

# ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY NEWS

Newsletter of the American Sociological Association's  
Section on Environmental Sociology

October 2019

## Section Committee

### Officers

**Chair (2019-2020):**  
Jill Harrison [jill.harrison@colorado.edu](mailto:jill.harrison@colorado.edu)

**Chair-Elect (2019-2020):**  
Rachael Shwom [shwomrac@sebs.rutgers.edu](mailto:shwomrac@sebs.rutgers.edu)

**Past-Chair (2019-2020):**  
Kari Marie Norgaard [norgaard@uoregon.edu](mailto:norgaard@uoregon.edu)

**Secretary (2018-2021):**  
Hannah Holleman [hannahsfarm@gmail.com](mailto:hannahsfarm@gmail.com)

**Treasurer (2017-2020):**  
Lori Hunter [lori.hunter@colorado.edu](mailto:lori.hunter@colorado.edu)

### Council

**Chair of Nominations Committee (2018-2020):**  
Tracy Perkins [tracy.perkins@howard.edu](mailto:tracy.perkins@howard.edu)

**Chair of Policy and Research Committee (2018-2020):**  
John Zinda [jaz65@cornell.edu](mailto:jaz65@cornell.edu)

**Chair of Publications Committee (2018-2020):**  
Joshua Sbicca [j.sbicca@colostate.edu](mailto:j.sbicca@colostate.edu)

**Chair of Membership Committee (2019-2021):**  
Raoul Liévanos [raoull@uoregon.edu](mailto:raoull@uoregon.edu)

**Chair of Teaching and Outreach Committee (2019-2020):**  
Janet Lorenzen [jlorenze@willamette.edu](mailto:jlorenze@willamette.edu)

**Digital Communications Committee (2018-2020)**  
Co-Chairs: Nathan Lindstedt [nathan.lindstedt@wsu.edu](mailto:nathan.lindstedt@wsu.edu)  
Justin Sean Myers [justinmyers@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:justinmyers@mail.fresnostate.edu)

**Council Member at-Large (2018-2020):**  
Emily Huddart Kennedy [emily.kennedy@ubc.ca](mailto:emily.kennedy@ubc.ca)

**Student Representative (2018-2020):**  
Apollonya Maria Porcelli [apollonya\\_porcelli@brown.edu](mailto:apollonya_porcelli@brown.edu)

### Award Committees Chairs

**Chair of Allan Schnaiberg Outstanding Publication Committee:**  
John Zinda [jaz65@cornell.edu](mailto:jaz65@cornell.edu)

**Chair of Marvin Olsen Student Paper Certificate Committee:**  
John Zinda [jaz65@cornell.edu](mailto:jaz65@cornell.edu)

**Chair of Fred Buttel Distinguished Contribution Award Committee:**  
Tammy Lewis [TLewis@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:TLewis@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

**Chair of Teaching and Outreach Award Committee:**  
Erica Morrell [erica.c.morrell@gmail.com](mailto:erica.c.morrell@gmail.com)

**Chair of Robert Boguslaw Award for Technology and Humanism:**  
Jill Harrison [jill.harrison@colorado.edu](mailto:jill.harrison@colorado.edu)

### Communications

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Lazarus Adua [lazarus.adua@soc.utah.edu](mailto:lazarus.adua@soc.utah.edu)

**Website Manager:**  
Nathan Lindstedt [nathan.lindstedt@wsu.edu](mailto:nathan.lindstedt@wsu.edu)

**Listserv Manager:**  
Jean Boucher [jlb964@gmail.com](mailto:jlb964@gmail.com)

**Social Media:**  
Justin Myers [justinmyers@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:justinmyers@mail.fresnostate.edu)

**Section Website:**  
<http://www.envirosoc.org/wordpress/>

**Section Listserv:**  
[envirosoc@listserv.neu.edu](mailto:envirosoc@listserv.neu.edu)

**Grad Listserv:**  
[envirograds@listserv.neu.edu](mailto:envirograds@listserv.neu.edu)

**Facebook:**  
[facebook.com/EnviroSocASA/](https://www.facebook.com/EnviroSocASA/)

**Twitter:**  
[@EnviroSocASA](https://twitter.com/EnviroSocASA) & [@envirograds](https://twitter.com/envirograds)

## SECTION CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I am honored to be writing as the new Chair of the Environmental Sociology section of ASA. The annual meeting in New York feels so long ago – trees are changing color here, and I am busy with teaching and administrative work (including scheduling courses for next summer, believe it or not!). But before we move fully into fall, I want to report back about the ASA meetings and share with you all some things that council has been working on.



*Continued on page 2*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### MESSAGE

1 From Section Chair, Update Pg. 1

### FEATURE ARTICLES

2 Confronting White Space & Ignorance, Pg. 3

3 Mentorship in the Section & Beyond, Pg. 6

4 A More Inclusive, Collaborative & Rhizomatic Sociology, Pg. 8

5 Youth Climate Activism & U.S. Politics, Pg. 9

6 Research & Policy Note on Flood Management, Pg. 11

7 Building Relationships & Reciprocity in Research, Pg. 12

### CALLS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

8 Call for Syllabi, Pg. 13

9 Call for Papers: Special Issue of Sustainability, Pg. 14

10 Abstracts, World Congress of Rural Sociology, Pg. 14

11 Climate Module for Introduction to Sociology, Pg. 15

12 Call for Broader Env. Soc. Literature, Pg. 15

### PUBLICATIONS

13 Books, Pg. 16

14 Sociological Perspectives Special Issue, Pg. 17

15 Journal Articles and Book Chapters, Pg. 18

SECTION/MEMBER NEWS, PG. 19

## Chair's Message (cont'd)

Thank you to the presenters and discussants who challenged us to stretch our understandings of environmental sociology in vitally important new ways. In our "Taking Stock of Environmental Sociology" paper session, Gregory Hooks provoked us to theorize the integration of treadmills of production and destruction. Jordan Fox Besek specified some epistemological challenges of engaging with the natural sciences. Lourdes Vera shared data justice efforts of the Environmental Data Governance Initiative. Michael Bell concluded this session as a discussant with thoughtful and engaging provocations about how we conceptualize and frame the broader political projects to which we contribute.

Our two paper sessions on "Environment, Oppressions, and Justice" showcased nine papers that demonstrate some of the impressive innovations in environmental justice scholarship. Ian Carrillo used his research on racial divisions of labor in Brazilian sugarcane to show how elites use racial ideologies to rationalize the dangerous working conditions and economic exploitation of workers. Maricarmen Hernandez drew on her ethnographic research in Ecuador to provide new insights into why some communities do not contest environmental hazards to which they are exposed. Samantha Fox identified some ways in which mainstream environmentalism re/produces environmental inequalities. Raoul Liévanos introduced his intersectional analysis of exposure to lead in Flint, Michigan. In the second session, Michelle Edwards, along with her students Briana Luna and Hannah Edwards, detailed the systematic ignorance of environmental conditions and broader failures of the environmental impact assessment process in the context of immigration detention centers. Lindsey Dillon showcased the multiple environmental injustices in Hunters Point, California, and their intersections with striking gentrification in the broader San Francisco area. Michael Warren Murphy traced through a long history of settler colonialism in Rhode Island, focusing on the dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands. Jules Bacon also presented scholarship that does the much-needed work of addressing settler colonialism within environmental sociology, demonstrating that getting involved with Indigenous organizations

transforms college students' ideas about environmental politics and their commitments to justice. David Pellow wrapped up the day as discussant with energizing and impassioned reflections on the second session's papers.

That these paper session rooms were overflowing well past capacity speaks volumes about the vibrancy of our section and the enthusiasm for the cutting-edge work the speakers presented. I designed these paper session themes to hold space for scholars doing work on these vitally important topics. Those of us there got to participate in the expansion and flourishing of what environmental sociology means, who it includes, and the emancipatory political projects to which it can contribute. I feel deeply honored to have been a part of this section at this inspiring moment. Thanks so much to all of our presenters and discussants, and to those who showed up to support, learn, and grow.

And there's more! Our section had 20 roundtables spanning a wide range of topics germane to environmental sociology. A huge thank you to all of our roundtable participants and to the many folks who showed up to learn and engage in discussion with those participants about their work. Our roundtables were followed by the section's business meeting, which was well attended. Last but not least, we enjoyed a fabulous reception together with the section on Animals and Society at a glamorous bar overlooking Columbus Circle – thank you so much to Lori Hunter for organizing this lovely event. We had record-breaking attendance and got to celebrate both sections' award winners while catching up with each other. What a fantastic way to wrap up the long and fulfilling day.

I also want to share a few quick notes as we move forward into fall. First, our new Chair-Elect, Rachael Shwom, will soon announce the call for submissions for next year's ASA annual meeting (which will be held in San Francisco, August 8-11, 2020). As you prepare your submission, please be sure to note the associated ASA guidelines – notably, that papers must be 15-35 pages (double-spaced), and that session organizers will not accept abstracts or emails in lieu of papers. (For the full list of criteria, see: <https://www.asanet.org/annual-meeting-2020/papers>.) Each year, several folks submit only abstracts or very long treatises to our section

sessions; out of fairness to those who complied with the ASA guidelines, we do not accept any such submissions for the paper sessions.

Second, our nominations chair, Tracy Perkins, has announced the call for the (many!) section positions open this year:

- Chair-Elect (1 year in this role followed by one year each as Chair and Past Chair)
- Treasurer (3 years)
- Council Member at-large (2 years)
- Graduate Student Representative (2 years)
- Nominations Committee chair (2 years)
- Policy and Research Committee Chair (2 years)
- Publications Committee Chair (2 years)
- Digital Communications Committee Co-Chair: Webmaster (2 years)
- Digital Communications Committee Co-Chair: Social Media Coordinator (2 years)

Please nominate yourself and/or a colleague for one of these positions, or to help with committee work – just email Tracy at [tracy.perkins@Howard.edu](mailto:tracy.perkins@Howard.edu). She can help you think about which position might be the best fit for you given your time, interests, and experience. We are especially interested in recruiting those from backgrounds currently underrepresented in our section, so that the section is governed by a group with a diverse set of perspectives. I have found my work on council to be so valuable over the years, so do consider volunteering for one role or another.

Finally, I want to provide a quick update on council's ongoing efforts to address racial exclusion and foster a more inclusive section. As one part of this, efforts are underway to formalize the ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity – to make it a permanent part of the section. This will require that we define the committee's roles and responsibilities in the bylaws, which requires first that council approve putting this proposal on the next ASA ballot and then that section members approve this measure on the ballot. To craft the bylaws language specifying the committee's role and responsibilities, I have been working with our Past-Chair Kari Norgaard, Secretary Hannah Holleman, and current ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity members Jennifer Carrera, Raoul Liévanos, Lauren Richter, and Elisabeth Wilder. In a conference call in late October, council will vote on

putting this proposed bylaw language on the ASA ballot. I will report back to you all about that after our conference call. In the meantime: Many, many thanks to the Committee on Racial Equity for all of their hard work over the past few years. Please see their update in this newsletter, in which they detail their efforts. Please also visit the committee's page on our [website](#), where the documents relating to their work are now available for all to read

Council members have developed several other changes to their responsibilities and work processes in order to help make section awards, communication venues, council membership, and other aspects of the section's purview more inclusive. I will share more about those in the Winter newsletter.

Best wishes for a meaningful autumn.

### **Jill Lindsey Harrison**

Chair, Environmental Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association

Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Colorado Boulder

## **FEATURE ARTICLES**

### **Confronting White Space and White Ignorance: A Summary of the Committee on Racial Equity's Mission and Work (2016-2019)**

The SES Committee on Racial Equity:

Elisabeth Wilder, *Northeastern University*

Lauren Richter, *Rhode Island School of Design*

Michael Mascarenhas, *University of California, Berkeley*

Raoul S. Liévanos, *University of Oregon*

Jennifer Carrera, *Michigan State University*

### **Background and CRE Formation**

The Section on Environmental Sociology (SES) is a comparatively new section of the American Sociological Association (ASA). The section was officially formed in 1976 as an outgrowth of the U.S. environmental movement and the need to strengthen sociologists' ability to contribute to environmental impact assessments, which had recently been mandated by national legislation (Caldwell 1988). Over the past four decades, membership in the SES has steadily grown.

However, while there have been some gains in diversity in the discipline of sociology as a whole, these gains have not been achieved in the SES (Mascarenhas et al. 2017). In 2015, Dorceta Taylor received the Fred Buttel Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Environmental Sociology Award. At the SES (formerly, “ETS”) business meeting that year, Dr. Taylor observed that the section has remained as white as it was when she first joined decades ago. At the 2016 SES business meeting, the section council placed the topic of section diversity on the meeting agenda. However, after other agenda items were discussed, the meeting was set to be adjourned without this topic being addressed. Section member Elisabeth Wilder rose to call our collective attention to which agenda item was set to be dropped without comment, and noted that this paralleled her experience in other white spaces where race and equity are often an afterthought rather than a foundational concern. The Committee on Racial Equity (CRE) was subsequently founded. Initial members included Elisabeth Wilder and Lauren Richter, both graduate student members at the time, and Michael Mascarenhas, professor at University California, Berkley. Jennifer Carrera joined the committee soon after. They worked to investigate racial and ethnic diversity within the section, assessed the educational and professional climate for scholars of color, recommended changes in section policies and practices, and engaged environmental sociologists in laying the foundation for a more inclusive scholarly community.

### ***The CRE's Initial Work***

The committee published a report entitled “Diversity in Sociology and Environmental Sociology: What We Know About our Discipline” (Mascarenhas et al. 2017) in the Spring 2017 Section Newsletter.<sup>1</sup> That report showed that in spite of growing overall membership in recent years, the section has lost graduate students and faculty members of color. In addition, according to the ASA membership database, the percentage of scholars of color in the SES is markedly low in comparison to other ASA sections and the association overall. Just under 5% of SES members identified as Asian/Asian American in both 2005 and 2016, and around 3% as

Hispanic/Latinx. The number of SES members who identify as African American increased from six in 2005 to twelve in 2016, but still represent just 2.4% of section membership. Scholars classified by the ASA as “Other” in the membership database, which includes Indigenous people, represents 1.8% of section members. Those classified by the ASA as identifying with “Multiple” racial-ethnic identities represent just under 8% of total section membership. An overwhelming 81.5% of section members identify as white. We therefore argue that scholars of color in the section constitute what Moore (2008) describes as a “micro-minority” in an otherwise exclusively “white space” (Anderson 2015, Mascarenhas 2018, Moore 2008).

White space is characterized by the overwhelming presence of whites in everyday interactions and positions of authority, which formally and informally act as barriers to inclusion and belonging for people of color or “non-whites” (Anderson 2015). White space can also produce and reproduce “tastes, perceptions, feelings, and emotions” (Bonilla-Silva 2006:104) on racial dynamics that protect and promote white “in-group solidarity and negative views about non-whites” (Bonilla Silva et al. 2006:233). This dominant framing fails to acknowledge the centrality of white supremacy in upholding other axes of power and domination (e.g., heteropatriarchy, capitalism, and neoliberalism) and creating a world in which people of color were never really meant to thrive, let alone survive (Costa Vargas 2008).

Following the publication of this first report, the CRE conducted a survey of section members to gauge perspectives on racial diversity and equity within the section. Nearly half of all survey respondents identified “discrimination,” “microaggressions,” and “not feeling welcome within the section” as main reasons scholars of color might choose not to participate in the section. However, among the majority-white survey respondents, there seemed to be little knowledge about the actual working and learning conditions of faculty and students of color in the section. Furthermore, while a majority of respondents expressed support for the work and initiative of the committee, some respondents

---

<sup>1</sup> CRE Reports and Newsletter articles can be found on the SES website: <http://envirosoc.org/>



explicitly or implicitly placed the onus on scholars and students of color to insert themselves into the field rather than on the field to provide an environment and scholarly community that is more welcoming. The CRE presented these results at the SES business meeting at the 2017 ASA and also held two follow-up focus groups on site that year.

Coupling the data on membership trends with our section member survey and information gathered in the ASA focus groups, the committee and section are better positioned to understand why it is that the section remains and is becoming an increasingly white space. In line with Mills (2007), the committee views the section's collective lack of knowledge about the experiences of faculty and students of color as symptomatic of a broader culture of white ignorance that must be intentionally disturbed. It also suggests that we must critically evaluate our normative landscape and shift our focus from simply recruiting students and faculty members of color to retaining and supporting scholars of color within the section. Everyone in the section has an opportunity – arguably a duty amidst the growing threat of white nationalism and academic indifference that is all too reminiscent of earlier racial crises in which sociology turned a blind eye to matters of racial injustice and justice (Du Bois [1920] 1999; Morris 2015; Steinberg 2007) – to listen to, center, support and most importantly respond to the experiences of colleagues of color.

### ***The 2018 ASA Pre-Conference and Beyond***

SES members' survey responses and focus group data indicated that more space and time needed to be devoted to race and the environment in SES and the broader discipline of sociology. Alongside new committee member Raoul Liévanos, the CRE organized an ASA pre-conference entitled "Bridging the Gap: A Conference on Race and the Environment" that took place during the summer of 2018. The committee secured a National Science Foundation workshop grant and additional funds from the University of Oregon Underrepresented Minority Recruitment Program, the University of California, Berkeley, and a small stipend from the SES upon request from the CRE. The conference actively sought and included participation from a demographically diverse community of scholars,

students, local activists, and regulatory officials from around the United States. It also featured a diverse set of theoretical approaches, empirical research strategies, and practical insights to better understand the intersections between race and the environment and centered work by graduate students and junior faculty of color who are publishing research that largely uses frameworks and techniques from outside the sub-discipline of environmental sociology *in an active attempt to redefine the sub-discipline*.

The CRE published a reflection on the pre-conference in the Fall 2018 Section Newsletter, noting that a "theme throughout the conference was that a common denominator in the oppression of people of color and environmental degradation is white supremacy and the multiplicity of social divisions that it uses to uphold its influence throughout the world. Further, our section is not immune to these issues. It is the work of all of us—especially white folks—to dismantle the divisive interpersonal and institutional mechanisms that stabilize and strengthen white supremacy, multiple-marginalization, and environmental degradation" (Mascarenhas et al. 2018). The committee is currently guest editing a forthcoming special collection in *Environmental Sociology* featuring papers from the conference. This special collection seeks to continue the conversation about (and advance a more critical approach to) race and racism within the section and the discipline.

Regarding next steps, the CRE has been presented with the option of the SES council voting to formalize the committee, thus institutionalizing this committee within formal section operation. For the past three years, the committee's work has been driven by independently-generated questions regarding the history and current state of section racial diversity and curiosity regarding member experiences. Further, the committee aimed to create space for conversation, reflection, and new scholarship. The committee therefore sees the benefits of a group of people acting outside formal section operation, in a spirit of evaluative, critically-informed drive for assessment and change. Yet, the committee also sees the benefits of institutionalizing the goals and sentiments behind this work into section policies and committee structures. It may be that multiple organizational forms can best help

the section and broader field achieve needed change. These conversations are ongoing, and the committee looks forward to further discussions and input moving forward.

## References

- Anderson, Elijah 2015. "The White Space." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1 (1):10-21.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2006. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*, 2nd ed. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo, Carla Goar, and David G. Embrick. 2006. "When Whites Flock Together: The Social Psychology of White Habitus." *Critical Sociology* 32(2-3):229-253.
- Caldwell, Lynton K. 1988. "Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA): Origins, Evolution, and Future Directions," *Impact Assessment*, 6:3-4, 75-83.
- Costa Vargas, João H. 2008. *Never Meant to Survive: Genocide and Utopias in Black Diaspora Communities*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. [1920] 1999. *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.
- Mascarenhas, M. 2018. "White Space and Dark Matter: Prying Open the Black Box of STS." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 43(2):151-170.
- Mascarenhas, M., Jennifer Carrera, Lauren Richter, and Elisabeth Wilder. 2017. "Diversity in Sociology and Environmental Sociology: What we Know About our Discipline." *ASA ETS Section News*, 1-5. <http://envirosoc.org/Newsletters/Spring2017.pdf>.
- Mascarenhas, M., Raoul S. Liévanos, Jennifer Carrera, Lauren Richter, and Elisabeth Wilder. 2018. "Reflections on "Bridging the Gap: Race and the Environment" Mini-Conference" *ASA ETS Section News*, 3-5. <http://envirosoc.org/Newsletters/Fall2018.pdf>.
- Mills, Charles. 2007. "White Ignorance." Pp. 13-38 In *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, edited by Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana. Albany: State University of New York.
- Moore, Wendy Leo. 2008. *Reproducing Racism: White Space, Elite Law Schools, and Racial Inequality*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Morris, Aldon. 2015. *The Scholar Denied: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

## Mentorship in the Section and Beyond

Apollonya Porcelli

Fellow environmental sociologists, I am happy to report that this year's mentorship program was a success. Now in its fourth year, our mentorship program pairs graduate students and post-doctoral students with faculty mentors. In total we had twenty pairs, with two pairs from non-academic institutions. Although there were four participants that were unable to attend ASA this year, they were able to set up Skype calls with their pairs and connect virtually. In addition to the informal meetings between mentors and mentees, we also held a casual drinks reception for participants in the program and for ASA Council members. Going forward, I hope that the mentorship program continues to be a staple within the section, providing an opportunity for early career environmental sociologists to learn from those more experienced, creating a low-risk space to cultivate new intellectual pursuits, and fostering a spirit of collegiality and camaraderie within the section.

While I want to take this chance to celebrate our mentorship program, I also want to focus on the role of mentorship in academia generally. I'll begin by talking about my own experience.

It was because of my participation in the mentorship program three years ago that I decided to run for Graduate Student Representative of this section. For much of graduate school, I had felt like I was on an island, having only a few people with whom I could discuss environmental sociological issues. I volunteered to participate in the mentorship program in its first year on a whim: "this could be fun," I thought. Though I was very excited, I was also daunted at the prospect of meeting scholars that I had looked up to from afar. Not only was I concerned with sounding smart, but also looking smart: "What do I do with my hair? Pull it back or leave it down? Are my heels too high? No heels." To my surprise, the faculty mentors that I had were approachable and welcoming, and made my superficial anxieties obsolete. As a result of these supportive (and

dare I say, fun) one-on-one meetings, I was able to feel more comfortable at the larger section events. I mean, ASA is overwhelming. And it was a relief to finally find a manageable space where I felt that I could fit in, both intellectually and socially.

When the opportunity arose to work behind the scenes on the mentorship program and become more involved in the section, I had to take advantage of it. While organizing the program this year, I was surprised by how much I enjoyed creating the mentor-mentee pairs. The alternate version of myself as a wedding planner who specialized in table seating assignments emerged, and I found myself imagining the conversations that would be had: “Would José and John talk about new spatial modeling strategies? Would Anna and Zee discuss the ways in which the Department of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin has changed over the years? Would Devon and Sara find a shared colleague in common?” In the end, it was an extremely rewarding experience that I look forward to again this coming spring.

The most important take-away, however, has been a much deeper appreciation for mentorship as a tool for professional development. As a graduate student, I have spent most of my time focused on earning fellowships and grants, publishing, and teaching. While these are fundamental parts of the job, I have found that as I apply for tenure-track jobs, issues that had once been on the back-burner are now front and center—issues like professionalism and balancing my personal and professional life. Once I started to apply for jobs, my insecurity skyrocketed and I had questions about everything. At times, I have found that I could talk with my mentors at other universities about questions that I didn’t feel comfortable raising with professors at my university. It is in the context of the mentor-mentee relationship that I was able to be vulnerable and ask those “stupid questions” I would often push aside or expect someone else to ask.

In a conversation I had with a mentor several months ago, I was worrying over what to wear for a job

interview and how much information about my personal life I should reveal. “Can I wear a floral dress? Is that too feminine?” In that moment I imagined being on the other side of the phone call and I asked myself, “What do mentors get out of this relationship? Why would *anyone* care about whether or not the flowers on my dress were too bright or too big?” I mean, I know why I wanted to participate in the mentorship program: I wanted to “learn the ropes” of academia. I wanted to make social connections. I wanted to fit in. So why would someone who already knows the ropes, has the social connections, and already fits in, want to help out a stranger like me?

And while I concluded that the reason must be a genuine concern for environmental sociology as an intellectual and professional field, I also found myself frustrated that this was not available to everybody. While I have had a very positive experience with mentorship, I have also met more graduate students than I can count who have endured the opposite—many of whom have dropped out of graduate school or were forced out.

Now, this just may be the way things are—some faculty are more passionate about mentorship than others, and some graduate students fit in and others don’t—but I would much prefer that mentorship is something that every faculty member does and every graduate student finds. Simply put, the knowledge exchange and identity-formation that occurs in this relationship does not occur everywhere in academia. To make this experience more broadly available, however, I believe that we, as sociologists, need to first recognize that its relative scarcity is symptomatic of larger structural issues within the profession and our society.

About a week ago, I came across an article<sup>2</sup> in the *New York Times* that discussed the parallels between higher education and democracy. The author, Viet Thanh Nguyen, an English professor at the University of Southern California, argued that while “we rhetorically prioritize general education, or a unified country...[we] put obstacles in the way of genuinely serving students

---

<sup>2</sup> Nguyen, Viet Thanh. “Why I Teach.” *New York Times*, 23 September 2019.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/23/opinion/viet-thanh-nguyen-teaching-democracy.html>

or constituents. In this way, higher education is indeed a microcosm of our entire society and its failures, with an elite, well-paid minority and an increasingly suffering majority of the overworked and the underpaid.” To rectify these issues, the author proposes that the most senior faculty should teach the majority of undergraduates, while the least senior (like graduate students and adjunct faculty) “should be elevated so that they, too, can share in the promise of our general education: to prepare young people for the goals of economic fulfillment and democratic responsibility.” I found these comments incredibly inspiring. And they really resonated with me as I was preparing to write this article.

Though Nguyen’s article speaks about the importance of teaching and prioritizing general education courses, I think the argument extends to mentorship. We in higher education talk about the importance of universities as places of liberation, community, and citizenship, but in reality this is not always true. Although the conversation about the overburdening of graduate students and adjuncts is not new, it remains an increasingly hardened form of inequality in our profession. Changing these structures will take time. However, in the short term, I firmly believe that mentorship, *good* mentorship, can be a way to rectify some of these structural and seemingly intractable inequalities that have now come to define academia. This is because person-to-person encounters restore dignity and care to a fractured work world where differences of status and labor contribution put incredible pressure on those seeking to break in and get ahead.

If mentorship is done right, you can make mistakes, ask uncomfortable questions, complain, find solutions to onerous teaching loads, and feel like you belong. By continuing to prioritize mentorship within the section, our association can be an inclusive space for graduate students, and at the same time help to remediate some of the institutional inequalities that have been cemented in higher education. If it can be done in higher education, perhaps it can happen elsewhere.

**Apollonya Porcelli** is a graduate student at Brown University. She is the Student Representative on the Section on Environmental Sociology.

## **A More Inclusive, Collaborative, and Rhizomatic (Environmental) Sociology**

Ashley Colby, Ph.D.

Discussing the value of public sociology is not new in the American Sociological Association (ASA). [Michael Burawoy](#) addressed it in 2004 saying, “I envision myriads of nodes, each forging collaborations of sociologists with their publics, flowing together into a single current. They will draw on a century of extensive research, elaborate theories, practical interventions, and critical thinking, reaching common understandings across multiple boundaries (25).” Reading recent Section on Environmental Sociology newsletters tells me that section members agree as to *why* public sociology is important. However, as someone who is committed to public sociology as a way to engage in the on-the-ground work of solving environmental social problems, there are resource barriers that make inclusion in ASA activities difficult, and meeting participation nearly impossible.

I am a sociologist firmly schooled in the academy but have branched out to use my training as a scholar-activist. After graduating with my Ph.D. from Washington State University in December 2018, I moved to Uruguay. Through my substantive interests in post-capitalist futures, I teach, research, and engage the public. I teach adjunct online at North American universities, which is my main source of income. This essentially subsidizes my research, which doesn’t receive institutional support. Finally, I am attempting to open [Rizoma Field School](#) to teach about post-capitalist regenerative livelihoods, many of which are thriving in Latin America. Outside of academic work, I engage in activism with both local and global organizations. This includes collaborations with the people of the Global South who are solving myriad climate, social, financial and political crises through meaningful, bottom-up practices. I am translating those findings to audiences in the Global North through both academic and popular publications and teaching American university students who visit Uruguay on guided short study abroad trips where they engage with local practitioners.

As a result of this alternative career path, the main components I am missing for full inclusion are: 1) significant, stable income; 2) structural support of an



institution; and 3) the personal connections that help to encourage collaboration in grant writing, publications or other opportunities. The first step in stimulating partnerships is overcoming the structural barriers that keep activists out, and those are primarily lack of resources. The first step for collaboration between activists/practitioners and academic sociologists would be travel grants that cover all travel costs and the costs of the meeting. Applications would need to bear in mind the diversity of potential participants and their ability or inability to provide something like letters of reference or a research summary with citations. This kind of money could be provided through a large NSF-type grant, suggesting the importance of these kinds of collaborations. Rather than focusing ASA funds on swag for attendees, we could re-allocate funds toward public sociology within ASA more generally. A model for an application I find appealing is this [HERD Fellowship](#) for a conference on regenerative agriculture, except in our case we wouldn't implement an age limitation. This application is open and inclusive, emphasizing underrepresented groups. The main component is short answer questions which could help guide conference organizers in best using this activist or practitioner's time at the conference. Most importantly, there is the option of a phone application, which could overcome barriers for some.

After physically getting to the meeting, the way I envision inclusivity would be several sessions that focus primarily on hearing from activists and practitioners and envisioning together new ways of collaboration that fit with the particular set of interests and goals of each activist and researcher, keeping in mind the goals of sections like the Section on Environmental Sociology. In my case, for example, I am looking for multiple means of collaboration with researchers squarely within the academy. I would love to share the data from my research findings for co-authorship in return for the institutional support of grants and help in writing publications. I also want to develop curricula around these research findings not only for my field school here in Uruguay, but for collaborative use in universities in the Global North that are adapted to the particular post-capitalist futures being imagined in that part of the world.

To return to Burawoy's vision, I imagine attending ASA annually as my primary connection to the world of academia, building relationships and connections each year as ASA carves out more space for voices like mine and others. These nodes can grow into specific sessions with activists, public sociologists and researchers working in many areas, not just the environment. These sessions could come to be known across ASA as a place where cutting edge research, teaching and other initiatives are born. The Section on Environmental Sociology could build a reputation as a vanguard in centering marginalized voices and finding ways to integrate them that benefits researchers and activists in consensual, mutual collaboration. As environmental sociologists, we explore some of the most pressing issues facing humanity today. But we can go further by imagining innovative solutions to increase inclusivity in the academy *and* the resultant collaborations that, as Ulrich Beck suggests, could usher in the [metamorphosis of the world](#).

**Ashley Colby** is Co-director of Rizoma Field School in Colonia, Uruguay, a school for experiential learning on the topic of sustainable livelihoods in the Global South. She completed her Ph.D. in sociology at Washington State University.

### **Youth Climate Activists Won't Change Policy in the U.S., They're Changing Politics.**

Dana R. Fisher, Ph.D.

Greta Thunberg had quite a visit to the US: She and her school-strike compatriots [protested in front of the United Nations](#); [marched by the White House](#); testified in a joint Congressional hearing on "[Voices Leading the Next Generation on the Global Climate Crisis](#);" and she shamed the world in a [moving speech at the Climate Action Summit](#). Perhaps most notably, she and many other young people lead Climate Strikes on [September 20th](#) and September 27<sup>th</sup>, which mobilized [millions of people to take to the streets](#) around the world to protest the lack of progress on climate change.

In the US, nearly all climate-related policymaking has stalled since the Trump Administration came to power in January 2017. With the support of Republicans in the Congress, the Administration has rolled back and

weakened environmental policies designed to protect our land, water, and air. Is it realistic to expect that the youth climate movement will meet with more success than their adult counterparts? In the current political climate, these groups will be lucky to maintain the status quo of the Obama Administration, which most scientists have acknowledged is woefully insufficient to address the climate crisis.

If this wave of youth climate activism is unlikely to succeed in achieving its goals, why should we be paying attention? Because these young people are cutting their teeth early in activism and protest in America; these hyper-engaged young people are primed to participate in our democracy and most of them (76%) will be old enough to vote in the 2020 election.

In my recent wave of research on the youth climate movement, I surveyed both the hosts of the climate strikes around the US (response rate 21%) and participants in the DC Climate Strike on September 20<sup>th</sup> (response rate 79%). I found that the organizers and participants of the strike were significantly more engaged in a range of political activities than the general American population: 83 percent of hosts and 46 percent of strikers reported contacting an elected official in the past year and 77 percent of hosts and 46 percent of strikers had attended a public, town, or school meeting. Almost all hosts (93%) and almost half of strikers (44%) participated in consumer activism, boycotting or deliberately buying a certain product for political, ethical, or environmental reasons. Moreover, 61 percent of hosts and 44 percent of strikers reported participating in confrontational direct action in the past year.

These school-strikes add momentum to a growing youth climate movement. Although striking from school is a relatively new and visible tactic, young people in America have been involved in so much more than skipping school and sitting outside government buildings. In recent years, they have [sued the government](#), [occupied Congressional offices](#), [bird-dogged candidates](#) and elected officials, and [participated in the meetings](#) of the long-suffering international climate regime.

Research tells us that when young people participate in politics and activism, [they become better citizens for life](#). So, regardless of whether these young people are successful in achieving their stated policy goals, this growing movement will have substantial and important consequences by facilitating more active participants in democracy.

[Youth Voting was up in 2018](#) but that may be a drop in the bucket compared to what we can expect in 2020. And, if the outcome of the election is not what they hope, these young people may learn from the recent protests in Hong Kong: when peaceful protest and political participation do not work, there are always other options.

#### **For more information, see:**

Fisher, Dana R. 2019. "Commentary: The broader importance of #FridaysForFuture." *Nature Climate Change*. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-019-0484-y>.

Fisher, Dana R. 2019. "The young Climate Strikers marching this week are all fired up and ready to vote." *The Washington Post*. 28 September. Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/09/28/young-climate-strikers-marching-this-week-are-all-fired-up-ready-vote/#comments-wrapper>.

Fisher, Dana R. 2019. "The Youth Climate Summit starts July 12. It's full of young activists trained in the anti-Trump movement." *The Washington Post*. 12 July. Available at: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/07/12/youth-climate-summit-starts-today-its-full-young-activists-trained-anti-trump-movement/?utm\\_term=.96b8d0e3c51e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/07/12/youth-climate-summit-starts-today-its-full-young-activists-trained-anti-trump-movement/?utm_term=.96b8d0e3c51e).

[Dana R. Fisher](#) is a professor of sociology at the University of Maryland. She has been studying the youth climate movement since spring 2019. Her new book [American Resistance](#) will be out with Columbia University Press on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

## Research & Policy Note: Understanding and Shaping Flood Management Policies

Jack Zinda

On the coast and inland, from superstorm Sandy to the Missouri and Mississippi, in sudden deluge and steady advance, water is going where people aren't counting on it going. Policies meant to shelter people from inundation and its consequences are proving inadequate. When floods strike, thousands find that physically and financially, their homes and communities are not safe from rising waters. Many tread a limbo of insurance claims and damage reports, or face the prospect of their homes and communities becoming uninhabitable. In the United States and around the world, people are reckoning with the fact that existing flood management policies are not made for today's precipitation regimes—much less tomorrow's.

Floods can engulf many domains of life. Shortcomings of disaster response often damage public trust in the institutions that are supposed to keep us safe. Despite the chastening experiences of Katrina and Sandy, halting and uneven support for people affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Maria have again become flashpoints. Meanwhile, [Junia Howell and James Elliott \(2019\)](#) show that property-centered disaster aid policies in the United States increase wealth inequality over time.

Challenges surrounding flooding bedevil local, state, and federal governments. Governments face a dilemma: preventing or removing development in flood-prone areas can undercut revenues and employment. Since property taxes often underpin local governments' finances, when repeated flooding diminishes property values or removes property from tax rolls altogether, the consequences for government functioning can be devastating. Those consequences in turn hit the people living in these communities. Facing this predicament, local governments often act as "recovery machines," accelerating development in the wake of disaster ([Elliott and Clement 2017](#)). Federal post-disaster policies often encourage these practices.

Debates are roiling about how public flood insurance might cushion floods' impacts, facilitate recovery, and convey the costs of actions that increase risk. These policy debates present struggles over values

concerning who deserves help when disaster strikes, and who should bear the costs of risk to homes ([Elliott 2017](#)).

Retreat—intentional efforts to relocate out of high-risk areas—is also emerging as a major domain of policy development. Retreat runs athwart attachments to place and community and norms of tenacious recovery. In particular, people of color and indigenous communities have raised alarm, knowing what has happened historically when government officials have come to their doors saying it is time to move. Yet [Elizabeth Koslov \(2016\)](#) has documented how Staten Island residents demanded buyouts after Superstorm Sandy confirmed in their minds that their neighborhood could not be livable in the long term.

In all these arenas and more, policies are changing. Environmental sociologists have been involved in many ways. These include evaluating social impacts of current disaster response policies, making sense of the [broader currents shaping policy change](#), assessing [who is at risk of flooding and what resources they have](#) for mitigating risk, examining how [affected people respond to floods](#), working with state and local governments to update policies, assisting affected communities in voicing their concerns, and providing [evidence and analyses to feed policy advocacy](#) and movement building around a Green New Deal. Needless to say, many more environmental sociologists are doing work in this area than I can recognize in this short note.

One role environmental sociologists can play is working with state and local governments to assess and build capacity to implement policies that reduce the harms of flooding. In New York state, for example, the [Climate Risk and Resiliency Act](#) and related [Climate Smart Communities](#) program, which support planning and standards to build flood preparedness, create spaces for sociologists to help with learning about community residents' needs, capacities, and concerns. In particular, those of us at Land Grant and Sea Grant institutions in the United States have ready opportunities to work with state extension networks with county and city extension offices to serve affected communities.

In all of these policy arenas, the key question is how to shield people from flood hazards in ways that respect

rights, values, and communities. Environmental sociologists have the tools, the knowledge, and the duty to assist in making flood management policies that keep people safe and secure.

If you would like us to address a policy issue of concern to you or you would like to contribute a policy update, please reach out to the Policy and Research Committee Chair, Jack Zinda, [jazinda@cornell.edu](mailto:jazinda@cornell.edu).

**Jack Zinda** is Assistant Professor in the Department of Development Sociology at Cornell University

### **Building Relationships and Reciprocity into Research**

Leontina Hormel

Over the course of my career as someone who enters “the field” to conduct research on communities, I have grown increasingly discontent with the standard process we learned as students and teach to our students, or what I call “the taker” process. The process passed on in our lessons is one that drops researchers into the field, where they collect information from people and places they study, then the researchers take this information away with them to be analyzed and shared with other scholars or readers not part of the community. The criticisms of this research process are not new. In my experience growing into the role of a public sociologist and participatory action researcher, though, I still see little movement in sociology and in academia, generally, that enables us to work with communities, and most especially vulnerable communities whose voices remain largely absent in political and economic decision-making. In fact, I see higher education institutions creating an environment that is intensifying our dependence on the “taker model.” In their heavy push for academic researchers to seek big grant opportunities and to produce even more scholarly output, evidence of one’s worth is more easily met with the status quo. Grants expect you to commit to a timeline and quantifiable outcomes, as do the institutions we work for. To work effectively with vulnerable communities, though, requires a much different process.

The first 10 years of my research career was stuck in the “taker model,” and I was rewarded for using it with several opportunities to be funded by well-regarded organizations, like Fulbright-Hays, IREX, Micron Foundation, and NSF. Colleagues in other disciplines value this model of research and, thus, it is easy to adjust it for interdisciplinary work. I have made an explicit move away from this type of research, as I move toward a reciprocal, justice oriented research program. This move is largely possible because I have made it through the tests of promotion and tenure. Justice oriented research harder to fund, because this type of research is difficult to package neatly within a year, or five years. If it is community-driven, it is also difficult to anticipate when you will be needed.

Working with vulnerable communities requires a different relationship with people and, consequently, time. Members of vulnerable communities, because they are exploited and stigmatized, need researchers who build meaningful relationships with them. They need researchers who earn their trust. This takes time. Members of these communities often deal with disturbing events on a near daily basis, which results in postponed interviews and community visits. This means timelines can only be incredibly rough estimates, and it also means trying to stick to a timeline may lead to self-imposed disappointment and frustration. Working with vulnerable communities also can place you in an uncomfortable space, since earning trust with people inescapably leads to friendship and love for the people you work with and who you ultimately are working *for*. You start feeling the highs and lows with everyone. It is this last part that can make traditional scientific scholars uncomfortable and, thus, many funding organizations suspicious. Building relationships during your research leads to long-term relationships, and with these relationships comes the strong drive to reciprocate. The “taker model” thinks in terms of giving money or gift cards to research participants as a means to reciprocate, but reciprocity in justice oriented research is about making sure there are seats added at the table where decisions are being made and it means taking public stands at political gatherings, with government agencies, and in newspapers.

Once I made a conscious shift toward reciprocal, justice research with Nimiipuu Protecting the Environment



(learn more about NPtE at this [link](#)) and residents at Syringa Mobile Home Park (learn about the project at this [link](#)), I noticed it was no longer difficult to explain my, and sociology's, relevance to people outside academia. Moreover, I included students in my research with Syringa MHP residents. Students not only learned how to interview and craft surveys, but also skills like compassion and empathy, especially for marginalized or voiceless parts of the community they were actually living in at the time. Their experiences can be exported back to the many different communities that a college student-body comes from, and returns to once they've graduated.

For many of you this is not a new conversation, since thankfully a growing number of sociologists and public academics are taking similar paths. The ASA Environmental Sociology section is doing a fantastic job growing the area of environmental justice and I am excited at the prospect of ES earning a reputation as an inclusive and welcoming section for colleagues and practitioners from diverse backgrounds. As we pursue these goals, I believe we have to ask how we can challenge the trend that privileges the "taker" research model, despite our understanding that this model can sabotage our abilities to do research that raises the visibility, voices, and power of those who are actively excluded from political practices. A couple questions come to mind that we could ask: *What is working right now that opens opportunities for sociologists and practitioners to build relationships and reciprocal research as we pursue justice? How do we illuminate the value of this work so the decision to pursue this work isn't putting academics' careers at risk?* Now seems as good a time as any to seek answers to these kinds of questions and act on them.

**Leontina Hormel** is Professor and Director of the Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program at University of Idaho. She is the winner of the Practice & Outreach Award (Spring 2019).

## CALLS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Call for Syllabi

The Teaching & Outreach Committee is requesting syllabi, active learning activities, and assignments from

section members that center race, indigeneity, gender, sexuality, disability, and underrepresented ways of knowing for our website. Please send to Kindra Jesse De'Arman [kindrad@uoregon.edu](mailto:kindrad@uoregon.edu) with "Enviro Soc Teaching" on the subject line. Here is the rest of the call in the Teaching and Outreach Committee Chair's own words.

As Chair of the Teaching & Outreach Committee, I will be submitting my new syllabus on "Social Change & Resistance" an undergraduate course which explores 2 main questions: How does social change happen? And what are the most effective methods we can use to support change according to social science research? Every reading on the syllabus is about solutions. Over the course of the semester we explored many different mechanisms of social change including:

1. Framing and storytelling
2. System 2 (and the challenge of dealing with System 1)
3. Consciousness raising (the Black feminist version), changing the perception of social norms
4. Social networks, grassroots recruitment, coalition building (including the matrix of resistance)
5. Online tactics and how they relate to offline protests
6. Political organizing, lobbying legislators & canvassing for elections/ballot measures
7. Urban planning (housing and transportation)
8. Lawsuits and rebates
9. Cohort replacement (passive social change)
10. Institutional and structural change (including systems theory)
11. System change: Decolonization, ending the racial caste system

We also explored debates over incremental reforms vs. system change (do reforms alter or reinforce the system?), individual change vs. institutional change (information deficit model, aggregation hypothesis), and slacktivism vs. activism (Can online slacktivists be recruited to activism or is slacktivism a barrier to activism?). I draw examples from multiple movements and campaigns like: Climate action, pipeline protests, immigrant rights, indigenous rights, Black Lives Matter, Marriage Equality, Fight for \$15, etc.

I describe this course in some detail because I want to make it clear that our call for syllabi goes beyond the

typical “environment & society” model and focuses on the idea of “just sustainability” where social justice is deeply integrated into our courses and our vision for the future. Please send syllabi, active learning activities, and assignments that center race, indigeneity, gender, sexuality, disability, and underrepresented ways of knowing to Kindra Jesse De'Arman [kindrad@uoregon.edu](mailto:kindrad@uoregon.edu) with "Enviro Soc Teaching" on the subject line.

### Call for Papers: Special Issue of Sustainability

Papers are invited for a special issue of the *Sustainability* journal (Impact Factor: 2.592). The theme of this special issue is *Climate Change and Global Food Security*.

The Special Issue, to be guest-edited by Md Saidul Islam, invites papers that evaluate the complex nexus between climate change and food security in Asia and beyond. Feeding the planet puts a lot of stress on the environment. Farming already takes more than 40% of the dryland and half the world's available freshwater. We may need to raise productivity by 70% by 2050. The simplest way to grow more food is to use more land, but it would come with a major environmental cost. Climate change, on the other hand, is putting a lot of strain on food productivity. Thus, the fundamental challenges we are facing today include how to grow more from less in a sustainable manner and how to optimize the entire food value chain from field to fork to reduce the carbon footprint, protect the environment, and support biological diversity, cause less water pollution and soil erosion, raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations, and contribute to the growth of the world economy. The global food system, on the other hand, also exacerbates the issue of climate change. We are inviting theoretical, empirical, and review papers focusing on any region/country of the world that examine, among other things, the diverse initiatives on, the current state of, future prospects for, and mitigations and resilience with regard to climate change and food security. Topics include:

- Complex nexus between food security and climate change;
- Urban food security in the age of environmental vulnerability;

- Impacts of climate change on agri/aquaculture;
- Global food system and its impacts on climate change;
- Food production and carbon footprints;
- Commodity chain analysis on food and climate change;
- Towards a carbon-neutral food system.

Deadline for manuscript submissions: 30 June 2020.

For further details:

[https://www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability/special\\_issues/climate\\_change\\_global\\_food\\_security](https://www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability/special_issues/climate_change_global_food_security)

### Call for Abstracts, World Congress of Rural Sociology

As part of the IRSA 2020 XV World Congress of Rural Sociology in Cairns, Australia (July 7-8 2020), **RC40** ([The Research Committee on Sociology of Agriculture and Food of the International Sociological Association](#)) invites abstracts for an exciting mini-conference on the theme of **"transdisciplinary visual methodologies."** We're also hosting a separate graduate student workshop for students exploring and using visual methods.

These unique events will bring together diverse visual and community-based scholars, activists, and artists working in the area of the sociology of food and agriculture to explore the role — and facilitate the use — of visuals (photos, videos and graphics) in community-engaged research. In particular, we invite submissions with an emphasis on the role of visuals for food movements in bridging the urban-rural divide.

We welcome [abstract submissions](#) of 300 words or less by **Nov. 1, 2019**. Please indicate if you intend to participate in the mini-conference or the graduate student workshop. Up to six papers will be considered for a special issue in a journal. For more information, please [visit our webpage](#).

Organizing Team:

- Evan Bowness (PhD Candidate, Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability, University of British Columbia, [evan.bowness@gmail.com](mailto:evan.bowness@gmail.com))

- Dana James (PhD Candidate, Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability, University of British Columbia, [dana.m.james91@gmail.com](mailto:dana.m.james91@gmail.com))
- Dr. Hannah Wittman (Professor, Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, University of British Columbia, [hannah.wittman@ubc.ca](mailto:hannah.wittman@ubc.ca))
- Dr. Annette Desmarais (Associate Professor & Canada Research Chair in Human Rights, Social Justice and Food Sovereignty, Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba, [annette.desmarais@umanitoba.ca](mailto:annette.desmarais@umanitoba.ca))
- Dr. Ilyas Siddique (Adjunct Professor of Agroecosystems at the Department of Crop Science, Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil, [ilysid@gmail.com](mailto:ilysid@gmail.com))
- Dr. Ian Mauro (Filmmaker, Associate Professor and Co-Director of the Prairie Climate Centre, University of Winnipeg, [i.mauro@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:i.mauro@uwinnipeg.ca))
- Natalie Baird (Masters Student and Community-Based Visual Artist, Environment and Geography, University of Manitoba, [natalie.k.baird@gmail.com](mailto:natalie.k.baird@gmail.com)).

### Climate Module for Introduction to Sociology

Dr. Andrew Szasz, University of California, Santa Cruz, invites readers to take a look at a climate change module for introduction to sociology classes. It is available at: <https://szasz.sites.ucsc.edu/> Readers may feel free to share the module with other. Here is why Dr. Szasz created the module in his own words.

From its beginnings, Sociology has always been centrally concerned to understand the problems of Modernity. Today, there is no longer any serious doubt that climate change has become one of the greatest – if not *the* single greatest -- threats to the future of human society.

In the U.S., hundreds of thousands of undergraduates take an Introduction to Sociology course each year, making Intro courses an idea site for showing college students how sociological analysis can help them understand the causes of, the impacts of and societal responses to the climate crisis;

A content analysis of bestselling Intro to Sociology textbooks shows that these books, typically, get to a discussion of climate change late in the book (typically in the next to last chapter) and then devote only a few paragraphs to it. (You can read that analysis at: <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/sites.ucsc.edu/dist/1/712/files/2018/12/Climate-Change-is-Largely-Missing-from-Best-Selling-Intro-to-Sociology-Textbooks-104amng.pdf> )

Textbooks do change, but I think too slowly, given how fast the climate crisis is accelerating.

So, I took it upon myself to create a website that professors and instructors who teach Intro could use if they wished to add more sociology of climate change content to their courses.

### Call for Broader Env. Soc. Literature

As part of efforts to advance diversity and inclusion in the Section on Environmental Sociology there is an organized effort to reorient how we publicly present our subdiscipline online. A group of us is working to collect and organize bodies of literature that help to broaden the “canon” of environmental sociology by elevating questions of race, gender, sexuality, indigeneity, ability, and other underrepresented bodies of literature.

We need the help of members to make this happen.

**Please submit lists of literature organized by themes in standard ASA citation style to the following people:**

Ike Leslie ([ileslie2@wisc.edu](mailto:ileslie2@wisc.edu)): gender and sexuality

Michael Haedicke ([michael.haedicke@drake.edu](mailto:michael.haedicke@drake.edu)):

indigeneity and traditional/indigenous ecological knowledge; experiences/communities of illness

Ethan Schoolman ([es808@sebs.rutgers.edu](mailto:es808@sebs.rutgers.edu)): disability and intersectionality

Josh Sbicca ([j.sbicca@colostate.edu](mailto:j.sbicca@colostate.edu)): race, ethnicity

Emily Kennedy ([emily.kennedy@ubc.ca](mailto:emily.kennedy@ubc.ca)): emotions, age

Nathan Lindstedt ([nathan.lindstedt@wsu.edu](mailto:nathan.lindstedt@wsu.edu)): other critical and underrepresented bodies of literature.

**Please send us your suggestions by December 1.**

The team will work to revise the website to reflect this collaborative effort.

## PUBLICATIONS

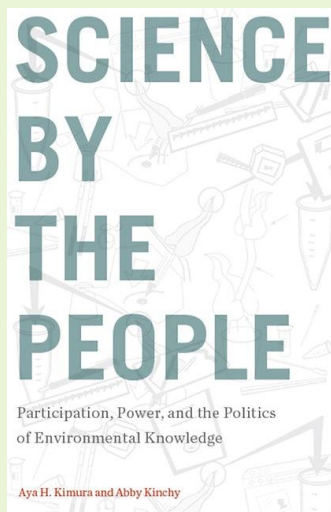
### Books

#### **Science by the People: Participation, Power, and the Politics of Environmental Knowledge**

Aya H. Kimura and Abby Kinchy  
(Rutgers University Press, 2019)

<https://www.rutgersuniversitypress.org/science-by-the-people/9780813595078>

Citizen science—research involving nonprofessionals in the research process—has attracted both strong enthusiasts and detractors. Many environmental professionals, activists, and scholars consider citizen science part of their toolkit for addressing environmental challenges. Critics, however, contend that it represents a corporate takeover of scientific priorities. In this timely book, two sociologists move beyond this binary debate by analyzing the tensions and dilemmas that citizen science projects commonly face. Key lessons are drawn from case studies where citizen scientists have investigated the impact of shale oil and gas, nuclear power, and genetically engineered crops. These studies show that diverse citizen science projects face shared dilemmas relating to austerity pressures, presumed boundaries between science and activism, and difficulties moving between scales of environmental problems. By unpacking the politics of citizen science, this book aims to help people negotiate a complex political landscape and choose paths moving toward social change and environmental sustainability.



**AYA H. KIMURA** is a professor of sociology at University of Hawai'i-Manoa. She is the author of *Radiation Brain Moms and Citizen Scientists: The Gender Politics of Food Contamination after Fukushima* (Duke University Press, 2016).

**ABBY KINCHY** is an associate professor of Science and Technology Studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic

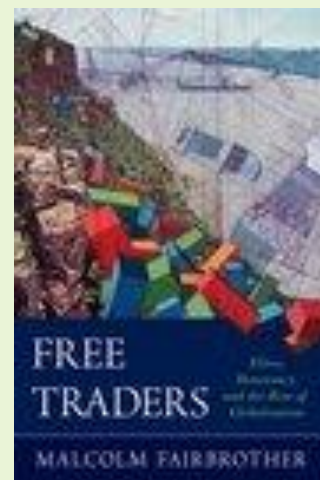
Institute and the author of *Seeds, Science, and Struggle: The Global Politics of Transgenic Crops* (MIT Press, 2012).

#### **Free Traders: Elites, Democracy, and the Rise of Globalization**

Malcolm Fairbrother  
(Oxford University Press, 2019)

<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/free-traders-9780190635466?cc=us&lang=en&>

Today's global economy was largely established by political events and decisions in the 1980s and 90s, when scores of nations opened up their economies to the forces of globalization. Free Traders argues that politicians' embrace of globalization was much less motivated by public preferences than by the agendas of businesspeople and other elites. Drawing on over one hundred interviews with decision-makers, and analyses of archival materials from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S., Fairbrother tells the story of how each



country negotiated and ratified two agreements that substantially opened and integrated their economies: the 1989 Canada-U.S. and trilateral 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement. Contrary to what many commentators believe, these agreements—like free trade elsewhere—were based less on mainstream, neoclassical economics than on the informal, self-serving economic ideas of business. Free Traders uses a comparative-historical approach to sharpen our understanding of how globalization arose in the past to provide us with clearer trajectory for how it will develop in the future.

**Malcolm Fairbrother** is a professor of sociology at Umeå University, Sweden, and the University of Graz, Austria. He is also a researcher at the Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm.



## For the Birds: Protecting Wildlife through the Naturalist Gaze

Elizabeth Cherry

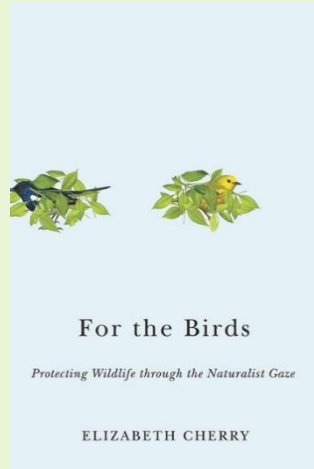
(Rutgers University Press, 2019).

<https://www.rutgersuniversitypress.org/for-the-birds/9781978801059>

One in five people in the United States is a birdwatcher, yet the popular understanding of birders reduces them to comical stereotypes, obsessives who only have eyes for their favorite rare species. In real life, however, birders are paying equally close attention to the world around them, observing the devastating effects of climate change and mass extinction, while discovering small pockets of biodiversity in unexpected places. *For the Birds* offers readers a glimpse behind the binoculars and reveals birders to be important allies in the larger environmental conservation movement.

With a wealth of data from in-depth interviews and over three years of observing birders in the field, environmental sociologist Elizabeth Cherry argues that birders learn to watch wildlife in ways that make an invaluable contribution to contemporary conservation efforts. She investigates how birders develop a “naturalist gaze” that enables them to understand the shared ecosystem that intertwines humans and wild animals, an appreciation that motivates them to participate in citizen science projects and wildlife conservation.

**ELIZABETH CHERRY** is an associate professor of sociology at Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York. She is the author of *Culture and Activism: Animal Rights in France and the United States*.



enhance our understanding of civic responses to environmental issues by engaging concepts and theories from cultural sociology. The issue includes 11 articles, many authored by our section members. I encourage you all to take a look through the special issue! It can be accessed online at:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/toc/spxb/current>. Articles in this special issue are:

1. If You Love the Environment, Why Don't You Do Something to Save It? Bringing Culture into Environmental Analysis, by Emily Huddart Kennedy and Josée Johnston
2. Framing and Feeling Fuel Environmentally Responsible Behaviors of Black Residents in the United States, by Karen A. Hegtvedt, Christie I. Parris, and Cathryn Johnson
3. The Self-sufficient Citizen: Ecological Habitus and Changing Environmental Practices, by Allison Ford
4. Eco-habitus or Eco-powerlessness? Examining Environmental Concern across Social Class, by Emily Huddart Kennedy and Jennifer E. Givens
5. Doing Right and Feeling Good: Ethical Food and the Shopping Experience, by Ethan D. Schoolman
6. Defining, Aligning, and Negotiating Futures: New Forms of Identity Work in an Urban Farming Project, by Amy Jonason
7. Building a Home: Everyday Placemaking in a Toxic Neighborhood, by Maricarmen Hernandez
8. Rethinking Greenwashing: Corporate Discourse, Unethical Practice, and the Unmet Potential of Ethical Consumerism, by Ellis Jones
9. “Not an Environmentalist”: Strategic Centrism, Cultural Stereotypes, and Disidentification, by Elizabeth Cherry
10. Cultural Barriers to Environmental Mobilization in the Republic of Turkey, by Ş. İlgü Özler and Brian K. Obach
11. How Do Ordinary Swiss People Represent and Engage with Environmental Issues? Grappling with Cultural Repertoires, by Philip Balsiger, Jasmine Lorenzini, and Marlyne Sahakian

## Journal Special Issue: Sociological Perspectives

The current issue of Sociological Perspectives (Vol. 62, Issue 5) is entirely focussed on advances in environmental sociology. Co-edited by Emily Huddart Kennedy and Josée Johnston, the special issue aims to

## Journal Articles

- Adua, Lazarus. "Reviewing the Complexity of Energy Behavior: Technologies, Analytical Traditions, and Household Energy Consumption Data in the United States." *Energy Research & Social Science* 59 (2020) 101289.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2019.101289>.
- Adua, Lazarus and Brett Clark. 2019. "Even for the Environment, Context Matters! States, Households, and Residential Energy Consumption." *Environmental Research Letters* 14 (2019) 064008.  
<https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ab1abf>.
- Adua, Lazarus and Linda Lobao. 2019. "The Growth Machine across the United States: Business Actors' Influence on Communities' Economic Development and Limited-Government Austerity Policies." *City & Community* 18(2): 462-482.
- Allen, Barbara L., Johanna Lees, Alison K. Cohen, and Maxime Jeanjean. 2019. "Collaborative Workshops for Community Meaning-Making and Data Analyses: How Focus Groups Strengthen Data by Enhancing Understanding and Promoting Use." *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 16 (18): 1-19.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16183352>.
- Besek, Jordan Fox. 2019. "Invasive Uncertainties: Environmental Change and the Politics of Limited Science." *Environmental Sociology*, 5 (4): 416-427.
- Dennis, Mary Kate and Paul Stock. 2019. "Green Grey Hairs: A Life Course Perspective on Environmental Engagement." *Journal of Community Practice*, Online first.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10705422.2019.1647324>.
- Flagg, Julia A. 2019. "From Symbol to (Some) Substance: Costa Rica's Carbon Neutral Pledge." *Human Ecology Review*, 25 (1): 23-42.  
<http://doi.org/10.22459/HER.25.01.2019>.
- Greenberg, Pierce. 2019. "Risk Perceptions and the Maintenance of Environmental Injustice in Appalachia." *Environmental Sociology*, DOI: [10.1080/23251042.2019.1647602](https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2019.1647602).
- Henderson, Kent. 2019. "Contradictory Governance Norms within World Society: Energy Development Strategies, Environmental Protection, and Carbon Dioxide Emissions." *Environmental Sociology*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2019.1613031>.
- Johnson, Erik W. and Phillip Schwadel. 2019. "It's not A Cohort Thing: Age, Cohorts, and Long-Term Variation in Support for the Environment." *Environment and Behavior*. 51(7): 879-901  
[DOI.10.1177/0013916518780483](https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916518780483).
- Kais, S. M. and Md. S. Islam. 2019. "Perception of Climate Change in Shrimp-Farming Communities in Bangladesh: A Critical Assessment." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16(672): 1-12.
- Loughran, Kevin and James R. Elliott. 2019. "Residential Buyouts as Environmental Mobility: Examining Where Homeowners Move to Illuminate Social Inequities in Climate Adaptation." *Population and Environment* 41(1): 52-70.  
<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11111-019-00324-7.pdf>.
- Mavisakalyan, Astghik, and Yashar Tarverdi. 2019. "Gender and Climate Change: Do Female Parliamentarians Make Difference?" *European Journal of Political Economy* 56:151-64.
- Mavisakalyan, Astghik, and Yashar Tarverdi. 2019. "Gender and Climate Change: Do Female Parliamentarians Make Difference?" *European Journal of Political Economy* 56:151-64.
- Mohammad, Lubna and Lori Peek. 2019. "Exposure Outliers: Children, Mothers, and Cumulative Disaster Exposure in Louisiana." *Journal of Family Strengths* 19(1):  
<https://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/jfs/vol19/iss1/4>
- Mook, Anne, and Christine Overdevest. 2019. "Fairtrade Credentialism: Towards Understanding Certified Producer Organizations' Perceptions of Fairtrade as a Credential." *Globalizations* : 1-16.
- Olzak, Susan and Erik W. Johnson. 2019. "The Risk of Occupying a Broad Niche for Environmental Social Movement Organizations" *Mobilization* 24(2) 177-198. [10.17813/1086-671X-24-2-177](https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-24-2-177).
- Sommer, Jamie M. Forthcoming. "The Factors that Drive Forestry Export Ties: A Network Perspective." *Society & Natural Resources*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2019.1661555>.
- Sommer, Jamie M. Forthcoming. "Ecologically Unequal Exchange and National Governance: A Cross-National Analysis of Forest Loss." *Environmental*

## Policy and Governance

<https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.1869>.

Rudel, Thomas K. 2019. "Shocks, States, and Societal Corporatism: A Shorter Path to Sustainability." *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-019-00560-1>.

Zinda, John Aloysius and Jun He. 2019. "Ecological Civilization in the Mountains: How Walnuts Boomed and Busted in Southwest China." *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. DOI:10.1080/03066150.2019.1638368.

Zinda, John Aloysius and Shrey Kapoor. 2019. "Metabolic Fractures: How Household Livelihood Practices Differentiate Agricultural Input Use in Southwest China." *Journal of Rural Studies*. DOI: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.09.008.

Zinda, John Aloysius and Zhiming Zhang. 2019. "Explaining Heterogeneous Afforestation Outcomes: How Community Officials and Households Mediate Tree Cover Change in China." *World Development*, 122:385–398.

## SECTION/MEMBER NEWS

**Md Saidul Islam**, Associate Professor of Sociology and the Coordinator of the Environment and Sustainability Research Cluster in the School of Social Sciences and Asian School of the Environment, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, was elected Chair of the Sociology of Development Cluster, Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) for 2019-2020. Dr. Islam is a former Visiting Scholar of the [Abdul Latif Jameel Water and Food Systems Lab](#), Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

**James Elliott** (Rice University) has been invited along with colleague **Elizabeth Fussell** (Brown University) to Washington, DC to brief staff at the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on November 13, 2019 on the topic of post-disaster resilience. The GAO is the research arm of the US Congress. It has launched a [formal inquiry into inequities in federal disaster recovery](#) based in part on research by Elliott, Fussell and other sociologists.

**Pictures from ASA 2019:** Printed below are several section-related pictures from the 2019 Annual Meeting of the ASA in New York.



Section Roundtable in Session, August 2019  
Credit: Kari Norgaard



Ken Gould Presenting the Buttell Distinguished Contribution Award to Kari Norgaard, August 2019. Credit: Tammy Lewis

### About photos:

Photos memorialize particular events or happenings in particular points in time. They are historical artifacts, serving as clear windows to the past. Going forward, we'll be publishing select section-related photos.

Lazarus Adua, Editor





*Jules Bacon presenting - to a standing room only crowd — their research on undergraduate students' involvement in Indigenous environmental movements. Credit: Kari Norgaard*



*Michael Warren Murphy presenting to a standing room only crowd, recounting histories of Native people's displacement from their lands in what is now called Rhode Island. Credit: Kari Norgaard*



*A Moment in Time: Environmental Sociologists Reunited. Credit: Kari Norgaard*