A MESSAGE FROM ASA ETS SECTION CHAIR

Hello, I hope your Fall Semester is off to a great start. It was wonderful to see so many of you at the annual meetings in Seattle. It was an honor to organize our section’s panels and roundtables. You all do such incredible and important research. I’d like to thank Stephanie Malin (Section Treasurer), who worked behind the scenes to make our section reception such a success, and Brian Mayer (Section Secretary) for keeping us all on task! I’d also like to thank Kenneth Gould for his great leadership as chair this past year as well as all the hard work that our current and former council members have done and are continuing to do.

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Message from ETS Chair (cont’d)

I’d also like to offer a sincere thanks to Jordan Fox Besek and Jennifer Reed, who organized the section’s first mentoring program this year, which matched graduate students with faculty mentors from other institutions. The mentoring program was a great success and will hopefully become one of our section’s annual activities.

Our community is vibrant and the work being done by section members is making significant contributions to our field as well as the discipline more broadly. We have a strong sense of collegiality, and I believe many other ASA sections are envious of how supportive and welcoming we tend to be of one another. I’m especially excited about all of the work being done by student members. With all of you, the future of environmental sociology is very bright!

I’d like to take this opportunity to briefly update you on a few section-related activities and topics.

First, Joshua Sbicca (Teaching and Outreach Committee Chair) has been working with student section member Nathan Lindstedt on a major overhaul of our section’s webpage. Nathan is incredibly skilled with web design (Joshua is very skilled as well!), and we are so grateful for their efforts. You will be hearing more about this from Joshua and Nathan as things progress.

Second, with the great support of council, I am working closely with a group of section members (including current and former council members) to form a new section committee on diversity and inclusion. While our section membership and leadership have become more diverse in recent years, especially in terms of gender diversity and diversity in the work being done and the methods being used, our section still lacks racial and ethnic diversity. This critically important issue has been raised by many section members, including multiple section members that contacted me after the Seattle meetings, and it is my hope that we can work in creative and productive ways to make our section more welcoming to Scholars of Color. Within the next month you will hear much more about this new committee and what some of the initial plans will be. If any of you are interested in being a part of such efforts, please contact me.

Third, I want to explore additional ways in which we as a community can recognize the contributions that many of you make to broader multidisciplinary areas of research and scholarship on various socioenvironmental relationships. I have some tentative ideas about this that I hope to share with you all very soon.

Fourth, I want to encourage you all to use the listserv more often to promote your work and the work being done by other environmental sociologists. If anyone is uncomfortable with sending out an email to the section about a new publication (etc.), please feel free to contact me and I’ll happily do it for you. This is such a great way to keep each other updated on all the excellent work being done by section members.

In closing, I look forward to serving as Section Chair this year. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have ideas or suggestions for things I and the council members can do to further improve and enhance our section.

I wish you all the very best as autumn turns to winter.

Sincerely,

Andrew Jorgenson
Chair, Section on Environment and Technology
Professor of Sociology and Environmental Studies,
Boston College
email: jorgenan@bc.edu

FEATURE ESSAY

Getting Toward Climate Justice in the Classroom

John Foran,
University of California, Santa Barbara

“Climate justice” has many definitions. My teaching and scholarship center around enabling meaningful action and empowerment vis-à-vis the looming catastrophe of climate change, including fighting for the most progressive possible global climate treaty, building the strongest possible global climate/social justice movements, and through both of these channels, contributing to the creation of a low-carbon, sustainable, equitable, and deeply democratic future. I believe that if we are to inhabit a livable world in coming years, the climate justice movement must become the biggest social movement the world has ever seen. Enabling

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Climate Justice in the Classroom (cont’d)

and nurturing our students’ engagement with the existential challenge and “wicked” problem of climate change should be a paramount goal of our work – it is in their hands we are placing the future of the planet.

Teachers are not born. We learn to teach. This is the story of how I learned to teach. I’ve taught at the University of California, Santa Barbara since 1989 and in that time gone from a newly minted Ph.D. to the top of the professor scale. It took me about five years to learn that the lecture was not the best way to teach, and it’s taken over twenty more years of continuous practice and reflection to do my best teaching, with hopefully more and better to come. From that early eureka moment it was but a short step to making my classes primarily interactive, starting with putting my neatly written lectures into the course reader where students could really take their time with them and freeing up all that class time for more meaningful discussions of many kinds.

This came about because I had the opportunity to be involved with a Pew Faculty Teaching project on the case method of learning at Harvard in 1994, and soon was working this innovative pedagogy into my classes, which have grown in recent years to average 80-150 students in size. The case method is a student-centered, highly interactive pedagogy which changes the classroom process into a collective search for an analysis and/or solution to a specific problem based on a “case” – a text that provides information about a situation, without analyzing it. The job of the students, with the professor, is to fashion solutions to the problem through a process of dialogue. The goals of the method include the development of critical thinking skills, learning through decision making and role playing situations, developing confidence in defining, confronting, analyzing, and solving problems through interactive discussions, and exercising and developing skills in public speaking and group problem solving.

I believe the case method can play a constructive role in creating a more democratic culture, in which citizens are prepared to consider and debate various alternatives to their problems. I have tried to nurture and develop this pedagogy by introducing it into the social sciences. In the late 1990s, ten graduate students and I wrote cases for classroom use, posted for general use on a website at UCSB, http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/projects/casemethod/. One of my projects for the next couple of years is to do a website of cases on climate and environmental justice [ETS section members, take note, and please contact me if you are interested].

Learning is also about doing. So my students in Sociology 108G: Methods and Research in Global and International Sociology, learn methods and apply them in group projects on topics they choose (in which environment, social movements, and inequality are the three broad areas to choose from). These research papers often run to 50 pages and involve formal fifteen-minute group presentations in the last two weeks of class, just like at an academic association meeting. These projects are uniformly exciting and give the students a capstone experience of doing sociology. They learn how to effectively present their work (and they do so creatively and with all the technology at their disposal) to an audience. And they see the value of collaborative work when the results are exponentially better than anyone could have achieved on their own. Those who start out dreading group projects typically come around to valuing them, and all take this experience out with them into the world after UCSB.

Learning is not about taking tests. I’ve never used a bluebook, a multiple choice test, or a short answer quiz. All my students’ papers (there are always at least 15-20 pages of writing in my classes, of various kinds) are written at home, with all materials available, and brightly polished before handing in. Well-written, original arguments, solidly documented, are the norm. Students usually have a choice of assignments, and can schedule much of their own writing over the course of a quarter. This empowers them to take charge of their evaluation process, and it yields much better papers for my TAs and me to read and offer our comments, including writing corrections and advice for improvement on their next paper.

In sociology, the subject matter is the world. Tongue only partly in cheek, my students are treated to this definition of sociology on the first day of class: “Sociology is … the study of everything!” So we study big issues and raise hard questions: how are societies structured, and how do they change? Can revolutions and other movements for radical social change

Continued on page 4
Climate Justice in the Classroom (cont’d)

transform the world for the better? Are there ways for a poor country to provide for its citizens to the living standards of a rich country? (the answer is yes). What would a binding, just, and ambitious global climate treaty look like, and how could it be negotiated at a U.N. climate summit? What should the diverse movements and organizations in the climate justice movement do in order to be more effective, on local, national, and global scales? What kind of world would you like to live in in 2050, and how would we get there?

Two collaborative and rather intensive techniques for getting at these questions include role play and the art form known as pecha kucha. The most extensive role-play I have done is in my course, “Earth in Crisis,” where students play out the attempt to negotiate a global climate treaty. For the past four fall terms, we have devoted two full weeks to this (the same length of time a UN climate summit lasts), with teams of three playing key countries in the negotiations or social movement/civil society groups who attend as observers and sometimes trouble-makers. While the countries engage in detailed negotiations, the civil society groups plan demonstrations and other actions designed to bring pressure on the negotiators. Things get even more interesting when in the two weeks after we finish, I attend the actual summit we have been role-playing, and Skype back with the class about what is happening there. Students can then compare their effort with the actual outcome in a final paper. Guess whose negotiations always seem to turn out better?

The pecha kucha [http://www.pechakucha.org/] is a story-telling art form in which the narrator gets to show twenty slides for twenty seconds each while telling the story. This past spring I used it in place of the role play, assigning groups of five students to develop a pecha kucha on themes relevant to the two classes — “Climate Justice” and “The World in 2050: Sustainable Development and Its Alternatives.” We devoted the last two weeks of each class to these presentations, which could either be made live or presented as a video. To help the students understand both what the genre was and to give them an idea of how to do this in a masterful way, I showed them the pecha kucha, “Not Yet the End of the World,” made by former TA and now postdoc, Summer Gray, which I recommend to anyone interested in this story telling format:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8dTFgRAjGA

In all of my academic and community work and interactions I aim to nurture and contribute to an authentic culture of inclusivity that seeks and prizes diversity of experience, belief, and thought. For me, teaching and learning are a never-ending, ever challenging, journey of discovery — of the world and of ourselves — usually enjoyable, often emotional, full of hope and humor, and sometimes, tears, but always a joint creation.

May your own teaching and other adventures bend the arc of social justice toward the world we dream of …

* * *

Please feel free to follow up on anything mentioned here that you are interested in knowing more about or anything you’d like to share with me by e-mailing John Foran at foran@soc.ucsb.edu

Additional Note: The Climate Justice Project

Launched in August 2013, this began as a group of eight UCSB-affiliated individuals, including three undergraduates and two graduate students. Seven of us attended the UN climate talks in Warsaw, Poland, in 2013, leading to an e-book, co-edited by Corrie Ellis, Summer Gray, and myself, that was launched with a press conference at COP 20 in Lima in December 2014: At the COP: Global Climate Justice Youth Speak Out [https://climatejusticeproject.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/foran-ellis-and-gray-2014-at-the-cop.pdf].

A team of eight made it to the COP 21 in Paris. Our recent writing can be found at a new website we are in the process of constructing: http://www.climatejusticeproject.org/mission/

SECTION NEWS

ETS Section Distinguish Scholars at SESYNC

In January 2016, five Environment and Technology Section members (pictured below) were invited as Distinguished Scholars to participate in the National Science Foundation Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) Immersion Workshop for sociology. The Distinguished Scholars—Riley Dunlap, Dana Fisher, Andrew Jorgenson, Lori Peek, and Tom Rudel—met at the SESYNC offices at the University of Maryland to
ETS Distinguished Scholars at SESYNC (cont’d)

present to and interact with about two dozen post-doctoral scholars from different disciplines and from across the United States. They offered presentations on theories and methods used in sociology to study socio-environmental questions and systems. Over the course of the first two days, each scholar presented two lectures on their area of expertise, and participants were given time to reflect upon and further discuss the content of the presentations in small group discussions and informal conversation during the second half of the workshop. Scholars focused their presentations on several approaches and methodologies used in environmental sociology, and specific applications in their own work, and situated this knowledge within the broader field of sociology.

Dr. Lori Peek, Associate Professor of Sociology at Colorado State University began the presentation by providing an overview of the focus, history, and approach of sociological inquiry. On the second day of the workshop, her presentation focused on sociological theories of disaster and vulnerability. Dr. Tom Rudel, Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Human Ecology at Rutgers University lectured on classical sociological theorists, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. In his next presentation, he discussed two examples of the use of spatial methods to understand difference and stratification in human impacts on the landscape. Dr. Andrew Jorgenson, Professor of Sociology and Environmental Studies at Boston College [and current Chair of the ASA ETS Section] followed with a discussion of methodological tools used in sociological research. His second presentation focused on comparative international work that looks at patterns in environmental change, development, and globalization. Next, the workshop participants heard from Dr. Riley Dunlap, Regents Professor of Sociology at Oklahoma State University, who presented the history and early development of environmental sociology. In his second lecture, he expanded this discussion by offering a summary of the attitudes and beliefs on behaviors that reflect environmental concern. Dr. Dana Fisher, Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland provided an overview of the conceptual and methodological approaches used by sociologists to study civil society and social movements. She also presented on theoretical distinction between environmental sociology and the environmental state. And finally, a collaborative presentation on contemporary sociological theory was led by Dr. Simone Pulver, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at UC Santa Barbara and a SESYNC program leader, and her co-presenters, Dr. Lori Peek, Dr. Dana Fisher, Dr. Andrew Jorgenson, and Dr. Kristal Jones, a SESYNC research scientist. Dr. Heather Randell, who received her PhD in sociology from Brown University and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at SESYNC, and Anya Galli, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology Program on Society and the Environment at the University of Maryland, were participants in the Immersion Program. They contributed as well their perspectives and knowledge as sociologists working on issues ranging from the impact of environmental change on human migration and household wellbeing to civil society engagement with climate and environmental movements and organizations.

An edited video recording of each lecture, along with a written summary of the lecture contents, an associated reading list, and the scholar’s slides is available at: [http://www.sesync.org/events-announcements/immersion-sociology](http://www.sesync.org/events-announcements/immersion-sociology).

The image on page 6 includes the sociologists at January 2016 SESYNC.

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CALLS

Environmental Sociology Special Issue

Find below a call for proposals for a special issue of Environmental Sociology, which will be guest edited by Stephanie A. Malin, Ph.D and Stacia S. Ryder, MA both of Colorado State University.

Background

Environmental sociologists have found that environmental risks are inequitably distributed within and between communities in the U.S. and internationally, where locally-undesirable land uses (LULUs) (Freudenburg 1993) concentrate among under-served and marginalized populations (see Bell and York 2010; Brown 2007; Mohai, Roberts, and Pellow 2009; Pellow 2001, 2002, 2012). Environmental Justice (EJ) scholars analyze the ways in which social inequalities link with environmental inequalities (Brulle and Pellow 2006; Bullard 1994, 2005), and pay increasing attention to dynamics like procedural equity in processes such as land use decision-making (Lake 1996; Sze and London 2008; Malin 2015). Scholars define EJ in a few ways, including: feeling safe “where we live, work, and play” (Taylor 2000); the equitable distribution of environmental benefits, risks, and hazards across society (Bullard 1994; Lake 1996; Schlosberg 2004); or even the rebuilding of our political-economic system to drastically reduce environmental ‘bads’ throughout society (Faber 2008).

EJ scholars have long articulated that environmental inequalities result from complex causal webs, experienced in multiple ways from various social positions. Access to environmental goods – and exposure to environmental bads – can often be affected by an array of social variables, including race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic class, age, nationality, geographic location, legal status, and structural political-economic contexts. In other words, instances of environmental injustice and people’s daily experiences with them are likely shaped and structured by multiple intersecting variables.

While recent work has examined EJ’s relationships to long-term processes such as land use decision-making (Sze and London 2008; Malin 2015) and more rigorous attempts to represent multiple notions of EJ (Schlosberg 2013; Harrison 2014), the field would benefit from more systematic theory-building. Further, while EJ research and researchers now include a wider variety of international perspectives, even more space should be created for analyses from the Global South and Indigenous communities. We propose that intersectionality may provide the tools to strengthen and create more space for these areas of EJ research – while recognizing the need to interrogate the very utility of intersectionality in this context. This Special Issue provides the long-overdue space for such an exploration.

Indeed, intersectionality may provide a useful frame through which to analyze EJ communities, activism, and various global iterations of environmental injustice, experienced through multiple social variables across time. But even this remains to be seen. There are internal contradictions to the theoretical application of intersectionality, which calls for scholars to recognize diversity while simultaneously utilizing homogeneous categories to draw generalized conclusions about experiences of oppression. The robust application of intersectionality to EJ research thus depends on a critical evaluation – both theoretically and practically – of the utility of intersectionality to analyze and advance EJ research.

Details

We suggest that innovative applications of intersectionality may provide promising toolkits to advance the

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Environmental Sociology Special Issue (cont’d)

field of EJ research, adding analytical robustness that until now has been lacking. Of course, a few important exceptions exist, including Krauss’ work (1993), where she examines various ways in which intersecting social identities affect women’s EJ activism. Yet, more systematic connections are needed. The field requires richer and more varied applications of intersectionality to determine its utility in EJ contexts, especially assessing its effectiveness and flexibility across geographical and social spaces. A critical question becomes: Are concepts of intersectionality themselves rigorous enough, clear enough, to be given this large theoretical responsibility, specifically in EJ research? If so, what do they begin to show us about layers of environmental injustice in marginalized spaces? Or about environmental injustices emerging in surprising ways?

Intersectional theorists frequently argue that “interlocking structures of oppression” work simultaneously and impact people differently based on several facets of their identity, most notably race, gender, and class (Collins 1993 p. 26, Crenshaw 2006). Geographic positionality is an additional imperative factor in evaluating spatial inequalities, or the unequal distribution of the costs and benefits of the relationship between society and the environment. On global, national, and local levels, resource access, allocation, dialogue, management, ownership, and control have historically been dominated by a relatively narrow segment of society possessing the desired suite of social identifiers: white, wealthy, heteronormative men from the urban Global North. Furthermore, this is often at the expense of others. EJ scholars have shown us how environmental hazards are habitually pushed to society’s margins, affecting the most vulnerable people and communities ‘first and worst’. Yet, these two deeply connected observations have yet to be systematically linked or theoretically tested by social scientists. Consequently, there is much more to critically analyze at the convergence of multiple forms of identity, lived experiences, intersecting structures of oppression, and subjugated knowledge in the context of environmental injustice.

To build and advance intersectionality and theories of EJ, we propose a Special Issue that examines intersectional approaches to environmental justice — that is, an issue dedicated to developing theoretical and empirical tools to measure the extent to which ‘interlocking systems of oppression’ shape EJ experiences. We aim for this special issue to present varied perspectives of the multiple ways people experience environmental injustice – from the Global South, from rural communities, from sacrifice zones, and from other marginalized and invisible spaces and social positions. We want authors to explore how environmental inequality manifests across and within stratified populations, across continents, nations, states, cities, cultures, times, and intersecting identities across social scales.

This issue aims to address the lack of intersectional approaches to EJ, while simultaneously creating space for a critical appraisal of intersectionality’s utility in this context. Manuscripts may focus on: 1) critical analyses of applying intersectional theory or methodology to EJ issues and cases; 2) analyses of intersecting “systems of oppression” and their relationships to empirical environmental injustices in the following contexts: natural or technological disaster; sustainable development programs; extraction; energy development; agriculture; waste storage; industrial production; or environmental governance; OR 3) intersecting forms of structural inequality, such as community-level natural resource dependence, that may create or exacerbate environmental injustice in relation to long-term land use decisions.

For example, you may want to analyze the multiple forms of marginalization related to extractive industries like mining. Often, these extractive industries are located in rural, persistently poor communities that are constrained to continue pursuing ‘boom-bust’ prone economic development strategies. Individual-level traits like race, class, and gender further shape and refine the micro-level experiences of environmental injustices in extractive communities. Yet the EJ implications remain under-analyzed, as do advancements in EJ theory and application of intersectionality.

Submission Dates

Open call deadline: October 21
Decisions sent to authors: November 4
Full papers due & submitted to Environmental Sociology: February 1 2017
R1s due to Environmental Sociology: June 2017
R2s due to Environmental Sociology: October 2017
Publication Date: First half of 2018

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Environmental Sociology Special Issue (cont’d)

Submissions and Questions
All submissions and questions should be directed to Stephanie.Malin@colostate.edu and Stacia.S.Ryder@gmail.com

Society & Natural Resources Call for Nominations: 2016 Outstanding Article Award

Society & Natural Resources is pleased to call for nominations for the 2nd annual Rabel J. Burdge and Donald R. Field Outstanding Article Award, for best general research article published in Volume 29 (2016) of the journal. The author(s) of the award-winning article will receive a US $500 cash prize, sponsored by the journal’s publisher, Taylor & Francis, and will be recognized at the 2017 International Symposium on Society and Resource Management (ISSRM) in Umeå, Sweden; and through the journal and related websites.

Criteria: The award will be presented to the author(s) of a general research article published in Volume 29 (2016) of Society & Natural Resources that, in the judgement of the selection committee, makes an outstanding contribution to the advancement of scholarship on society and natural resources. Selection criteria include:

- Innovative and interesting topic
- Meaningful contribution to the study of society and natural resources
- Engagement with prior scholarship
- Quality of conceptual development
- Solid, well-articulated methodology and effective use of evidence, as applicable
- Coherent and persuasive argument
- Clarity and general excellence in writing

Preference will be given to an article that promises to be influential over time.

Deadline: Letters of nomination must be received by November 15, 2016.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Strangers in their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right.


Strangers in Their Own Land describes how it could be that Louisiana --- one of the most polluted states in the nation, the site of the PB oil spill, a coastal state highly subject to global warming-linked storm— could be planning to vote Trump who plans to abolish the EPA.

Arlie Russell Hochschild is Professor Emerita, Sociology at the University of California, Berkley. She is the author of nine books, three of which have been named as New York Times Notable Books of the Year and her work appears in sixteen languages.

Disasters, Risks and Revelation: Making Sense of Our Times


We live in disastrous times, where disasters are increasing in frequency, scale, cost and severity. They are part of the modern condition, a source of physical anxiety and of existential angst. Paradoxically, at the height of their necessity, disaster scholars find themselves on the intellectual periphery. In particular, they cite a lack of adequate theory for their marginality. This book seeks to address this, bringing together disaster research and social theory to offer a critical

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Disasters, Risks and Revelation (cont’d)

examination of disasters, their causes, consequences and future avoidance. Matthewman gives particular emphasis to those novel forms of risk that arise from unprecedented levels of interconnectivity and the complexity of our socio-technical arrangements. There is a long-held notion in social theory that life only reveals itself in moments of rupture. This book argues that disasters reveal three things: who we are, what is wrong with our systems, and what we can do about this.

Steve Matthewman is Associate Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Auckland, New Zealand. He is an established writer and co-editor, and has over 12 years' experience teaching introductory level sociology courses across various institutions in New Zealand.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters


Continued on page 10


MEMBER NEWS

Lori Peek

Dr. Lori Peek has been appointed as the new Director of the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado Boulder. Here is a link to the announcement: https://hazards.colorado.edu/article/our-next-director-lori.peek-chosen-to-lead-natural-hazards-center

Many congratulations to Dr. Lori Peek!

Riley E. Dunlap, Aaron M. McCright & Jerrod H. Yarosh

A study authored by Dr. Riley E. Dunlap, Dr. Aaron M. McCright & Dr. Jerrod H. Yarosh (2016) has been cited in a feature essay published in the The Guardian newspaper. This further highlights the continuing public influence of research conducted by ASA ETS members.

Many Congratulations Dr. Riley E. Dunlap, Dr. Aaron M. McCright & Dr. Jerrod H. Yarosh!
PRESERVING THE MOMENTS: ETS ANNUAL CONFERENCE IMAGES

ETS 40th Anniversary Cake from the Section Reception in Seattle

Kevin Smiley receiving the Marvin E. Olsen Student Paper Award from Stephanie Malin and Ken Gould for his study titled, “Race and Air Quality in Urban America: How Metropolitan Contexts Condition Environmental Risk.” L-R: Kevin Smiley, Stephanie Malin (ETS Treasurer), and Kenneth Gould (Past-Chair of ETS)

Congratulations, Kevin Smiley!

Liam Downey, Bob Brulle and Riley Dunlap receiving the Allan Schnaiberg Outstanding Publication Award with Ken Gould. Liam’s publication is titled “Inequality, Democracy, and the Environment” and Bob and Riley’s publication is titled, “Climate Change and Society: Sociological Perspectives.” L-R (Front): Liam Downey, Bob Brulle and Riley E. Dunlap. In the back: Kenneth Gould.

Congratulations to Liam Downey, Bob Brulle and Riley E. Dunlap!

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Preserving the Moments (cont’d)

Beth Caniglia, presenting at the Presidential Panel on Climate Change during the 111th Meeting of the ASA in Seattle.

Congratulations, Dr. Beth Caniglia

Lauren Contorno, doctoral student at Northeastern University, receives Brent K. Marshall Award for best paper from Environment and Technology Division of SSSP for her study titled, “Turtles & Teamsters Revival? Analyzing Labor Unions’ Environmental Discourse from the 2014 People’s Climate March”

Congratulations, Lauren Contorno!