

University of California, Santa Cruz
ENVS 147 -- Environmental Inequality, Environmental Justice
Summer Session, 2016
Professor Andrew Szasz

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The concepts of “environmental racism” or “environmental justice” arose from a specific struggle by a community of African-Americans resisting the siting of a hazardous waste landfill in their community. From its beginnings as an innovative fusion of environmental activism and black Civil Rights, the concept of environmental racism has continued to grow and expand. It soon embraced the experience of other racial and ethnic minorities in the United States, Native Americans, latinos and others. Expanding the concept further, the “environmental inequalities” perspective came to encompass gender and class dimensions, as well. The concept can be expanded fruitfully in both space and time: Environmental inequalities exist not only in the United States; all over the world, social and environmental inequalities are inseparable facets of a single process. Environmental inequality not only pervades contemporary society; at its very origins, modern society was made possible by acts of combined social and environmental injustices. In this course, we study “environmental inequalities” in this deep, structural sense.

THREE TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN THE COURSE

Environmental Inequalities – Research
Environmental Inequalities at the foundation of Modernity
Environmental Justice in the context of the American environmental movement

REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Read required readings in a timely manner. All readings are posted on eCommons.
- 2) Regular attendance at lecture is required. Attendance will be taken. 2 points per session.
- 3) Midterm exam #1. 25 points.
- 4) Midterm exam #2. 25 points.
- 5) Final exam. 30 points.

Each day of class is divided into three periods or parts:

- (a) 9:00 to 10:00
- (b) 10:15 to 11:15
- (c) 11:30 to 12:30

Important dates:

- Midterm #1 – Tuesday, August 9th
- Midterm #2 – Tuesday, August 16th
- Final exam – Thursday, August 25th

SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS, READINGS

Session 1, Tuesday, July 26

Topics: Introduction to the course; the start of the environmental justice movement;
Social Inequalities -- class; race/ethnicity; how they interact; overview of EJ research

Readings:

Geiser and Waneck, "PCBs and Warren County," *Science for the People*, 15(4):13-17, 1983.

Saez, "US class inequality 2015" (look at the graphs in the back)

Norton/Arieli, "Actual vs Ideal Wealth Distribution" (here, too, the graphs)

Brown, "Divergent Fates: The Foundations of Durable Racial Inequality, 1940-2013"

Szasz and Meuser, "Environmental Inequalities: Literature Review and Proposals for New Directions in Research and Theory," *Current Sociology*, 45(3):99-120, 1997.

Session 2, Thursday, July 28

Topic: Environmental Inequalities "where we live"

Readings:

Engels, Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844, "The Great Towns," pp. 68-110.

Szasz, Shopping Our Way to Safety, chapter 2.

Hurley, "The Social Biases of Environmental Change in Gary, Indiana, 1945-1980." *Environmental Review*, 12(4): 1-19, 1988.

Szasz and Meuser, "Unintended; Inexorable: The Production of Environmental Inequalities in Santa Clara County, CA," *American Behavioral Scientist* 43(4):602-632, 2000.

Session 3, Tuesday, August 2

Topic: Environmental Inequalities “where we work”

Readings:

Marx, Capital, Volume 1, pp. 238-263.

Davidson, Peril on the Job, pp. 1-41.

Wright, "The Effects of Occupational Injury, Illness, and Disease on the Health Status of Black Americans: A Review"

Randall and Short, "Women in Toxic Work Environments: A case Study of Social Problem Development," *Social Problems*, 30(4):410-424, 1983.

Moses, "Farmworkers and Pesticides," Chapter 10 (pp. 161-178) in Robert D. Bullard, Confronting Environmental Racism.

Hall, “Impacts of the Energy Industry on the Navajo and Hopi,” pp. 130-154 in Robert D. Bullard, Confronting Environmental Racism.

Session 4, Thursday, August 4

Topic: Environmental Inequalities: The state of current research; new directions in EJ research

Readings:

Logan, “The Impact of Katrina: Race and Class in Storm-Damaged Neighborhoods”

Kates, “Reconstruction of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina: A research perspective”

Rice, “The Transnational Organization of Production and Uneven Environmental Degradation ...”

Roberts and Parks, “Ecologically Unequal Exchange, Ecological Debt, and Climate Justice: The History and Implications of Three Related Ideas for a New Social Movement”

Session 5, Tuesday, August 9

*** Midterm #1 [first hour] ***

Topic: Environmental inequalities a fundamental feature of Modernity

Reading:

Polanyi, The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of Our Time, Chapters 3-6, pp. 33-76.

Session 6, Thursday, August 11

Topic: Environmental inequalities a fundamental feature of Modernity (cont)

Readings:

* recall Marx on the working day, Engels on the early industrial city

Crosby, "Ecological Imperialism: The Overseas Migration of Western Europeans as a Biological Phenomenon," pp. 103-117 in Worster, The Ends of the Earth: Perspectives on modern environmental history.

Cronon, Changes in the Land, pp. 54-107

Weiskel, "Toward an Archaeology of Colonialism: Elements in the Ecological Transformation of the Ivory Coast," pp. 141-171 in Worster, The Ends of the Earth: Perspectives on modern environmental history.

Session 7, Tuesday, August 16

*** Midterm #2 [first hour] ***

Topic: EJ perspective on the history of the American Environmental Movement, Period 1

Readings:

Statements by Frederick Law Olmstead, Theodore Roosevelt, Guifford Pinchot, John Muir, in Merchant, pp. 384-385, 319-321, 328-330, 356-358.

Nash, on "wilderness," in Merchant, pp. 365-372.

Fox, The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy, pp 272-290

Darnovsky, "Stories Less Told: histories of US environmentalism," *Socialist Review* (92/4), v. 22, # 4, October/December, 1992, pp. 11-54.

Gottlieb, "Reconstructing Environmentalism: Complex Movements, Diverse Roots," *Environmental History Review*, Winter, 1993, pp. 1-19.

Session 8, Thursday, August 18

Topic: EJ perspective on the history of the American Environmental Movement, Period 2

Readings:

Rachel Carson, selection from Silent Spring, Merchant, pp. 437-440

Szasz, "Corporations, Organized Crime and the Disposal of Hazardous Waste: An Examination of the Making of a Criminogenic Regulatory Structure,"

Szasz, EcoPopulism, pp. 23-27 (in Chapter 2), Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Session 9, Tuesday, August 23

Topic: EJ perspective on the history of the American Environmental Movement, Period 3

Readings:

Szasz, EcoPopulism, Chapters 3, 4, 8

Citizens' Clearinghouse on Hazardous Waste, Empowering Ourselves, pp. 4-6, 25-34.

Hamilton, "Women, Home and Community...", *Race, Poverty and the Environment*, 1(1):3, 10-13.

Hamilton, "Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles," pp. 207-219 in Robert D. Bullard, ed., Unequal Protection.

Gutierrez, "Mothers of East Los Angeles Strike Back," pp. 220-233 in Robert D. Bullard, ed., Unequal Protection.

Session 10, Thursday, August 25

*** Final Exam ***

Students with Disabilities: If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of classes. Contact DRC at [831-459-2089](tel:831-459-2089) or at drc@ucsc.edu for more information.

Please Note: I considered any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating on exams or plagiarizing from the Web in your paper, a serious violation of the University's norms of conduct. Students who plagiarize or cheat on exams receive an F in the course and will be reported to their College Provost for further sanctions.