

ENVR E - 145: Introduction to Environmental Justice

Course Meeting Time and Place

Tuesdays 7:35 – 9:35 pm Maxwell Dworkin G 125

Course Instructors

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Office Hours: Contact Penny Turner at penny_turner@harvard.edu to schedule an appointment.

Teaching Fellow

R. Criag Crouch

Course Background

This seminar will examine the interplay of race, socio-economic status, and interest group politics and the formulation and implementation of U.S. federal and state environmental policy. It will involve an interdisciplinary examination of some fundamental environmental problems faced by individuals and communities of color. In particular we will consider the proposition that people of color and socio-economically disadvantaged individuals, whether residing in urban or rural communities, bear a disproportionate burden of environmental pollution and its health consequences. Studies suggesting that people of color have environmental burdens imposed upon them unfairly due to over-siting of industrial plants and landfills in their communities and from exposures to pesticides and other toxic chemicals at home and on the job will be reviewed and analyzed. Consideration will be given to the viewpoint that there exists within the United States, as well as globally, a pattern of environmental inequity, injustice and racism. Furthermore, we will evaluate the contention that underlying this pattern is an historical failure on the part of interest groups, particularly the mainstream environmental movement, to provide a vision and strategy to address environmental racism and injustice.

Key topics to be considered during the semester include racism and social justice, environmental racism, pollution impacts and health effects in communities of color, risk assessment, community responses to environmental threats, pollution in developing nations, indigenous peoples, and climate change. We will review studies and analyses that document environmental injustice. The possible causes for patterns of injustice will be examined and discussed. Considerable attention will be paid to grassroots and community-based efforts to deal with environmental threats. Recent proposals to address the problem of environmental racism and injustice will be discussed and analyzed. Occasionally, community leaders, lawyers, organizers, academics, and government officials will join the class to discuss current issues and problems.

Required Texts

Available at the Coop

Cole, Luke and Sheila Foster, 2001 From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement. New York: New York University Press

Rechtschaffen, Clifford and Eileen Gauna, 2002 Environmental Justice: Law, Policy and Regulation, Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press

Vig, Norman and Michael Kraft, 2005 Environmental Policy: New Directions for the Twenty First Century (Sixth Edition). Washington, DC: CQ Press

Holt, Thomas C., 2002 The Problem of Race in the 21st Century. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Course Pack, ENVR E - 145 Introduction to: Environmental Justice

Week 1 Introduction to Environmental Justice

**Tuesday, January 30, 2007
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Historical Background to Environmental Justice
- Definitions and Principles of Environmental Justice

Required Readings

- **Rechtschaffen and Gauna, Environmental Justice: Law, Policy and Regulations**
 - Chapter I: Overview of the Environmental Justice Movement
- **Cole and Foster, From the Ground Up**
 - Introduction
 - Chapter 1: A History of the Environmental Justice Movement
- Foreman, The Concept of Environmental Justice,
- Agyeman, Just Sustainabilities, pp.1-38

Week 2 Background on Environmental Policy

**Tuesday, February 6
7:30pm-9:30pm**

- Overview of Environmental Policy
- Introduction to Environmental Policy-making

Required Readings

- **Vig and Kraft, Environmental Policy**
 - Chapter 1: Environmental Policy from the 1970s to the Twenty-First Century
 - Chapter 2: Power to the States: The Promise and Pitfalls of Decentralization
- **Rosenbaum, Walter. Environmental Politics and Policy, Chapters 2 and 3**

Week 3 Race, and the Evolution of E.J. Movement

**Tuesday, February 13
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Background on Racism in America
- Racial Discrimination in American Society and Responses
- U.S. Civil Rights Movement and its Legacy

Required Readings

- **Holt, The Problem of Race in the 21st Century**
 - Read the whole book
- **Course Packet**
 - Wilkins, David B., "Introduction: The Context of Race" in Color Conscious, K. Anthony Appiah and Amy Gutmann
 - Lawrence, Charles R., III "The ID, Ego and Equal Protection: Reckoning With Unconscious Racism," Vol., 39, No. 2 Stanford Law Review (1987)
 - Mendieta, Eduardo. 2000. "The Making of New Peoples: Hispanizing Race" in Hispanics/Latinos in the United States. Jorge Gracia and Pablo De Greif, editors. New York: Routledge

- Marable, Manning, “The Paradox of Integration: Black Society and Politics in the Past: Reform Period, 1982-1990” in Race, Reform, and Rebellion, Manny Marable

Suggested Additional Readings on Race, Racism, and Social Justice

- Marable, Manning 1991 Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945-1990 (Second Edition). Pp 185-230 (Chapters 8 & 9)
- Hacker, Andrew. Two Nations (Part I), pp 35-55
- Feagin, Joe R., Fighting White Racism. Samuel Myers, editor
- Bell, Derrick, Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism, pp. 1-14
- Omi and Winant, Racial Formation in United States. Pp 9-23 and pp. 48-75

Week 4 Environmental Policy-Making and Environmental Justice
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**Tuesday, February 20
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- U.S. Environmental Regulation and Enforcement: Overview of Structure
- Review of Selected Environmental Policy Issues
- Issues in Risk-Based Decision-making

Required Readings

- **Rechtschaffen and Gauna, Environmental Justice: Law, Policy and Regulations**
 - Chapter IV: Risk Assessment
 - Chapter V: The Dynamics of Federal Environmental Regulation
 - Chapter VI: Standard Setting
- **Course Packet**
 - Nichols, “Risk-Based Priorities and Environmental Justice” in Finkel and Golding, eds., Worst Things First? The Debate Over Risk-Based Environmental Priorities
 - Russell and Gruber, “Risk Assessment in Environmental Policy-Making”. Science Vol. 236, pp. 286-290 (1987)
 - Rosenbaum, Environmental Politics and Policy, Chapter 4

Suggested Additional Readings

- **Vig and Kraft, Environmental Policy**
 - Chapter 10: Risk-Based Decision Making

Week 5 Mainstream Environmental Organizations and Their Critics

**Tuesday, February 27
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- The Mainstream Groups
- “The Death of Environmentalism”
- The current mainstream movement and EJ

Required Readings

- **Vig and Kraft, Environmental Policy**
 - Chapter 4: Maintaining Presence: Environmental Advocacy and the Permanent Campaign
- **Grist Magazine’s Special Series on “The Death of Environmentalism” (see handout for pages)**
 - **Available on the web at:** <http://www.grist.org/news/maindish/2005/01/13/doe-intro/>
 - “The Death of Environmentalism” by Michael Schellenberger and Ted Norhaus

- Selections from the rebuttals, interviews, commentaries, speeches, and critiques (see handout for details)

Suggested Additional Readings on Mainstream Groups

- Gottlieb, Robert. “Something in the Wind: Radiation, Pesticides, and Air Pollution” in American Environmental History, Chapter 9, pp. 244-270
- Gottlieb, Robert. 1993 Forcing the Spring: The transformation of the American environmental movement. Chapter 4.
- Warren, Louis S., “National Park and the Trouble with Wilderness” in American Environmental History, Chapter 8, Pp. 212-243

Week 6 Toxic Waste, Unequal Protection & Facility Siting

**Tuesday, March 6
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Toxic Wastes & Race
- Racism and the disproportionate siting of polluting facilities in Communities of Color

Required Readings

- **Rechtschaffen and Gauna**
 - Chapter VIII : Facility Permitting
- **Course Packet**
 - Goldman and Futton, “Toxic Wastes and Race Revisited”
 - Bryant, Bunyan. 2003. “Henry Ford Medical Waste Incinerator: A Case Study” in Environmental Advocacy, Chapter 6
 - Faber Report

Week 7 Unequal Protection: Is Environmental Racism The Reason?

**Tuesday, March 13
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Issues of Objectivity
- Debates about Research Methodologies, science, and the use of quantitative tools
- Intent
- Equal Protection
- Market Forces

Required Readings

- **Rechtschaffen and Gauna**
 - Chapter II : Theories of Causation
 - Chapter III : The Evidence
- **Cole and Foster**
 - Chapter 2: The Political Economy of Environmental Racism: Chester Residents Concerned for Quality of Life
 - Chapter 3: Environmental Racism: Beyond the Distributive Paradigm
 - Chapter 4: Buttonwillow
 - Chapter 5: Processes of Struggle

Week 8 Community Responses to Environmental Threats

**Tuesday, March 20
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Litigation
- The Civil Rights Act – Title VI
- Community Organizing and Activism

- **Rechtschaffen and Gauna**
 - Chapter X : Litigation as a Response
 - Chapter XIV : Enforcement of the Civil Rights Act as a Response
 - Only Sections A, B, and C (pp 351-369)

Week 9 Environmental Justice Issues in Native American Communities

**Tuesday, April 3
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Natural Resource Damage
- Pollution and Health Consequences

Required Readings

- **Cole and Foster, pp. 134-150**
 - Chapter 6: In Defense of Mother Earth: The Indigenous Environmental Network
- **Course Packet**
 - Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, Executive Order 13084 63 Fed. Reg 27655
 - National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee, Fish Consumption and Environmental Justice, November 2002 (revised) pp. 1-20, 128-139
- **Rechtschaffen and Gauna**
 - Chapter XVI : Native American Issues

Suggested Additional Reading on Native American Issues

- Royster, Judith. “Native American Law” in The Law of Environmental Justice. Michael Gerrard (ed.)

Week 10 EJ Issues in Native American Communities and Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**Tuesday, April 10
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Resource Exploitation and Challenge to Traditional Cultures
- Hydro Quebec and James Bay

Required Readings

- **Course Packet**
 - Cultures in Conflict, Hydro Quebec Case Study
 - Oran Young, Introduction to Issues in Social and Environmental Impacts of the James Bay Hydroelectric Project, edited by James Hormig

Week 11 Global Issues I: Resource Exploitation, Indigenous Peoples, and Development

**Tuesday, April 17
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Resource Exploitation Issues and International Corporations
- International Organizations and Impacts on Indigenous Cultures
- Development and Developing Nations

Required Readings

- **Course Packet**
 - Conoco Case Study
 - Doyle, Timothy. 2005 Environmental Movements In Majority And Minority Worlds. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
 - Chapter 1: “Introduction to Environmental Movements”
 - Chapter 3: “Movements Against Mining: Environmental Movements in the Philippines”
 - Chapter 6: “River Movements: Environmental Movements in India”
 - Agyeman, et al Just Sustainabilities, Chapter 13, pp. 269-288

Week 12 Global Issues II: Climate Change
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**Tuesday, April 24
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

- Climate Change
- Environmental Justice Implications
- Possible Solutions and Environmental Justice

Required Readings

- **Vig and Kraft**
 - Chapter 13: Climate Policy on the Installment Plan
- **The New Yorker’s three part series on Climate Change – Available through Lexis-Nexis**
 - Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2005. “The Climate of Man – I: Disappearing Islands, Thawing Permafrost, Melting Polar Ice. How the Earth is Changing.” The New Yorker. April 25, 2005. Pg 56.
 - Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2005. “The Climate of Man – II: The Curse of Akkad.” The New Yorker. May 2, 2005. Pg 64.
 - Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2005. “The Climate of Man – III: What Can Be Done?” The New Yorker. May 9, 2005. Pg 52.

Weeks 13, 14 & 15 Student Presentations

**Tuesday, May 1
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

**Tuesday, May 8
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

Final Presentations

- **Presentation Schedule To Be Announced**

**Tuesday, May 15
7:30pm – 9:30 pm**

Final Papers/Projects

11/17/06