of critical theory. In *Dancing with Iris: The Philosophy of Iris Marion Young*, ed. Ann Ferguson and Mechthild Nagel. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 95-101.

- Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. 1991. Principles of environmental justice. <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>
- Robert D. Bullard. 2005. Neighborhoods 'zoned' for garbage. From *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*, ed. Robert D. Bullard. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- Laura Pulido. 2000. Rethinking environmental racism: White privilege and urban development in Southern California. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90 (1): 12-40.
- Jeff Romm. 2002. The coincidental order of environmental injustice. 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. 117-137.
- Charles W. Mills. 2001. Black trash. In *Faces of Environmental Racism: Confronting Issues of Global Justice*, Second Edition, ed. L. Westra, B.E. Lawson. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 73-91.
- 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.
- Daniel Faber. 2008. What does the future hold? The struggle for 'productive' environmental justice. From *Capitalizing on Environmental Injustice: The Polluter-Industrial Complex in the Age of Globalization*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 259-273.
- Iris M. Young. 2001. Activist challenges to deliberative democracy. *Political Theory* 29(5): 670-690.
- 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)
- Kristin Shrader-Frechette. 2002a. Utilitarian excuses for environmental injustice. From *Environmental Justice: Creating Equality, Reclaiming Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 15-18.
- 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.
- Jill Lindsey Harrison. 2011. Justice adrift in environmental politics. Draft paper in progress.
- Andrew Szasz. 2007. Selections from *Shopping Our Way to Safety: How We Changed from Protecting the Environment to Protecting Ourselves*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (pp. 1-8, 105-133, 194-222)
- Wendell Berry. 2001. The whole horse. From *The New Agrarianism: Land Culture, and the Community of Life*, ed. Eric T. Freyfogle. Washington, DC: Island Press, pp. 63-79.
- Julie Guthman. 2011. "If they only knew": The unbearable whiteness of alternative food. From *Cultivating Food Justice*, ed. Alison Hope Alkon and Julian Agyeman. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Ryan Holifield. 2004. Neoliberalism and environmental justice in the United States Environmental Protection Agency: Translating policy into managerial practice in hazardous waste remediation. *Geoforum* 35: 285-297.
- U.S. EPA. 2011. Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice. <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/interagency/index.html>
- Kristin Shrader-Frechette. 2002b. Taking action: Public responsibility for environmental justice. From *Environmental Justice: Creating Equality, Reclaiming Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 185-205.