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# Geography 430-900

## Environmental Justice

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Instructor: Dr. W. Jepson  
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Office: CSA 201C  
Office Hours: T 1-2:30pm;  
R 8-9:30am  
TR 9:35 – 10:50pm  
CSA 302

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### Course Description

Communities of color and working-class communities bear a disproportionate impact and cost of environmental hazards where they work, live and play. A history of unequal protection, often based on the spatial configurations of communities, proximity to unwanted hazards, and narrow definitions of “nature” in broader environmental movements, has contributed to the systematic exposure and marginalization of these communities. This course will explore the concepts of environmental justice and racism in terms of major debates about environmental quality, poverty, race and social justice in domestic and international contexts. We examine four themes in depth: Vulnerability and Disasters, Toxic Trading and Waste, Water, and Climate

This is an advanced course and writing-intensive course (W). You are expected to read the course material according to the schedule. Your classroom participation depends on your work outside of class.

Prerequisite: Geography 201 or 202; Junior or senior classification

### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define “environmental justice”
- Describe the history and development of the environmental justice movement and scholarship
- Identify the major social, economic and political processes through which communities of color and working-class communities bear a disproportionate impact and cost of environmental hazards where they work, live and play
- Evaluate an environmental problem from the perspective of environmental justice
- Evaluate the means by which different groups assess, measure, and base claims of environmental justice

### Required Books & Materials

- Bakker, K. J. (2010). *Privatizing water: governance failure and the world's urban water crisis*. Cornell University Press.
- Barlow, M. 2007. *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water* New York: The New Press
- Cole, Luke W., and Sheila R. Foster. 2001. *From The Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement*. New York: New York University Press
- Walker, Gordon (2011) *Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics* (New York: Routledge)
- Articles available on E-Learning
- Documentaries available on Media Matrix (*Flow, A Village Called Versailles*)

You are not obligated to purchase these items at the MSC Bookstore; they are also available online and at other retailers.

Course blog: <http://geog430.wordpress.com>

### Student Assessment & Assignment Policies

Letter grades will follow approximately the following scheme: A for 100-90% total points; B 89-80%; C 79-65%; D 64-50%; F below 50%.

Attendance is required. Grading rubrics will be provided to students in class. Please be aware: Students cannot receive W credit for this course without a passing grade on the writing component, no matter how the points are distributed.

**Students will be evaluated on the following activities**

(1) **Literature Review** (20%) (1500-2500 words)

- Writing Workshop – Writing in the Discipline, **22 January 2013**
- Draft 1 Due **14 February 2013** (feedback on 21 February 2013)
- Writing Workshop – Revision, 28 February 2013
- Final Draft Due **19 March 2013** [Graded]

(2) **Reflection Essays** (20%) (500-750 words each)

You will be assigned two reflection essays during the course of the semester. A reflection essay draws on topics in reading, class discussions, and/or films. For example, an essay may respond to a question such as “How do communities self-organize to address perceived environmental justice? Are they effective?” The goal is to develop an argument and use class material to support your answer.

You will post the essay on the course blog. Please the instructor and class know you posted the essay in an email.

You will be given feedback on the *first reflection essay*. You will have the option to revise and repost for a higher grade one week from receipt of instructor feedback. Posts after that time will be given a final grade. You will not have the option to revise and repost for the *second essay*.

***You must post at least one reflection essay before Spring Break (8 March 2013)***

(3) **Op-Ed** (20%) (500 words) on KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

- Writing Workshop, **12 February 2013**
- Draft 1 Due **2 April 2013** (feedback on 7 April 2013)
- Final Due **23 April 2013** [Graded]

(4) **Participation** (20%), including, but not limited to

- Attendance (unexcused absences will result in ½ downgrade for final mark)
- Comments on Course Blog
- Additions to Course Blog (including appropriate links, photos, videos, etc)
- Class Preparation and Discussion
- Leading Discussion – one time this semester you will lead discussion, prepare discussion questions, and develop a list of key words (this will be distributed to all the students during class)

(5) **Final Exam** (20%) \*\*\***3 MAY 2013 12:30-2:30**\*\*\*

The final exam is a comprehensive assessment of the course material. It is an essay exam. You will need a 2 “blue books”.

**EXTRA CREDIT** – You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit in this class by designing a *student-led film series on environmental justice* to be held in the College of Geosciences and open to the TAMU public. If you are interested, you will have to let me know by the Week 3 so I can provide you with the instructions and framework. If you decide to earn extra credit, it will be worth **up to 10% of your final grade**.

## Course Policies

In addition to normal high standards of courtesy and respect expected in any university classroom, please take note of the following:

**1. Scholastic Dishonesty.** The Aggie Code of Honor is simple: “Aggies do not lie, cheat, or steal, nor do they tolerate those who do.” Instances of scholastic dishonesty will be treated in accordance with Section 20 of the TAMU Student Rules. Please inform yourself on the student rules regarding cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information, conspiracy at the new website:

<http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>.

**2. Grade Disclosure.** All personal information concerning your performance in this course is covered by federal privacy legislation, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). No grades or status questions will be provided by telephone or email. You are welcome to come to office hours to discuss your grade and performance.

**3. ADA Statement.** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 126 of the Koldus Building, or call 845-1637.

**4. Due Dates.** All assignments are to be submitted before or at the beginning of class on the specified due date. NO EXCEPTIONS, unless there is a University excused absence. Please see Student Rules (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm>). **Late assignments will be downgraded ¼ grade for each day overdue. If you do not turn in W-Assignments or they are late, your final paper will be downgraded.**

**5. Email.** Email communications must meet the same standards as the written assignments in this course. I expect proper salutations and signatures (emails without identifiable information will be deleted). ***Please use GEOG 430 in the subject line of the email.***

**6. Absence.** This class follows University policy regarding excused absences. For more information, please see Section 7 of the student rules: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu>.

## Key Student Resources

- Writing Center
- Office Hours
- E-Learning
- Media Matrix
- Librarian

*Please note: Dr. Jepson reserves the right to modify the syllabus content, readings, and schedule of topics*

# COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1	Assignment
1/15	<b>Environmental Justice: An Introduction</b>
1/17	<b>What is Environmental Justice?</b> Figueroa, Robert, and Claudia Mills (2003). Environmental Justice. In <i>A Companion to Environmental Philosophy</i> , edited by D. Jamieson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers) Merchant, C. (2003). "Shades of darkness: race and environmental history." <i>Environmental History</i> 8(3). Walker, Gordon (2011) <i>Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics</i> (New York: Routledge), Chapter 1  For more background you may read: Mohai, P., Pellow, D., & Roberts, J. T. (2009). Environmental justice. <i>Annual Review of Environment and Resources</i> , 34, 405-430.
Week 2	
1/22	<b>Writing Workshop</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Writing a in the Discipline: Literature Review</i></li></ul>
1/24	<b>Justice, Evidence, and Process</b> Hartley, Troy W. (2003) Environmental justice: an environmental civil rights value acceptable to all worldviews. In <i>Environmental Ethics: An Anthology</i> , edited by A. Light and H. Rolston III. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers) Nussbaum, Martha (2011) <i>Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach</i> (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press) (17-68) Walker, Gordon (2011) <i>Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics</i> (New York: Routledge), pp. 37-53.
Week 3	
1/29	<b>Justice, Evidence and Process</b> Corburn, Jason. 2005. <i>Street Science: Community Knowledge and Environmental Health Justice</i> . MA: MIT Press (Chapter 1 and 2) Walker, Gordon (2011) <i>Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics</i> (New York: Routledge), pp. 53-76.
1/31	<b>Environmental Justice - History in the US</b> Cole, Luke W., and Sheila R. Foster. 2001. <i>From The Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement</i> . New York: New York University Press, Chapter 1, 2, and 3
Week 4	
2/7	<b>Environmental Justice –History in the US</b> Cole, Luke W., and Sheila R. Foster. 2001. <i>From The Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement</i> . New York: New York University Press (103-165) Schlosberg, D., & Carruthers, D. (2010). Indigenous struggles, environmental justice, and community capabilities. <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> , 10(4), 12-35.
2/5	<b>Globalizing Environmental Justice</b> Low, Nicholas, and Brendan Gleeson (1998) <i>Justice, Society and Nature: An Exploration of Political Ecology</i> . London: Routledge (Chapter 8) Walker, Gordon (2011) <i>Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics</i> (New York: Routledge), Chapter 2

**Week 5**

2/12	<b>Vulnerability and Disasters</b> <i>Deep in the Bowl</i> . (2011). <i>Harper's Magazine</i> , 323(1936), 42-50. Walker, Gordon (2011) <i>Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics</i> (New York: Routledge), Chapter 6 Cutter, S. L. (2005) The geography of social vulnerability: Race, class, and catastrophe. <i>Understanding Katrina: Perspectives from the social sciences</i> . Maantay, J., & Maroko, A. (2009). Mapping urban risk: Flood hazards, race, & environmental justice in New York. <i>Applied Geography</i> , 29(1), 111-124.	<b>Literature Review Due (Version 1)</b>  Word file uploaded to E-Learning before class.
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2/14 **Writing Workshop – Writing an Op-Ed**

- *Knowing your facts*
- *Forming your ideas*
- *Writing Rhetoric (with Style)*

**Week 6**

2/19	<b>Vulnerability and Disasters</b> Allen, B. L. (2007). Environmental justice and expert knowledge in the wake of a disaster. <i>Social studies of science</i> , 37(1), 103-110. Davis, M. (2006) "Who is Killing New Orleans?" <i>New Left Review</i> Godsil, R., A. Huang & G. Solomon (2009) "Contaminant in the air and soil in New Orleans after the Flood" In Bullard and Wright (eds) <i>Race, Place, and Environmental Justice After Hurricane Katrina: Struggles to Reclaim, Rebuild, and Revitalize New Orleans and the Gulf Coast</i> , Chapter 5. Pastor et al (2006) Environment, Disaster, and Race After Katrina. <i>Environment</i> (Summer), 21-26	
2/21	<b>Vulnerability and Disasters</b> <b>FILM - A Village Called Versailles (in-class viewing)</b> Karen J. Leong, Christopher A. Airriess, Wei Li, Angela Chia-Chen Chen, and Verna M. Keith (2009) Resilient History and the Rebuilding of a Community: The Vietnamese American Community in New Orleans <i>East Journal of American History</i> 94(3)	

**Week 7**

2/26	<b>Vulnerability and Disasters</b> <b>FILM - A Village Called Versailles (in-class viewing with discussion)</b>	
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2/28 **Writing Workshop – Revising Work****Week 8**

3/5	<b>Toxic Waste Dumping and Trading Garbage</b>  <i>Go online, search for "toxic trading" and then report back what you have found What are the definitions, in terms groups, agencies, organizations etc? How does this link back to our discussion of "global environmental justice"?</i>	<b>FINAL LITERATURE REVIEW DUE</b>  Word file uploaded to E-Learning before class.
3/7	<b>Toxic Waste Dumping and Trading Garbage</b> Walker, Gordon (2011) <i>Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics</i> (New York: Routledge), Chapter 4	

**Week 9 SPRING BREAK**

*NO CLASS*

## Week 10

- 3/19 **Toxic Waste Dumping and Trading Garbage**  
Lepawsky, J., & McNabb, C. (2009). Mapping international flows of electronic waste. *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe canadien*, 54(2), 177-195.  
Pellow, D. (2007) *Resisting Global Toxics* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press) (Chapter 6 “Electronic Waste: the Clean Industry Exports its Trash”)
- 3/21 **Toxic Waste Dumping and Trading Garbage**  
Pellow, D. (2007) *Resisting Global Toxics* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press) (Chapter 4 “The Global Village Dump”)

## Week 11

- 3/26 **Water Justice**  
Barlow, M. 2009. *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water* New York: The New Press (1-101)  
  
*Go online, search for “water justice” and then report back what you have found. What are the definitions, in terms groups, agencies, organizations etc? How does this link back to our discussion of “justice”?*
- 3/28 **Water Justice**  
Barlow, M. 2009. *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water* New York: The New Press (102-176)  
Vanderwarker, A. (2012). Water and Environmental Justice. *A Twenty-First Century US Water Policy*.
- Op-Ed (Version 1) Due**  
Word file uploaded to E-Learning before class.

## Week 12

- 4/2 **Water Justice**  
Bakker, K. J. (2010). *Privatizing water: governance failure and the world's urban water crisis*. Cornell University Press. (Chapters 1, 2 ,3)
- 4/4 **Water Justice**  
Gleick, P. H. (1998). The human right to water. *Water Policy*, 1(5), 487-503.  
Sultana, F and Loftus, A. (2012) “The right to water: prospects and possibilities” in *The Right to Water* (New York: Earthscan), 1-18  
Linton, J. (2012) “The human right to what? Water rights, humans, and the relation of things” in *The Right to Water* (New York: Earthscan), 45-60)

## Week 13

- 4/9 **Water Justice**  
Gelles, P. (2010) “Cultural identity and indigenous water rights in the Andean Highlands” in *Out of the Mainstream. Water Rights, Politics and Identity*, Rutgerd Boelens, David Getches and Armando Guevara-Gil (editors), 119-144  
Bustamante, R. et al. (2012) “Seeing through the concept of water as a human right in Bolivia” In Sultana and Loftus (eds.) *The Right to Water: Politics, Governance, and Social Struggles* (New York: Earthscan), 223-240.
- 4/11 **Water Justice**  
Bakker, K. J. (2010). *Privatizing water: governance failure and the world's urban water crisis*. Cornell University Press. (Chapters 5, 6)  
Woodhouse, M., & Langford, M. (2009). Crossfire: There is no human right to water for livelihoods. *Waterlines*, 28(1), 5-12.

## Week 14

4/16

### Climate Justice

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Clare Palmer, Department of Philosophy

Adger, W. et al (2006) "Toward Justice in Adaptation to Climate Change" in Adger, W. N., Paavola, J., Huq, S., & Mace, M. J. (Eds.). (2006). *Fairness in adaptation to climate change*. (Cambridge: MIT press).

Gardiner, S. M. (2011). Climate justice. *The Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*, 309.

Go online, search for "climate justice" - What are the definitions, in terms groups, agencies, organizations etc? How does this link back to our discussion of "justice"?

4/18

### Climate Justice

*Environmental Justice* (2009) 2 (4) Special Issue: Climate Justice

Read Introduction and Guest Editorial; selection one paper, prepare a summary to discuss in class

## Week 15

4/23

### KEYSTONE XL OP-ED Debate and Discussion

**FINAL OP-ED DUE**

**Final version posted on the blog before class.**

Word file (including references) uploaded to E-Learning before class.

4/25

### Climate Justice

Blackstock, J. J., & Long, J. C. (2010). The politics of geoengineering. *Science*, 327(5965), 527-527.

Robock, A. (2008). 20 reasons why geoengineering may be a bad idea. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 14-18

Corner, A., & Pidgeon, N. (2010). Geoengineering the climate: the social and ethical implications. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 52(1), 24-37.

Jean Buck, H. (2012). Geoengineering: Remaking Climate for Profit or Humanitarian Intervention?. *Development and Change*, 43(1), 253-270.

## Week 16

4/30

### Review for Final Exam

Walker, Gordon (2011) *Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics* (New York: Routledge), Chapter 9