

ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY NEWS

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

April 2020

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SECTION CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I last wrote to you three months ago, and it feels like a lifetime. Here in Colorado, we have been sheltering in place for a few weeks now to help slow the spread of COVID-19. It feels cliché to say that these are unprecedented, challenging, and unsettling times, and yet those words continue to resonate with me. I find myself deeply anxious about the weeks and months to come, as well as heartbroken and angered by the profound structural injustices that the current crisis is creating, exacerbating, and illuminating. At the same time, I push myself to also see and honor the incredible forms of mutual aid organizing and insightful intellectual analysis of the current moment. Scholars, journalists, activists,



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Chair's Message (cont'd)

and so many others are helping to show the world that the current crisis reveals once again how deeply inhumane capitalism is and that we must develop and fund robust public institutions to protect public health and the environment, provide living wages, ensure dignified work, and reduce inequality.¹ I have found a bit of time for volunteer work and joining collective efforts to fight for more just responses to the current crisis, and I commit to do more of that in the coming months.

Our colleague Lori Peek and her colleagues are building a network of scholars doing COVID-related research – the [COVID-19 Global Research Registry for Public Health and Social Sciences](https://www.covid19registry.org/) – to help coordinate efforts and share information. If you are doing work on the current crisis and/or know of ways for environmental sociologists to contribute, please consider that registry. And please share your work with the rest of us through the listserv or social media.

ASA has not yet announced whether it will cancel this year's annual meeting. The section is thus carrying on with planning our sessions at the annual meeting, as well as our regular work of reviewing submissions for our awards, preparing this year's mentoring program, publishing our newsletter, finalizing our items for the ASA election – including our slate for open council positions as well as several bylaws changes, updating our website, and more.

For instance, to help diversify how the Section publicly represents the “canon” of environmental sociology, several section members have cultivated lists of recommended scholarship that address the following topics in relation to the environment: gender and sexuality; indigeneity and traditional/Indigenous ecological knowledge; experiences/communities of illness; disability; intersectionality; race and ethnicity; emotions; and other critical and underrepresented bodies of literature. Publications Committee Chair Josh Sbicca led this effort, with help from Ike Leslie, Michael

Haedicke, Ethan Schoolman, Emily Kennedy, and Nathan Lindstedt – as well as from all of you who contributed suggestions of relevant scholarship. Thank you all for taking the time to do this work! Please see these, now available on our section website: <http://envirosoc.org/wordpress/diversifying-the-environmental-sociology-canon-project/>

Because of the challenges created by the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, ASA extended the voting eligibility deadline to join ASA and this section to April 10. This means that anyone who joined ASA on or before April 10 will receive a ballot and be able to participate in the election that opens on April 30. People who also joined sections will receive a ballot that includes the candidates for the sections to which they belong. Let your vote count and renew online by visiting <https://asa.enoah.com>. If you encounter any problems, please contact the Membership department at membership@asanet.org.

Ballots for the 2020 ASA -wide and Section election will be distributed to eligible members at the end of April. Ballots will be sent out from “ASA Election” via the Sociological.ballot@intelliscaninc.net email address. Please add this email address to the permitted senders list on your spam filter to ensure timely delivery of your ballot. Voting will close at 5 p.m. eastern on Friday, May 29, 2020.

Most importantly, please be sure to vote! You'll have the opportunity to vote for the candidates for our section's open council positions, as well as several bylaws changes. The bylaws changes are intended as steps toward fostering a more inclusive, meaningful, and positive space for all. They also adjust dated language in our bylaws and awards and bring them in line with ASA rules. Please see the textboxes below (p. 5-7) for a summary of the ballot items.

Chair's message continued on page 3

¹ As just a sample of such work, see Mike Davis' short article “In a Plague Year” published on *Jacobin* on 3/14/20: <https://jacobinmag.com/2020/03/mike-davis-coronavirus-outbreak-capitalism-left-international-solidarity?fbclid=IwAR07sbWbJbn0LZGpWA->

[glEihre1COK83HeUBMrQ1xvPk1Oj3tkUETyPrbRY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glEihre1COK83HeUBMrQ1xvPk1Oj3tkUETyPrbRY). See also the interview with Noam Chomsky on 4/1/20 on *Truthout*: <https://truthout.org/articles/chomsky-ventilator-shortage-exposes-the-cruelty-of-neoliberal-capitalism/>.

I hope that you all are safe, healthy, and able to balance your most pressing obligations while also finding time to care for yourselves and your loved ones.

Sincerely,

Jill Lindsey Harrison

Chair, Environmental Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association

Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Colorado Boulder

FEATURE ARTICLES

The Ties that Bind

By Lori Peek

University of Colorado Boulder

Where to begin when the world feels so upended? In a matter of three months, [COVID-19](#) has spread to nearly every part of our globe. Hundreds of thousands have fallen ill, while thousands more—many of them [poor, elderly, or with underlying health concerns](#)—have succumbed to the disease. Schools are closed and businesses shuttered. Travel has nearly ground to a halt as nations secure their borders and people hunker down, trying to shield themselves from subsequent shocks to our collective system.

What holds society together during times like these?

This is the question that the founding thinkers in sociology posed in response to the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and other historical moments of profound upheaval. They were concerned then, as we remain now, in identifying how social institutions—the family, government, economy, education, and religion—interconnect and ultimately uphold or alter the existing social order. The visible structures associated with those institutions comprise the physical spaces where we live, learn, work, and worship.

But the [sociological imagination](#) has always focused on the invisible forces—the shared norms and values, the emotional connections, the relationships—that bind us together and ultimately make social life possible.

It is no wonder that sociologists and other social and behavioral scientists have long been interested in the [study of disasters](#). These events have the potential,

if examined closely, to reveal important truths about our society, the times we live in, and ourselves. Disasters often strip away the outer layer of the social formations they crash into, and in doing so unearth a view of what is going on, down in the core of things.

Over the years, researchers have made important discoveries about how personal and collective capacity can be strengthened in disasters. Thomas Drabek and Enrico Quarantelli [once argued](#), for example, that “disasters often bring out the best in individuals. Ability to endure suffering, desire to help others, and acts of courage and generosity come forth in times of crisis.” The earliest disaster researchers were so struck by these dynamics that they coined terms such as “altruistic community” and “therapeutic social system” to depict the mutual helpfulness and social solidarity that they repeatedly observed.

When events unfold that disrupt the social order, most of us search for solace among our fellow human beings. The COVID-19 pandemic has been no different. [Kindness](#) has remained in full view as this crisis unfolds, as has human ingenuity. We have found creative and novel ways to be together and to offer love and support, even as we are told to stay away from each other. The need for [social distancing](#) is an imperative in this crisis, but so too is our need to find ways to remain in community with others.

As we celebrate the strength of social bonds and the power of social connection, we must also never take these forces for granted. Such bonds are created through socialization and relationships, which also means that these webs of humanity can be diminished through destructive processes. Just as Drabek and Quarantelli highlighted the good in disaster, they also cautioned that “disasters can evoke the worst in persons—a relentless search for scapegoats to blame for destruction and loss of life,” although they do point out that “this tendency to seek the cause in a who—rather than a what—is most common after catastrophes not caused naturally.”

Of course, it is not only the disaster agent that determines the response. The condition of our [social fabric](#) does that as well. Our social bonds become tattered and frayed when they are not carefully tended to. Our social institutions become corroded and

destabilized when we do not invest in the people, programs, and infrastructure that make them possible.

This is the time for us to take the positive lessons from past disasters, as well as to heed cautionary findings. What each one of us does in the coming hours and days matters. Listening to scientists and taking recommended protective actions like washing our hands and limiting gatherings matters. Spending on healthcare and programs like paid sick leave, unemployment benefits, and food stamps that [aid people in distress](#) matters. Supporting others and seeing ourselves as part of a [broader whole](#) matters. Each of these steps, when taken together, will save lives.

This is the moment for us to recognize our interdependence and to recommit to our collective sense of responsibility to one another. In recognizing this responsibility, we must know that we already have the answer inside of us to the question posed earlier: What holds society together during a time like this?

We do.

Building Partnerships to Inform Policy

By Danielle Falzon, Brown University

Environmental Sociology Section Policy and Research Committee

How can we make sure our research informs policy? How can we meaningfully engage with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to produce research that is relevant and actionable? While many of us aspire to make an impact through our research beyond the pages of academic publications, it is not always easy to know how. It can be a challenge to connect with NGOs engaged on the ground in a way that is non-extractive and mutually beneficial. To better understand how academics might do these things better, I spoke with Dr. Saleemul Huq, Director of the International Center for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) in Bangladesh.

ICCCAD is a research NGO based out of Independent University Bangladesh. Dr. Huq and his team work with other NGOs, academics, government agencies, and international networks to inform work on climate change and development. They aim to produce action-oriented

research that can be used directly by policy-makers. They also welcome “Visiting Researchers” (like myself) from universities around the world to conduct their own research while also contributing to ICCCAD’s initiatives.

I asked Dr. Huq about ICCCAD’s collaborations, and how academics can build partnerships with organizations like his. He outlined his ideas about genuine partnerships, mutual benefits from working together, his approach to building networks, and how to encourage action-oriented research. On partnership, Dr. Huq explained:

“I have a very strict dichotomy, or hierarchy of the word partnership....So I very often get approached by an international partner to join forces on a project or a proposal. And it’s very easy to divide them into two categories. The first category is that they have already put something in, they have an idea, they have a plan, they included a number of developing countries in their plan, Bangladesh is one of them, would we like to be their Bangladesh partner in that.”

His opinion on such relationships is straightforward, “That’s not partnership. That’s subcontracting.” While his organization will engage in this type of cooperation, it is not what they prefer. Instead, they seek relationships that can be lasting and collaborative.

“The other form of partnership...happens more through social capital. They know me, I know them, they come to me and say, ‘Well there’s this call. Should we put something in together? What do you think?’ And I get to put my ideas into the plan itself, the proposal itself. Then I own that proposal, we do it together.”

He emphasized that developing ideas together can improve research methodologically and in policy application. Especially when the non-academic partner organization is more familiar with the local context, it is crucial that academics follow their lead, even if that means deviating from initial research plans. Then, both partners should work together to publish academic papers and policy briefs to convey results to varied audiences.

It is also important that we academics recognize the broader experience that we gain working with NGOs. A genuine partnership can open our eyes to things not previously evident to us. At the same time, we should ensure that we contribute as much as we benefit. For

example, Dr. Huq explained that most of his team writes in English as a second language. Many have been educated exclusively in the Bangladeshi school system, which emphasizes rote learning over critical thinking. Working with academics trained in other contexts exposes his team to new ways to approach research questions and think about results. Even assisting with English language can be a huge help. “I think it’s an extremely healthy mutual learning,” he stated.

Dr. Huq’s perspectives on partnership stem from his broader philosophy about building and maintaining networks over the long term. He quipped, “My theme song is the Eagles’ song, ‘you can check out but you can’t leave’...you can check out from ICCCAD and go home, but you can’t leave.” This rings true to my experience— I keep coming back and engaging with ICCCAD even outside of Bangladesh. This discussion, for example, took place at the UN climate negotiations where I was helping with their events. Since most of ICCCAD’s partners do work related to climate change, Dr. Huq makes sure that they reconnect at the negotiations, to further solidify this network.

In Dr. Huq’s view, social capital is the more substantive benefit in building diverse partnerships. The research is important, but the relationships persist beyond it, and it is through these relationships that such collaborative research can continue. When partners consider each other as equals, and seek to both learn and contribute, there is much to be gained in both formal research and unexpected co-benefits from building long-term relationships.

Finally, what about policy? These relationships with NGOs are often imagined to lead to research that can inform policy. Dr. Huq cautions that this does not happen automatically. Researchers must ensure that their research is made actionable. ICCCAD has a strategy for that, through the workshops and seminars they hold for researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers. He elaborated:

“So we try and emphasize follow-up. It’s not just good enough teaching. One has to know what is done with what is taught. And that’s about capacitating them to do something. If they haven’t been capacitated to do something, all they’ve done is learn something. It’s not good enough. We’re teaching in order to do...It’s practicing, it’s changing behavior. It’s writing a paper, doing seminars. It doesn’t matter what it is but you have to go and *do* something. You just can’t acquire the knowledge and keep it to yourself.”

Right now, we keep research insights within the bubble of academia. By forming meaningful partnerships based on mutuality and relationship-building we can pop this bubble and have a greater impact on policy. We must open ourselves up to learn from non-academic organizations such as ICCCAD that have already done the work of building networks and connections with government agencies and policymakers. I hope that Dr. Huq’s insights can help inform our section’s collaborations to make our research more relevant.

SECTION NEWS & MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Proposed Section Bylaws Changes—From Section Chair

I worked with Section Council this past year to carefully deliberate and craft several modest but important proposed changes to our Section bylaws (detailed below). We did so through many conversations, quite a few email exchanges, all-Council conference calls in May and October 2019, our in-person Council meeting in August 2019, correspondence with ASA administrators, and an anonymous Council vote in October 2019. Per ASA policy, we submitted our proposed bylaws changes to ASA administration for review in November 2019, and ASA approved them. The following proposed bylaws changes will appear on the ASA ballot in April for all Section members to vote on. They are intended as steps toward fostering a more inclusive, meaningful, and positive space for all. They also adjust dated language in our bylaws and awards and bring them in line with ASA rules. You’ll see these items on the ballot in April – many thanks in advance for taking a few minutes to vote!

Bylaws Changes (cont'd)

1. First, council voted to propose that we add in our bylaws the following statement to the description of duties of each Section Officer and other Member of Council, which charges all of those positions with the responsibility to help create a more inclusive and diverse section: “As with all other Council members, this individual will participate actively in efforts to create a meaningful, positive, and inclusive space for participation of all members and to help diversify Section membership. This includes but is not limited to reading the most recent Racial Exclusion and Equity report; actively reflecting on their routine responsibilities and those of other Council members; suggesting changes to position responsibilities to implement positive practices; and contributing or soliciting 1-3 newsletter articles, email postings, or tweets per year that diversify our collective space. Additionally, each Council member’s annual report, due July 1, will include a section on ‘Racial Exclusion and Equity’ that summarizes their work over the year toward these ends.”
2. Second, council voted to propose adding to our bylaws a new standing committee called the Committee on Racial Exclusion and Equity. This committee will formalize what has been the Section’s ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity. As a reminder, the ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity was founded in 2016, partially in response to numerous section members’ concerns about insufficient attention to racial exclusion and racial inequity within the section. Members included Elisabeth Wilder, Lauren Richter, Michael Mascarenhas, Jennifer Carrera, and Raoul Liévanos. Their committee investigated racial and ethnic diversity within the section, assessing the professional climate for scholars of color, recommending changes in section policies and practices, organizing a mini-conference on race and the environment, editing a special issue of *Environmental Sociology* to showcase scholarship from that conference, and engaging environmental sociologists in laying the foundation for a more inclusive scholarly community. In 2018, Section Council expressed support for integrating the committee’s recommendations into all aspects of section practice; in fall 2019, council developed the new bylaw (first proposal above) that will enact this. Additionally, in 2018 and 2019 council meetings, Section Council expressed support for formalizing the committee from ad hoc to permanent status within the Section. To craft the bylaws language specifying the committee’s role and responsibilities, I worked with our Past-Chair Kari Norgaard, Secretary Hannah Holleman, and ad hoc Committee on Racial Equity members Jennifer Carrera, Raoul Liévanos, Lauren Richter, and Elisabeth Wilder. In October 2019, Council voted to propose new bylaws language that formally establishes a new standing committee called the Committee on Racial Exclusion and Equity, and we developed policy language that specifies the committee’s roles, responsibilities, and processes for appointment and succession of committee leadership and membership.
3. Third, council voted to propose that we amend Section bylaws to remove gendered language (replacing “he/she” with “they” in the bylaws).
4. Fourth, council voted to propose that we amend section bylaws language pertaining to many of our section awards. Three of these changes are substantive changes designed to reduce unintended institutional exclusion. ASA rules. You’ll see these items on the ballot in April – many thanks in advance for taking a few minutes to vote!
 - a. First, our bylaws currently state that, to be eligible for our publication awards, the applicant must be a member of ASA and our section at the time that they apply for the award. This innocuous-seeming requirement effectively requires that one must pay their membership dues in order to apply for the award. Although certainly we want to encourage folks to renew their memberships, this requirement precludes scholars who lack those funds from applying from our section awards. Our proposed bylaws revision thus specifies that the *winner* of each award must be a section member at the time that they *receive* the award (which is required by ASA).

- b. The second substantive change to awards bylaws language pertains to the Section’s Teaching and Mentoring Award and is designed to make the application process more accessible and less arduous for applicants. Namely, the proposed bylaws specify that applicants first only need to submit a brief nomination letter and that the awards committee will then request a complete nomination packet from a narrower selection of potential winners and/or their nominators.
- c. The third substantive change to our awards bylaws language pertains to the Section’s Practice and Outreach Award. Namely, we propose changing the bylaws so that the award “honors faculty members/scholar-activists who demonstrate outstanding practice and outreach contributions that advance equity in the context of socio-environmental relations.”
- d. The other proposed changes to awards bylaws language are simple bureaucratic adjustments that clarify unclear language, make language consistent across awards, and bring our awards names and bylaws language into line with ASA policies (e.g., ensuring that each award name includes our section name). If changes to the award section in our bylaws are approved by section membership, calls for nominations will be updated in accordance with the new language.

Note: Council and other Section members have informally proposed many additional ways in which our Section could more effectively address racial exclusion and sexual harassment and otherwise become a more inclusive and diverse space. This includes, as some of you will recall, a concern raised about the fact that the individuals honored in the names of our section awards are all white men and that this may unwittingly perpetuate a narrow and alienating message about “who we are” as a section and discipline. This proposal, like many others we received, deserves more discussion and consideration before we can decide whether and how to act on it, and you will hear more about many such proposals in the coming years as we deliberate them as Council and in conversation with you. Please feel free to reach out to me with questions or suggestions.

Environmental Sociology Beyond Academe

By Georgia Piggot (Stockholm Environment Institute), Anna McCreery (Elevate Energy), and Jessica Koski (BlueGreen Alliance)

As the academic job market tightens, and environmental challenges call for more urgent responses, some Environmental Sociology Section members may be thinking about career opportunities outside University settings. In this Q&A, three environmental sociologists who took their PhD into non- and alt-academic roles share their experiences for those interested in expanding their career horizons beyond the ivory tower. They are Georgia Piggot, Anna McCreery, and Jessica Koski. Their biosketches are shown after the interviews.

What does your job involve, and what sort of training is needed to land a job like yours?

Georgia: The motto of my organization is “bridging science and policy”, and I think that characterizes the work we do well. My job is a mix of primary research on policy-oriented topics, and summarizing existing work in plain language for policy audiences. Our research is supported by traditional academic funders, and contracted from government and NGO partners who need more in-depth analysis of climate policy topics.

The people we typically hire have good research and writing skills, along with demonstrable policy interest. In my case, the winning combination was my PhD training along with four years of State government climate policy experience. A PhD isn’t strictly necessary for this job, but many members of our team do have graduate training. When hiring, we look for an interesting portfolio of policy-oriented research and writing - whether that’s in peer-reviewed or public outlets is less important to us than the substance and impact of the work.

Anna: Our in-house research team provides data and analysis support to our programs, and leads research to advance the industry and make the case for more investment and better policy. I lead and manage research projects, including small requests like a literature review or basic descriptive statistics, or more complex analyses in collaboration with university-based partners.

I was originally hired as a Research Analyst and worked my way up by demonstrating the ability to lead analytic work and think strategically about client relationships and project outcomes. Our Research staff typically have an MA (especially among Senior Analysts and Managers), or a BA and a few years of experience. While my PhD isn't necessary, it is valued and enhances our team's credibility with research-oriented partners and funders. I also had some prior experience outside of academia, including a summer position at a non-profit. Experience writing for non-academic audiences is crucial, even if it's just a blog.

Jessica: A large part of my job is researching policy options and translating them for different audiences. Climate and labor policy are often complex with nuanced tradeoffs, so it's important to be able to pick out the most pertinent information that folks need to make good decisions and present that information in a way that's easily accessible. This is an area where graduate school prepared me well. It is also important to gain experience building relationships and collaborating with a lot of diverse stakeholders and to hone your facilitation skills.

How did you find your job?

Jessica: As I neared the end of my program, I knew that I didn't want to pursue a traditional academic career, but that was about all I knew. We weren't exposed to many other career paths, so I didn't have a clear idea of what a life outside academia could look like. Like any good doctoral student, I put my research skills to use! My first task was to create a long list of environmental leaders that inspired me. Next, I interviewed them to learn more about their day to day work life, how they found their jobs, and their advice on selling the skills I'd gained during my PhD to the advocacy world. One of the best pieces of advice that I got was just to start doing what I wanted to do in whatever way I could. That inspired me to reach out to

the Sierra Club. Lucky for me, they both needed volunteers and are extremely committed to helping individuals grow their advocacy skills. I gained a lot of real world organizing experience volunteering with the Sierra Club that ultimately proved crucial in helping me launch a career in enabling me to make the transition from academia to a career in advocacy.

Anna: I submitted a resume and cover letter. The more complicated process was identifying the types of jobs I was interested in and qualified for, learning how to effectively job search outside of academia, and turning my CV into a resume. I drew on my research skills and learned how to job search by reading (especially [So What Are You Going to Do with That? Finding Careers Outside Academia](#), by Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius), and conducting dozens of informational interviews to learn what type of jobs exist in different fields, what it's like to work in them, and what qualifications are necessary.

Georgia: I sort of stumbled into this job, in contrast with the more deliberate approach Jess and Anna took to career planning. I moved to Seattle for personal reasons part-way through my PhD, and was looking for volunteer or consulting gigs with environmental organizations to keep engaged in my new locale. SEI happened to be hiring at the time I moved, so I threw in an application. I wasn't a good fit for the role that was advertised, and the timing wasn't great for finishing up my PhD, but I figured that by applying I'd be on their radar for future work. Life doesn't always go as planned though, and I was offered a full-time position. Sometimes great opportunities arise when you least expect them, and I'm glad I decided to jump on this one when it became available. I realize that "lucky timing" is not particularly helpful advice for those seeking a similar role - if I were job hunting now I'd join the [IISD Climate Change Job Vacancy mailing list](#) to find a position like mine.

What's similar/different about your role and a traditional academic position?

Anna: As a small research team in a larger organization, my co-workers include building engineers, call center staff, field organizers, and other experts. Our staff have deep local knowledge to inform research questions and findings and support the research process. The day-to-day schedule is different from my

time in graduate school: I work standard 9ish to 5ish hours with some flexibility (for personal appointments, etc.), and I rarely work on the weekends. In terms of the research itself I can influence but not control topics and priorities, and the level of rigor varies from one project to another. Some of our work ends up in peer-reviewed journals, but most is published in policy-oriented factsheets, white papers, or unpublished. Part of my role is to help ensure staff on other teams communicate research results accurately and tempered by the strength of the evidence, especially when we need to balance research rigor with other considerations such as time, budget, and a focus on the mission.

Georgia: My experience has been that PhD career advising tends to create a sharp divide between academic and non-academic roles, but I'm definitely in a blurry area in-between. SEI-US is affiliated with Tufts Institute of Environment, so we have access to the resources of the University, and my Boston-based colleagues even teach courses from time-to-time. There are some key differences though. The work is more team-based than I've experienced in a University setting. Like Anna's role, it tends to be a 9-to-5 office culture. There's also a greater emphasis on policy engagement, from the local to international level. It's a good position for a research nerd who also wants to help move policy forward.

Jessica: There is still a large research and teaching component to my work, but it's deeply rooted in community needs and the real world social and political context. My graduate research was highly theoretical, so this was a big shift for me. My current work is also far more collaborative than my graduate work. Winning requires coalitions, so I am constantly working in partnership with other organizations. This is one of the most deeply rewarding parts of my job—growing a shared vision for our future and then working together to make it happen!

Georgia Piggot is a Senior Scientist in the Climate Policy team of the [Stockholm Environment Institute's US Center \(SEI\)](#). SEI is an international non-profit research and policy organization that tackles environment and development challenges. Georgia holds a BSc in Ecology from the University of Otago, MA in Environmental Management from the University

of Queensland, and PhD in Sociology from the University of British Columbia.

Anna McCreery is a Research Manager at [Elevate Energy](#), a nonprofit that designs and implements energy efficiency, solar, and other programs with a focus on serving low-income households. Anna holds a BA and MA in Sociology, and a PhD in Environmental Science from the Ohio State University.

Jessica Koski is the Washington State Policy Coordinator for the [BlueGreen Alliance](#), a coalition of environmental groups and unions that work together to seize our current environmental challenges as opportunities to create widely shared economic prosperity. Prior to this role, she was an organizer for the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign. Jessica holds a BA in Economics and Women's Studies from Bowdoin College and a PhD in Sociology from Northwestern University.

This Q&A was written under the auspices of the Environmental Sociology Policy and Research Committee. If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter, please reach out to the Policy and Research Committee Chair, Jack Zinda, jazinda@cornell.edu

CALLS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONVERGE Cultural Competence in Hazards and Disaster Research Training Module

The Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado Boulder is so pleased to share our newly released CONVERGE *Cultural Competence in Hazards and Disaster Research Training Module*. You can register for the free online module here:

<https://converge-training.colorado.edu/register/>

This is part of a larger series of online modules designed to accelerate the training of a diverse hazards and disaster workforce. These interactive, 30 to 60 minute courses cover a variety of topics that researchers and practitioners can use to quickly background themselves on research relevant to the study of extreme events. Upon successful completion of a 10 question quiz, users receive a certificate (so these can be useful for classroom assignments as well as other activities). For more information on the

CONVERGE modules, see <https://converge.colorado.edu/training-modules>.

You can sign up for free resources and additional updates at the CONVERGE website at: <https://converge.colorado.edu/signup>.

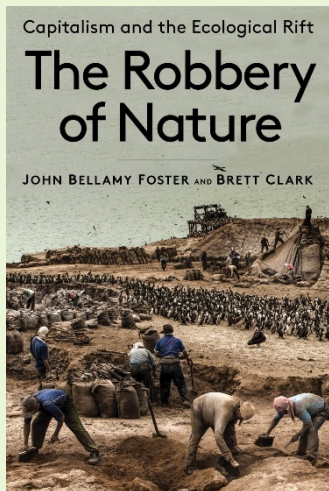
PUBLICATIONS

Books

The Robbery of Nature

John Bellamy and Brett Clark
(New York: Monthly Review Press, 2020)
<https://monthlyreview.org/product/the-robbery-of-nature/>

In the nineteenth century, Karl Marx, inspired by the German chemist Justus von Liebig, argued that capitalism's relation to its natural environment was that of a *robbery* system, leading to an irreparable *rift* in the metabolism between humanity and nature. In the



twenty-first century, these classical insights into capitalism's degradation of the earth have become the basis of extraordinary advances in critical theory and practice associated with contemporary ecosocialism. In *The Robbery of Nature*, John Bellamy Foster and Brett Clark, working within this historical tradition, examine

capitalism's plundering of nature via commodity production, and how it has led to the current anthropogenic rift in the Earth System. Departing from much previous scholarship, Foster and Clark adopt a materialist and dialectical approach, bridging the gap between social and environmental critiques of capitalism. The ecological crisis, they explain, extends beyond questions of traditional class struggle to a corporeal rift in the physical organization of living beings themselves, raising critical issues of social reproduction, racial capitalism, alienated speciesism, and ecological imperialism. No one, they conclude, following Marx, owns the earth. Instead we must maintain it for future generations and the innumerable, diverse inhabitants of

the planet as part of a process of sustainable human development.

John Bellamy Foster is editor of *Monthly Review* and a professor of sociology at the University of Oregon.

Brett Clark is associate editor of *Monthly Review* and a professor of sociology at the University of Utah.

The Conservation Revolution: Radical Ideas for Saving Nature Beyond the Anthropocene

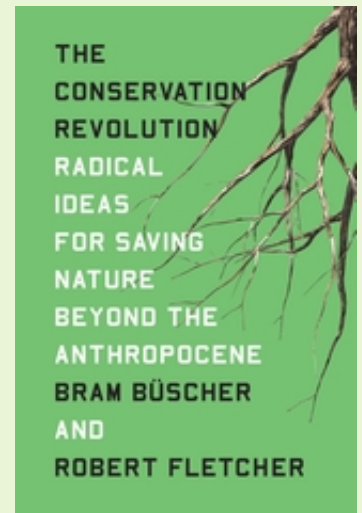
Rob Fletcher and Bram Büscher
(Tuscon, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2020)

Conservation needs a revolution. This is the only way it can contribute to the drastic transformations needed to come to a truly sustainable model of development. The good news is that conservation is ready for revolution.

Heated debates about the rise of the Anthropocene and the current 'sixth extinction' crisis demonstrate an urgent need and desire to move beyond mainstream approaches. Yet the conservation community is deeply divided over where to go from here. Some want to place 'half

earth' into protected areas. Others want to move away from parks to focus on unexpected and 'new' natures. Many believe conservation requires full integration into capitalist production processes.

Building on a razor-sharp critique of current conservation proposals and their contradictions, Büscher and Fletcher argue that the Anthropocene challenge demands something bigger, better and bolder. Something truly revolutionary. They propose convivial conservation as the way forward. This approach goes beyond protected areas and faith in markets to incorporate the needs of humans and nonhumans within integrated and just landscapes. Theoretically astute and practically relevant, *The Conservation Revolution* offers a manifesto for



conservation in the 21st century - a clarion call that cannot be ignored.

Bram Büscher is Professor and Chair of the Sociology of Development and Change group at Wageningen University and holds visiting positions at the University of Johannesburg and Stellenbosch University.

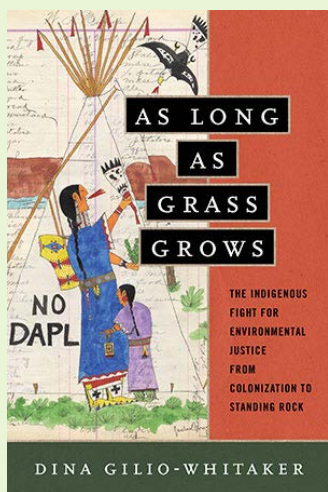
Robert Fletcher is Associate Professor in the Sociology of Development and Change group at Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice from Colonization to Standing Rock

Dina Gilio-Whitaker
(Boston: Beacon Press)
<http://www.beacon.org/As-Long-as-Grass-Grows-P1445.aspx>

Through the unique lens of “Indigenized environmental justice,” Indigenous researcher and activist Dina Gilio-Whitaker explores the fraught history of treaty violations, struggles for food and water security, and protection of sacred sites, while highlighting the important leadership of Indigenous women in this centuries-long struggle. *As Long As Grass Grows* gives readers an accessible history of Indigenous resistance to government and corporate incursions on their lands and offers new approaches to environmental justice activism and policy.

Throughout 2016, the Standing Rock protest put a national spotlight on Indigenous activists, but it also



underscored how little Americans know about the longtime historical tensions between Native peoples and the mainstream environmental movement. Ultimately, she argues, modern environmentalists must look to the history of Indigenous resistance for wisdom and inspiration in our common fight for a just and sustainable future.

Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Colville Confederated Tribes) is the policy director and a senior research associate at the Center for World Indigenous Studies and teaches American Indian Studies at California State University San Marcos.

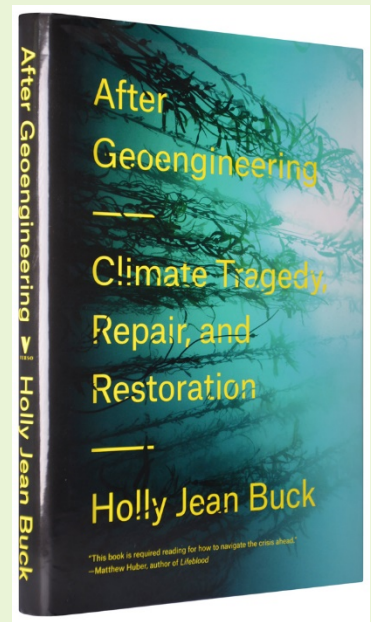
After Geoengineering: Climate Tragedy, Repair, and Restoration

Holly Jean Buck
(London: Verso, 2019)
<https://www.versobooks.com/books/3091-the-world-after-geoengineering>

What if the people seized the means of climate production?

The window for action on climate change is closing rapidly. We are hurtling ever faster towards climate catastrophe—the destruction of a habitable world for many species, perhaps

the near-extinction of our own. As anxieties about global temperatures soar, demands for urgent action grow louder. What can be done? Can this process be reversed? Once temperatures rise, is there any going back? Some are thinking about releasing aerosols into the stratosphere in order to reflect sunlight back into space and cool the earth. And this may be necessary, if it actually works. But it would only be the beginning; it's what comes after that counts.



In this groundbreaking book, Holly Jean Buck charts a possible course to a liveable future. Climate restoration will require not just innovative technologies to remove carbon from the atmosphere, but social and economic transformation. The steps we must take are enormous, and they must be taken soon. Looking at industrial-scale seaweed farms, the grinding of rocks to sequester carbon at the bottom of the sea, the restoration of wetlands, and reforestation, Buck examines possible

methods for such transformations and meets the people developing them.

Both critical and utopian, speculative and realistic, *After Geoengineering* presents a series of possible futures. Rejecting the idea that technological solutions are some kind of easy workaround, Holly Jean Buck outlines the kind of social transformation that will be necessary to repair our relationship to the earth if we are to continue living here.

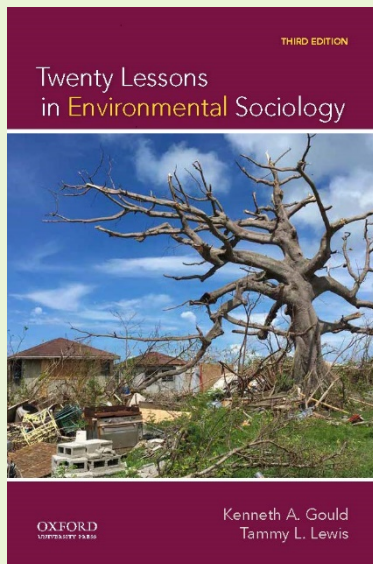
Holly Buck Ph.D. is NatureNet Postdoctoral Fellow at the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability

Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology, 3rd Edition

Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, Eds.
(Oxford University Press, 2020)

Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology introduces undergraduates to the topic in an innovative way.

Instead of compiling articles from professional journals, this reader presents twenty classroom-tested "lessons" from dedicated, experienced teachers and researchers



in the field. Building the collection on the model of a successful undergraduate classroom experience, the coeditors asked the contributors to choose a topic, match it with their favorite lecture, and construct a lesson to reflect the way that they teach it in the classroom. The result is an engaging and versatile volume that

presents the core ideas of environmental sociology in concise, accessible chapters. Significant changes to the new edition include:

1. Completely new lessons on "Theories in Environmental Sociology" (by Justin Myers), "The Sociology of Environmental Health" (by Norah Mackendrick), and "U.S. Environmental

Movements" (by Jill Lindsey Harrison). These lessons are written by new contributors.

2. A brand-new lesson on "Climate Change" (by Laura McKinney, a new contributor).
3. A greater focus on issues of gender inequality and Indigenous peoples throughout the world.
4. Updated data and examples in lessons.
5. An invitation from the authors for students to post photos that represent the book's themes on social media, using hashtags linked to the book.
6. An accompanying instructors' guide.

Kenneth A. Gould is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Urban Sustainability Program, Brooklyn College, and professor of sociology, and earth and environmental sciences, CUNY Graduate Center.

Tammy L. Lewis is Professor of Sociology and Associate Provost for Faculty & Administration (Interim) at Brooklyn College/CUNY.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Adua, Lazarus and Linda Lobao. Forthcoming 2020.

"The Political-Economy of Local Land-Use Policy: Place-Making and the Relative Power of Business, Civil Society, and Government." *The Sociological Quarterly*. DOI: 10.1080/00380253.2020.1756517.

Adua, Lazarus, Brett Clark, Richard York, and Chien-fei Chen. 2019. "Modernizing Our Way Out or Digging Ourselves In? Reconsidering the Impacts of Efficiency Innovations and Affluence on Residential Energy Consumption, 2005-2015." *Journal of Environmental Management* 252: 109659.

Alook, Angele, Ian Hussey, and Nicole Hill. 2019. *Indigenous Gendered Experiences of Work in an Oil-Dependent, Rural Alberta Community (A Research Report)*. Edmonton: Parkland Institute . https://www.parklandinstitute.ca/indigenous_gendered_experiences_of_work.

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TRANSITION

Career

Tracy Perkins, who currently chairs the Nominations Committee of the section, is leaving Howard University this summer to start a new position as an Assistant Professor in the School for Social Transformation at Arizona State University in August. Congratulations!

Caleb Scoville (Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology at UC Berkley) will join Tufts University as an Assistant Professor of Sociology with a faculty affiliation in Environmental Studies starting in fall 2020. Congratulations!