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Provisional syllabus

Sustainability and Social Justice



Introduction

How is poverty related to population growth? Why have indigenous peoples been disproportionately affected by the nuclear industry? Why are women more likely than men to die in natural disasters? Is it true that rich white men are more sceptical of the existence of climate change than any other social group? Such questions highlight what scholars of environmental justice have known for decades: that all humans are not in the same boat when confronting the most pressing environmental problems of our time.

This seminar provides an interdisciplinary introduction to the complex inter-connections between social injustice/ inequality and environmental problems and, conversely, between the goals of sustainability and social justice. It examines a range of social-scientific approaches to understanding these connections and draws, in particular, on environmental justice literature written from feminist, post-colonial, political economy, and environmentalist perspectives. Social categories of class, race and gender, and unequal/unjust power relations between people, are placed at the centre of debate and provide a framework for critically analysing a range of environmental problems found in the EU and in different parts of the world. In all cases, the root causes of the problem and potential policy/political solutions for bringing about more just and sustainable outcomes are considered.

Aims and intended learning outcomes

- To provide an introduction to the complex inter-connections between social injustice and environmental problems.
- To cultivate critical skills needed to analyse the significance of social justice to a range of environmental events, issues, policies and debates, and in particular to the search for a more sustainable society.
- To enable you to apply appropriate theoretical frameworks and conceptual tools to the analysis of local and global environmental justice issues;
- To enable you to do independent research aimed at identifying causes of, and potential solutions to, socio-environmental justice problems.
- To enable you to practise skills in communicating 'evidence-based arguments' formed through research and critical analysis.

Format

The seminar consists of 9 two-hour seminars, which will typically be organised as follows: there will be a short mini-lecture providing issue overviews and frameworks for thinking about the main concepts and themes raised in the module syllabus and required readings. The mini-lecture will prompt collective discussion and debate and students' written commentaries (see below) will be used as a starting point.

Seminars will make use of different media (e.g., video and websites) where appropriate to demonstrate and illustrate how key concepts can be used to analyse and interpret environmental problems through an eco-social justice lens. It is hoped that we will strike a balance between looking at problems and debates from different academic perspectives and historical, socio-political and geopolitical contexts and interpreting them using personal insights and experiences.

The seminars form a crucial part of the seminar content and attendance must be treated as essential. The only way for you to acquire the information and discuss the ideas in the seminars is to attend them.

The content of the seminars will depend primarily on the discussion that takes place each day: truly inspiring academic discussions cannot and should not be determined by a seminar leader in advance. Therefore, there is no substitute for attending and making your own notes about the content of each seminar.

Reading list

The core text is:

Walker, Gordon (2012) *Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics*. London: Routledge.

Seminar 1: Introduction to the module

Agyeman, Julian and Bob Evans (2004). 'Just sustainability': the emerging discourse of environmental justice in Britain? *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 170(2):155–164.

Walker, Gordon (2011). Chapter 1: Understanding environmental justice, in *Environmental Justice* **[core text]**

Martinez-Alier, Joan (2002). Currents of environmentalism in *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*, pp. 1-15. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

1. Frames and claims: theoretical and empirical dimensions of environmental justice

Seminar 2: Theoretical foundations and frames

Walker, G. (2011). Chapter 2: Globalising and framing environmental justice.

Dobson, Andrew (2003). Social justice and environmental sustainability: Ne'er the twain shall meet? In Agyeman, Julian, Robert Bullard, and Bob Evans, Eds., *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World*, pp. 83-95. Boston, MA: The MIT Press.

Dower, Nigel (2004) Global economy, justice and sustainability. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 7: 399–415.

Schlosberg, David, (2007) Distribution and beyond: conceptions of justice in contemporary theory and practice, in *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature*, pp.11-41, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Young, Iris Marion (2009) Structural inequality and the politics of difference, in Grabham, E. et al. eds., *Intersectionality and Beyond : Law, Power and the Politics of Location*, pp.273-298, Abingdon,: Routledge-Cavendish.

Agyeman, Julian (2005). Just sustainability in theory, in *Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice*, pp.79-106. New York: New York University Press.

Seminar 3: Claims, evidence and action

Walker, G. (2011) Chapter 3: Making claims: justice, evidence and process.

Littig, Beate and Erich Griebler (2005). Social sustainability: a catchword between political pragmatism and social theory. *International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 8 (1/2): 65-79.

Laurent, Éloi. (2011). Issues in environmental justice within the European Union. *Ecological Economics* 70:1846–1853.

Schlosberg, David (2004). Reconceiving environmental justice: global movements and political theories *Environmental Politics*, 13 (3), Autumn: 517 – 540

Seminar 4: Environmental injustice: intersections of class, race and gender inequality

Newell, Peter (2005). Race, class, and the global politics of environmental inequality. *Global Environmental Politics*, 5(3): 70-94.

Di Chiro, Giovanna (2008). Living environmentalisms: coalition politics, social reproduction, and environmental justice. *Environmental Politics* 17(2): 276-298

Pellow, David (2007). Race, class, environment and resistance, in *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*, pp. 37-71. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Young, Iris Marion, (2009) Structural inequality and the politics of difference, in Grabham, E. et al. eds., *Intersectionality and Beyond : Law, Power and the Politics of Location*, pp.273-298, Abingdon,: Routledge-Cavendish.

Schlosberg, David and David Carruthers (2010). Indigenous struggles, environmental justice, and community capabilities, *Global Environmental Politics* 10(4), November: 12-35.

Seminar 5: Environmental injustice: temporal and spatial dimensions

Catney, Philip and Timothy Doyle (2011). The welfare of now and the green (post) politics of the future' *Critical Social Policy* 31(2): 174-93.

Buckingham, Susan and Rakibe Kulcur (2009). Gendered geographies of environmental justice. *Antipode* 41 (4): 659–683.

Page, Edward (2008). Distributing the burdens of climate change, *Environmental Politics*, 17 (4):556-575

2: Understanding environmental problems through a justice lens

Seminar 6: Problem focus: Pollution

Walker, G. (2011). Chapter 4: Locating waste and Chapter 5: Breathing unequally

Buckingham Hatfield Susan, Reeves D and Batchelor A (2005) Wasting women: the environmental justice of including women in municipal waste management, *Local Environment*, 10 (4): 427-444.

Dhillon, Christina and Michael G. Young (2010). Environmental racism and First Nations: a call for socially just public policy development. *Canadian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(1): 25-39.

Iles, Alistair (2004). Mapping environmental justice in technology flows: computer waste impacts in Asia *Global Environmental Politics*, 4(4), November: 76-107.

Pellow, David (2007). *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; see especially chapters 4, 5 and 6

Seminar 7: Problem focus: Resource extraction: human impacts and ecological debt

Goeminne, Gert and Erik Paredis (2010). The concept of ecological debt: some steps towards an enriched sustainability paradigm, *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 12:691–712

Tschakert, Petra (2009). Digging deep for justice: A Radical Re-imagination of the Artisanal Gold Mining Sector in Ghana *Antipode*, 41(4):706–740.

Sbicca, Joshua (2012). Elite and marginalised actors in toxic treadmills: challenging the power of the state, military, and economy, *Environmental Politics* 21(3): 467-485

El Jack, Amani (2007). Gendered implications of development-induced displacement in Sudan. In P. Vanderggest, P. Idahosa and P. S. Bose (Eds.) *Development's Displacements: Ecologies, Economies and Cultures at Risk*, 61-81. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Martinez-Alier, Joan (2002). *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Urkidi, Leire and Mariana Walter (2011), Dimensions of environmental justice in anti-gold mining movements in Latin America, *Geoforum* 42: 683–695

Schlosberg, David and David Carruthers (2010). Indigenous Struggles, Environmental Justice, and Community Capabilities, *Global Environmental Politics* 10(4), November: 12-35.

Seminar 8: Problem focus: Climate change and natural disasters

Walker, G. (2011). Chapter 6: Flood vulnerability and Chapter 8: Climate justice.

Johnson, Craig (2012). Governing climate displacement: the ethics and politics of human resettlement. *Environmental Politics* 21(2): 308-328.

MacGregor, Sherilyn (2010) A stranger silence still: The need for feminist social research on climate change. *Sociological Review* 57(2):124-40.

Parks, Bradley and J. Timmons Roberts (2006). Globalization, vulnerability to climate change, and perceived injustice, *Society and Natural Resources*, 19:337–355.

Neumayer, Eric and Thomas Plumper (2007). The gendered nature of natural disasters: the impact of catastrophic events on the gender gap in life expectancy, 1981–2002. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(3), 551–566.

Star, Cassandra (2004) Climate Justice Campaigns and Environmental Refugees. *Ecopolitics XV: Environmental Governance: Transforming Regions and Localities*, 12-14 Nov 2004, Macquarie University, Sydney.

Verchick, Robert (2008). Katrina, feminism and environmental justice. *Cardozo Journal of Law and Gender* 13 (79): 791-800.

Seminar 9: Problem focus: Access to and enjoyment of environmental goods

Walker, G. (2011). Chapter 7: Urban greenspace: distributing an environmental good.

Day, Rosie (2010). Environmental justice and older age: consideration of a qualitative neighbourhood-based study. *Environment and Planning A*, 42:2658-2673

Sister, Chona, Jennifer Wolch and John Wilson (2010) Got green? addressing environmental justice in park provision *GeoJournal*, 75:229–248.

Horberg, Claudi and Andrea Pauli (2007). Child poverty and environmental justice *International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health*, 210 (5): 571–580.

Thomas, G. and Thompson, G. (2004). 'A child's place: why environment matters to children' A Demos/Green Alliance Report. Available online at: <http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/uploadedFiles/Publications/A%20Childs%20Place%20Final%20Version.pdf>