Environmental Sociology List

Environmental Sociology List ................................................................. 1

General parameters .................................................................................. 1
1. Overview Pieces (8) ................................................................................. 2
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 2
2. Origins of Environmental Sociology (13) ............................................... 2
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 3
3. Political Economy of the Environment (17) ............................................. 3
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 4
4. Ecological Modernization Theory (6) ...................................................... 4
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 5
5. Social Construction and Environmental Realism (13) ............................. 5
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 6
6. Environmental Knowledge Production (14) ............................................. 6
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 7
7. Gender and the Environment (15 units) ................................................... 7
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 8
8. Culture, Consumption and the Environment (14) ..................................... 8
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 9
9. Globalization, Global Commons, Global Environment (10) ..................... 9
   Supplementary ......................................................................................... 10
10. Risk, Disasters, and Catastrophic Events (17) .......................................... 10
    Supplementary ......................................................................................... 11
11. Social Movements (13) .......................................................................... 11
    Supplementary ......................................................................................... 12
12. Environmental Justice (14) .................................................................... 12
    Supplementary ......................................................................................... 13
13. Public Policy, Governance and the State (17) .......................................... 13
    Supplementary .........................................................................................

General parameters
Goal: approximately 10-16 units per section (total list should be 150-200 readings). Book 200 pages + = 5 units; Book 100-200 pages = 3 units; Book with less than 100 pages = 1 unit.

Each Supplementary list should include 3-4 readings (or fewer if they are books).

Students only read 2 Supplementary lists from the entire list.

Total = 172 (as of Feb 23 2017).


March 1 2017
1. Overview Pieces (8)

In this section, you will read overview articles and chapters that help you gain a bird’s-eye view of the entire field of environmental sociology. By reading these pieces, you will also begin to develop a very general perspective on the human-environment relationship and how it is studied from a social scientific perspective. Students interested in understanding more about the historical evolution of the human-nature relationship are encouraged to read the supplementary readings found below.


Supplementary

*NOTE: This supplementary section will be of particular interest to students who are interested in the history of human-nature interactions, especially as written from the perspective of professional historians.*


2. Origins of Environmental Sociology (13)

This section contains seminal pieces in the development of environmental sociology. In this section, you will encounter some of the most influential voices in early environmental sociology: Fred Buttel, Riley Dunlap, Allan Schnaiberg, and John Bellamy Foster. Some of these articles may seem outdated, but they remain essential to understanding the development of the subfield. The readings in this section encourage you to make connections to classical sociological theory – especially Marx and Weber.


**Supplementary**


3. **Political Economy of the Environment (17)**

*This is one of the major perspectives in the environmental sociological literature. Environmental problems are, to a large degree, material problems, and this body of work addresses what this means in terms of capitalism and alternative forms of economic organization.*


**Supplementary**


4. **Ecological Modernization Theory (6)**

*Ecological modernization theory is often presented as a contrast to a Marxian political economic perspective on the environment. It seeks to identify how modernization and late capitalism can, in fact, facilitate environmental protections.*


Supplementary

Elements of ecological modernization theory have been adopted by some business leaders. The Hawken et al book is included here as one example.


5. Social Construction and Environmental Realism (13)

Perhaps the liveliest and longest-lasting disagreement in environmental sociology is between social constructionists and realists. This section offers up an overview of this debate, as well as introducing some more recent efforts at reconciling the two perspectives.


**Supplementary**


6. Environmental Knowledge Production (14)

Readings in this section address epistemological and ontological questions about environmental processes. How do we develop knowledge about nature? What, if anything, separates nature from society and politics? What role does skepticism, ignorance, and gaps in knowledge play in the construction of environmental problems? What is distinctive about how scientists produce and disseminate knowledge about environmental processes? You might note that many of the readings and themes in this section overlap with science and technology studies and the sociology of knowledge. Some of these studies have a distinctly theoretical and even technical bent, although engaging with these particular “ways of knowing” is critical to understanding political struggles over pressing environmental problems like population health, toxic exposure, and climate change.


Supplementary


7. Gender and the Environment (15 units)

Articles in this section build on an established feminist tradition of interrogating connections between the exploitation of women and natural resources. Scholars here do not limit themselves to the study of women (as a biological sex), and they avoid essentialist theorizing about male/female dualism. Instead, they incorporate nuanced theories of gender as well as multiple intersecting spheres of oppression and exploitation. One important feature to note when reading this section: despite a long noted empirical phenomena whereby women express more pro-environmental behaviors than men, scholars in this area (e.g., Banerjee and Bell 2007; Huddart Kennedy and Dzialo 2015) believe that mainstream environmental social science continues to neglect gender.


**Supplementary**


8. **Culture, Consumption and the Environment (14)**

These readings focus on the interactions between human culture, consumption, and the natural environment. You will encounter readings on human relationships with animals, food as a symbol of the natural world, as well as readings that address the sustainability of consumer culture. Some of the articles in this section are by scholars (e.g., Jerolmack, Grazian) that look at humans’ relationship with non-human animals (e.g., pigeons, zoo animals) in a general way. Other articles in this section have a more focussed attempt to theorize the ways human behavior is environmentally significant and/or unsustainable.


**Supplementary**


**9. Globalization, Global Commons, Global Environment (10)**

*Environmental sociology must contend with the globalization of culture, resources flows, capital, and ideas. This section explores tension between various geographic scales (e.g., the national and the global), issues of the global commons, power inequalities in the global political economy, as well as how the field has moved to try and adapt a more global (and less Eurocentric / US-centric) perspective.*


**Supplementary**


**10. Risk, Disasters, and Catastrophic Events (17)**

*One key issue that environmental sociologists increasingly contend with is environmental catastrophe – what happens when the natural world move out of the backdrop of social life and becomes part of dramatic, even violent upheavals? Authors in this section contend with environmental disasters ranging from climate change to Hurricane Katrina to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. A key theme to consider in this section is risk and whether the modern era can be categorized as a distinct “risk society.”*


**Supplementary**


### 11. **Social Movements (13)**

This section of the list addresses political struggles over the environment, understanding politics broadly as the arena of power where individuals and communities struggle to determine the distribution of authority, legitimacy and material resources. Environmental movements are important phenomena for study in their own right. They also should be understood as a major social impetus for the development of environmental sociology as a subfield. These readings should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Justice readings, many of which could have been listed here, too.


Stoddart, Mark C.J. and David B. Tindall. 2010. “We’ve also become Quite Good Friends: Environmentalists, Social Networks and Social Comparison in British Columbia.” *Social Movement Studies*, 9(3): 253 – 271. [1 unit]

**Supplementary**


12. **Environmental Justice (14)**

One of the most significant developments in U.S. environmental politics was the emergence of the environmental justice movement in the 1980s. Much like the field of environmental sociology writ large, the sociology of environmental justice has evolved hand in hand with the EJ movement. Many of the sociologists working in this field understand themselves as scholar-activists who themselves have helped to foster the movement. As a global EJ movement has emerged, the scholarship has taken on a more global perspective (although that is underrepresented in this list).


**Supplementary**


13. Public Policy, Governance and the State (17)

This final section engages with academic scholarship studying the intersection of environmental issues, governance and the state. Although politics and environmental policy are prevalent themes across much of the scholarship in environmental sociology, here the policymaking process and governance are the central focus. In particular, many of these readings build upon Michel Foucault’s seminal ideas about “governmentality,” or the techniques and strategies through which societies and ecological systems are made accessible to the power and control of the state.


Supplementary
