

HC 315 Race, Place and Space: Environmental Justice in the Twentieth Century

Winter 2003
Naperville Campus
Saturday, 9-12 PM

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Textbooks :

From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement by Luke W. Cole and Sheila R. Foster (editors)

Faces of Environmental Racism, Confronting Issues of Global Justice 2nd Edition by Laura Westra and Bill E. Lawson (editors).

Course Description: In the United States during the early 1980s the modern Environmental Justice Movement emerged primarily from the national environmental protests of southern African American communities, their civil rights leaders and their churches who perceived and successfully articulated that the places in which they lived were being environmentally degraded disproportionately as a function of race. As the Environmental Justice movement developed it became clearer through numerous studies by private and public institutions like the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the United Church of Christ that the environmental spaces of people of color and poor people (regardless of race) were in fact being used by the larger community (or society at large) as the sinks for toxic, hazardous and non-toxic wastes at a rate which was six to five times larger than the percentage of minority group representation in society. The injustice of these policies would be reflected in the dire health consequences faced by individuals occupying these polluted communities: cancer, miscarriages and developmental disorders. As time progressed it became clear that this was a world wide phenomena where countries of color and poor countries were being disproportionately used as the primary geographic places for toxic waste export from Western countries.

This course will provide a survey of historical and contemporary forces (social, cultural, technological, scientific and economic) which have led to the global emergence of environmental inequalities in societies during the last century. This course will also show how the environmental ethics of a society (national and international) as well as their notions of who belongs to the larger body politic have contributed to environmental inequalities in national and international geographic spaces. This course is an excellent elective for business, education, religion, sociology/anthropology and science/engineering focus area who seek to understand the foundations and ramifications of human ethics, values and culture on decisions and policies which impact the global environment (or ecosystems).

Vincentian Values: This course will promote the Vincentian values of the DePaul Community **which seeks to ennoble the God-given dignity of each person.** This religious personalism is manifested by the members of the DePaul community in a sensitivity to and care for the needs of each other and of those served, with a special concern for the deprived members of society. DePaul University emphasizes the development of a full range of human capabilities and appreciation of higher education as a means to engaged cultural, social, religious, and ethical values in service to others.

Faculty: Dr. Washington is an environmental scholar with over 20 years of combined experience as an environmental scientist, engineer and historian. Dr. Washington spent the first 10 years as an environmental chemist and engineer in corporate America and with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) implementing and reviewing environmental policies and regulations which had a direct impact on human health and ecosystems. Dr. Washington's doctoral work in environmental history and environmental health focused on the history and current public health ramifications of environmental inequalities on marginalized communities as a function of race, gender and class. She is a nationally recognized environmental justice historian who is currently preparing her first environmental justice

monograph for publication.

Competencies: A3F, S3E, H4, H5 & FX.

Reflection and Meaning, A3F: Can compare two or more philosophical perspectives on the relationship of the individual to the community.

Science, Technology and Society, S3E: Can describe how scientific or technological knowledge affects perspectives on the relationships between humans and nature.

Power and Justice, H4: Can analyze power relations among racial, social, cultural or economic groups in the United States.

Globalization, H5: Can analyze issues and problems from a global perspective.

Environmental Studies, FX: Can understand and explain the interdisciplinary nature of environmental issues and problems in contemporary society.

Learning Experience and Course Evaluation

Students will be evaluated by an environmental justice project, project presentation, a final paper (10 pages) and class participation. Students will have the opportunity to examine and reflect upon one of two environmental justice projects/problems that are taking place in Chicago from any two of the above competencies. In examining their environmental justice problem students must demonstrate an understanding of the underlying technical and scientific principles or activities which produced and or ameliorated involved in these problems. Students must comply with the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Environmental Justice Project (30%): The nature of the student project for this course will vary and could be the development of a history of a particular environmental justice struggle, the development of resource material for an environmental justice group, or assisting in the development of an environmental justice website for an environmental justice group in Chicago. All projects must be approved by the professor by the fourth week of the semester. Students will be expected to keep a journal of all their project activities which will be reviewed every two weeks by the instructor. At the end of the course the journal will contain internet as well as traditional based research material about their selected problem; interviews or assessment statements. The log book will count for 30% of the course. All relevant competencies should be identified in the journal and should be reflected in this work: A3F, S3E, H4, H5 & FX.

Environmental Justice Project Presentation (30%): Students (a maximum of 4 presenters) are expected to make a 20 to 30 minute presentation to the class which describes their environmental justice project from their selected competency areas: A3F, S3E, H4, H5 & FX.

Environmental Justice Project Paper (30%): Each student is required to write a paper which summarizes their environmental justice project. The paper should be written from the perspectives of the student's competencies that were selected for the course and the journal. The paper should be no more than 10 pages (doubled spaced, 12 point font) in length not including title page, notes or bibliography. The paper can be written in APA or Chicago Manual of Style format. At least 5 references are needed from the paper and they can be drawn from the project log. All selected competencies for the course should be reflected in this work. *Students are expected to adhere to the University's policy on plagiarism.*

Class Participation (10%): Students are expected to attend every class session and should notify the instructor when they are unable to attend the course. Class participation will be evaluated by weekly in-class essays or reflection papers that should be written from the perspective of at least two of the course competencies (A3C, A4, S3C, S4 & FX). Each essay will count for 1% of the grade.

Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are therefore detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. All members of the university community share the responsibility for creating conditions where violations of academic integrity are curtailed. In particular:

Students must abstain from any violations of academic integrity and set examples for each other by assuming full responsibility for their academic and personal development, including informing themselves about and following the university's academic policy.

Violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution.

Cheating is any action that violates university norms or instructor's guidelines for the preparation and submission of assignments. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized access to examination materials prior to the examination itself; use or possession of unauthorized materials during the examination or quiz; having someone take an examination in one's place; copying from another student; unauthorized assistance to another student; or acceptance of such assistance.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a. The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgment that it is someone else's.
- b. Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgment.
- c. Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- d. The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion. Actions taken by the instructor do not preclude the college or the university from taking further punitive action including dismissal from the university.

Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct is any action that deliberately undermines the free exchange of ideas in the classroom or threatens the impartial evaluation of the students by the instructors or advisor. This includes but is not limited to attempts to bribe an instructor or advisor for academic advantage, and persistent hostile treatment of, or any act or threat of violence against, an instructor, advisor or other students.

Course Schedule

January 3: Environmental Justice Defined.

Cole and Foster, *Introduction* and Westra and Lawson, *Chapter 2 Environmental Justice, A National Priority.*

January 10: A History of the Environmental Justice Movement in 20th Century America. Cole and Foster, *Chapter 1, A History of the Environmental Justice Movement.* Westra and Lawson, Chpts. 3, *Living for the City: Urban United States and Environmental Justice.*

January 17: A History of Global Environmental Justice Movements in the 20th Century
Cole and Foster, *Chapter 6, In Defense of Mother Earth: The Indigenous Environmental Network*. Westra and Lawson, *Chapter 10, Multinational Corporations, Developed Nations, and Environmental Racism: Toxic Waste, Oil Exploration and Eco-Catastrophe*.

January 24: Ethics of Environmental Justice
Film: *We All Live Downstream (28:50) & Class Discussion*
Laura Westra and Bill Lawson, *Introduction, Chapter 4, Just Garbage and Chapter 5, Black Trash*.

January 31: Politics of Environmental Justice.
Cole and Foster, *Chapter Two, The Political Economy of Environmental Racism*. Westra and Lawson, *Chapter 1, Decision Making*.
Environmental Justice Journals Due!

February 7: Health/Medical Ramifications of Environmental Justice Struggles.
Guest Lecture/EJ Field Trip, TBA (To Be Announced).

February 14: Community Responses to Environmental Racism
Cole and Foster *Chapter 5, Processes of Struggle: Grassroots Resistance and the Structure of Environmental Decision Making*.
Environmental Justice Journals Due!

February 21: Case Studies in Environmental Justice
Guest Lecture/ EJ Field Trip, TBA. Cole and Foster, *Chapter Four, Buttonwillow: Resistance and the Structure of Environmental Decision Making*. Westra and Lawson, *Chapter 6, Africville*.

February 28: Environmental Justice Project Presentations.
Environmental Justice Journals Due!

March 6: Environmental Justice Project Presentations

March 13: Final Papers Due and Final Environmental Journals Due!