

SYLLABUS: Sociology of the Climate Emergency Spring 2022

SOCIOL 139-LEC-001

Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley

Winter 2021 / Tuesday and Thursday 5:00 - 6:30 pm / Social Science Building Room 20

Course Taught Online January 18-27; in person thereafter



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Email: dacohen@berkeley.edu

Reader: [Dennis Best](#), Energy and Resources Group

Office hours and location:

Wednesday 3-5 pm. [Book here](#). Please email directly if you are unable to find a time on Calendly.

IMPORTANT:

- See <https://bit.ly/SocClimateEmergencySpring22> for a live-updated syllabus. (Note: capitalization for the link.)
- Class will initially meet on zoom from January 18-27. **The zoom link is available on the bCourses webpage for the class.** We will all need to be flexible during this very challenging Omicron wave. I will adjust the class as we go. The first four remote sessions will run a max of 75 minutes in light of zoom fatigue. If remote learning is extended substantially, I will adjust the course format.

I will continue to survey students throughout the semester to fine-tune the class, given the unpredictable nature of this crisis, and online learning for all of us here at Cal. Course materials may also be adjusted based on student feedback. All readings will be available by link (eg magazine articles) on bCourses, unless noted otherwise.

Basics :

We live in a terrifying time of great uncertainty. We must all adapt as best we can, trying to meet each other's needs. We will have to improvise, with at least two weeks of remote instruction, and potentially more. Please fill out the survey linked above, to help me customize the course to meet your needs.

Further notes on course elements and meeting times.

- You will be expected to submit a 150-200 word discussion post on bCourses by 10 pm on the Monday night before the Tuesday class, and comment on at least two other students' posts before class; you may skip the online posts for three classes at your discretion.

- Every class will include some time in breakout groups where you discuss core concepts from the readings and lectures, and complete short surveys via google forms. I'll ask some breakout groups to report back, to ensure that we know what's going on with the readings and the course's core ideas.
- Each class includes an audio-visual component to vary the learning method; often, it is a chance to meet one of the readings' authors.
- The reading load of the course is moderate. But please note, in many classes you have the *option* to select which readings you want to do. I will use surveys to assess reading progress throughout the course, and will adjust as needed to ensure that the reading load is manageable.
- I have included "recommended readings" *in case you want to deepen your knowledge*. These are entirely optional, and you are not expected to cite these readings in your weekly reflections, or in your take-home essays.

Intellectual agenda:

The climate emergency is in many ways new. And it is urgent beyond words. The world's best scientists have said that to have a good chance of keeping global heating to the safest level of heating (1.5 degrees Celsius), we must cut global carbon emissions by nearly half by 2030, and must make "[far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society](#)." (Or, as Naomi Klein puts it, we must "change everything.") But. If we only consider the current emergency in terms of the last five, ten, one hundred, or even one thousand years, we may fail to understand some of the fundamental reasons why we are in this emergency; and by misdiagnosing the cause, we may pursue inadequate solutions. Likewise, because heat-trapping greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are so profoundly entwined in our energy and land use systems; our political economy; and our intersecting systems of patriarchy, white supremacy, and colonialism; it is impossible to pursue GHG reductions in isolation from these broader dynamics.

Indeed, we are in the midst of a radical environmental turn across the social sciences. Cutting-edge scholars across the social sciences and humanities are interrogating every foundation of their discipline.

Sociology, for instance, has long been organized around the idea of “social facts,” an idea from the 19th century. But scholars are increasingly recognizing that the idea that we do (or should) belong to a society “separate” from nature is an illusion—or, more precisely, an ideology used to justify European colonialism, and to celebrate a certain form of privileged lifestyle more generally. To make sense of the climate emergency, we need a new common sense. And to sustain that common sense, we have to revise and improve our concepts and empirical accounts of the past—down to the most basic ways that human beings have related to non-human nature since the emergence of our species. We thus devote three weeks to Simon Lewis’s and Mark Maslin’s *The Human Planet*, a brilliant historical synthesis of new developments in a wide range of fields, combining earth systems analysis with the histories of organized social life, capitalism, and colonialism.

This course first begins with a brief sketch of the core climate challenges. Then, through a reading of *The Human Planet*, it undertakes a more holistic, historical approach, which we continue through classic and new work on Black Reconstruction and Indigenious struggles. The historical re-grounding makes up the first half of the class. The second half of the class surveys some of the leading social science, especially sociology, on the climate crisis, building on that broader foundation. We work toward a consideration of whether a “Green New Deal” approach, broadly understood, can address the climate emergency. Shorter: we first situate the climate emergency in some broad historical developments in humans relationship to nature—especially capitalism and colonialism—and then we explore a handful of contemporary social science of climate debates in light of those foundations.

The fundamental goal of the course is to equip you intellectually to better *understand* the climate emergency—its causes, its entanglements with other issues, and some potential strategies for stabilizing the climate—from a critical social science perspective, anchored in sociology. My hope is that this deeper, more contextual understanding will sharpen your analysis of contemporary climate policy struggles.

We are on a tight timeline. We do have many ways to act. I hope this class will be as helpful for people who are doing activism right now as for those who are less certain about whether or how to take action. It should also help those focused on building research careers, whether in or outside academia. All the historical readings are designed to enrich our understanding of the present moment, and our futures. And while covid protocols and the lecture format will limit our interactions to some extent, we will all work to learn from each other, with each of us bringing unique perspectives, back-stories, interests, and experiences into the conversation. Although this is a text-heavy class, we will be connecting the texts to our everyday lives. We have one decade to make major changes to the global economy—this isn't an "academic" exercise.

I have thought carefully about which materials to include in the class. That being said, I am open to significant revision of the topics covered. (Eg, given limited time, we do not cover issues like social movement organizing, labor, or urban politics, and instead cover topics like climate diplomacy and social psychology. Choices are inevitable; but some of the choices here are somewhat arbitrary and we can adjust the topical focus of some weeks to students' interests.)

Lectures:

Each class will feature lectures and some small-group discussions. I'll use lectures to highlight the core arguments of class readings, the core evidence supporting those arguments, and to lay out additional context and ideas. We'll use small-group discussions and google quizzes to ensure that students are following along, and to provide spaces for them to share their own ideas and interpretations. I will always use the lectures to explain core methods and ideas in (environmental) social science. And I will devote class time to developing some of the core reading and writing skills needed to excel in this and other social science courses.

Readings:

All readings will be made available online through bCourses. You're also encouraged, but not required, to keep up with news about climate change. The readings in the first half of the class are designed to provide an intellectual foundation for thinking about climate change in its full social and historical context. The readings in the second half of the class are designed to equip students to analyze some key controversies in contemporary climate politics, including tools that can be used for any number of additional issues. The class will split attention between the United States and the rest of the world, with a slight majority of the focus being on the U.S.

Attendance:

Doing the readings and attending class are required. You're always expected to show up with something to say about the readings, and to be prepared to partake in group work and online surveys.

That being said, if you are feeling any potential covid symptoms, if you have tested positive, if you have been exposed, or you should otherwise be in quarantine, please do not attend! I

will make course slides, an audio recording of the class, and all course-related materials available on bCourses.

Professionalism:

Professionalism is important at Berkeley for staff, faculty, and students. In the classroom, it implies the following: (a) being accountable and taking responsibility for your actions; (b) keeping appointments; (c) being honest; (d) being engaged with the topic and the class; (e) communicating clearly and concisely in class and over email; (f) arriving on time and ready to work; (h) keeping the professor aware of any situations that might affect your performance; and (i) fostering a relationship of mutual respect—**no sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise disrespectful comments will be tolerated.**

Assignments:

This is a twice-weekly lecture class with a modest reading load.

Participation (40 pts):

- You are expected to post 150-200 word reactions to the readings on bCourses each week. The reaction post is due by 10 p.m. on Monday evening. **No reaction is required for the first week.** You can skip an additional three weeks without penalty. Overall, then, you must do 10 discussion posts.
- I will provide reaction prompts and open a forum on bCourses no later than the weekend before the reaction posts are due. You are welcome to react to my prompt. But it is not required! As long as your reaction is thoughtful, the format is flexible. Write what moves you. You may find it helpful to use the reaction posts to *both* clarify something that seemed confusing *and* take the chance to express an opinion, some uncertainty, and/or connect dots between readings—whatever gets your neurons firing.
- I will read your reactions before finalizing course lectures.
- You are also expected to write brief responses to two other students' reactions. And you can respond more, of course, when interesting threads develop.
 - Note: We will read but not “grade” the reaction posts in detail. If your reaction post completely lacks care, you will receive only partial credit that week.
 - If you write reaction posts for 11 weeks, including responses to other students' posts, you will get full participation credit.
- In addition, you are expected to participate in small-group discussions on zoom and in class, as well as online polls taken during class.
- During a covid wave, taking attendance during lectures is impractical. We hope you will attend the lectures to take advantage of the intellectual community, and to participate in it; and because it will make it vastly easier for you to write thoughtful, compelling take-home essays. Ideas live *both* in the texts where they are expressed (as well as videos, audio recordings, and other media) *and* in our live conversations about them.

“Take-home” midterm assignment (30 points), distributed Feb 25th, due March 9th, 12 pm:

- You will have over a week to answer two short essay prompts, with texts of 1500-2000 words each. You will have a choice between prompts. The point isn't to provide a gotcha test, but to give you the chance to develop an argument based on your engagement with the course material.
- **Late submissions will be penalized at the rate of 1 pt (out of 30) per day for up to 5 days. After 5 days, take-homes will only be accepted under extremely extenuating circumstances.**

“Take-home” final assignment (30 points), distributed April 22nd, due May 8, 10 pm:

- You will have over a week to answer two short essay prompts, with texts of 1500-2000 words each. You will have a choice between prompts. The point isn't to provide a gotcha test, but to give you the chance to develop an argument based on your engagement with the course material.

Pandemic spring updates:

- Everybody will get +1 (out of 30) added to their midterm grade
- Everybody will get +6 added to their participation score
- Everybody will get the chance to make up 3 missed discussion posts, for a total potential score of 12 points; there is a separate discussion thread for make-up posts. EVERY make-up post should indicate the week it refers to. This is due by May 8—*no extensions*.
- There will be an additional optional assignment: a reaction post to Dennis Best's lecture, worth up to 4 points, in the same way as the discussion post. That's due by April 28.
- Maximum participation score, with these additional elements, is 44/40.
- Those who hand in the final by May 6th at 10 pm will get one extra point.
- Take homes will only be accepted as late as May 12. NO LATER. Late takehomes will be penalized at 0.5 points per day.

Care:

This is an extremely difficult time—and for many of us, challenging at the most basic levels of economic survival, mental well-being, physical health, and so on. Basic collective care and self-care come first. We will be sure to check in with each other. And I will of course not penalize anyone facing the kinds of challenges that make ordinary coursework even more difficult. Berkeley has policies and resources, there are many mutual aid groups on campus and in communities in the East Bay and elsewhere. If students feel that they are lacking information on potential support systems, we will create a shared database. [Support Resources](#) include emotional, physical, safety, social, and other basic wellbeing resources for students. Academic resources can be found at the [Student Learning Center](#) and [English Language Resource](#) sites. Berkeley's Office of Emergency Management has resources to [prepare for emergencies](#).

The pandemic has made all of this harder. A large number of students will have direct caregiving responsibilities in their lives—including of family members, friends, partners, and other members of their communities. This essential work cannot be devalued or ignored. This course is organized to maximize student flexibility during this challenging time, by emphasizing continuous learning through reading (including options on what to choose to read), weekly reaction posts (three of which can be skipped at no penalty), and just two open-ended written assignments. Consistent small-group work online and in person will offer opportunities for peer learning. Please let me know if your caregiving responsibilities are creating problems that require additional adjustments to evaluation.

Basic Needs:

If you are facing challenges securing food or housing during the semester, please seek out resources for support and help. It can be challenging to do your best in class if you are having trouble meeting your basic needs. You can find a list of key campus resources at the following webpage (<https://basicneeds.berkeley.edu/>) as well as information about accessing the [UC Berkeley Food](#)

[Pantry](#). Additionally, please notify me of your situation if you are comfortable doing so as this will allow me to make necessary class accommodations or assist you as I can within my capacity.

Students with Disabilities:

If you require course accommodations due to a physical, emotional, or learning disability, contact [UC Berkeley's Disabled Students' Program \(DSP\)](#). Notify the instructor and GSI through course email of the accommodations you would like to use. You must have a Letter of Accommodation on file with UC Berkeley to have accommodations made in the course.

UC Berkeley is committed to providing robust educational experiences for all learners. With this goal in mind, we have activated the ALLY tool for this course. You will now be able to download reading materials in a format that best fits your learning preference (i.e., PDF, HTML, EPUB, and MP3). For more information visit the alternative formats link or watch the video entitled, "[Ally in bCourses](#)."

Diversity Statement:

Consistent with UC Berkeley's [Principles of Community](#), we are all responsible for creating an inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives—expressed through race and ethnicity, culture, gender identities and sexual orientations, political and social views, religious and spiritual beliefs, learning and physical abilities, language and geographic characteristics, age, veteran status, and social or economic classes—are recognized, respected, and seen as a source of strength. Everyone is expected to treat everyone else with respect and dignity. I welcome suggestions on how to further incorporate diversity into the course in a meaningful way. Climate change in particular can be a distressing and stressful topic—especially in the context of a global pandemic! We will be patient and understanding with each other. And we will recognize that there are no intrinsically right answers on many of the questions we take up. (The class does, however, presuppose an acceptance of the overwhelming, international scientific consensus on the basics of climate science.)

Pronouns:

I will address you by your preferred pronouns (and names) in class. I expect everyone to use the preferred pronouns of the person with whom they are communicating. Pronouns are important aspects of speech that are used to refer to others instead of using their name. Using the preferred pronouns is part of respectful and caring communication. More information on preferred pronouns is available on the following website: <https://www.mypronouns.org/sharing>

Mental Health and Wellness:

All students — regardless of background or identity — may experience a range of issues that can become barriers to learning. These issues include, but are not limited to, strained relationships, anxiety, depression, alcohol and other drug problems, difficulties with concentration, sleep, and eating, and/or lack of motivation. Such mental health concerns can diminish both academic performance and the capacity to participate in daily activities. In the event that you need mental health support, or are concerned about a friend, UC Berkeley offers many services, such as free short-term counseling at University Health Services. An excellent campus website having links to many resources is: <http://recalibrate.berkeley.edu/>. Another campus website addressing mental health services in specific reference to this time of the coronavirus pandemic is: <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/coronavirus/student-mental-health>. *Remember that seeking help is a good and courageous thing to do — both for yourself and for those who care about you.*

Grading:

The course is designed to keep students working at a relatively even pace throughout the semester. The mid-term and the final are designed to reward careful reading and engagement during class. In particular, they invite students to develop *their own arguments and ideas about climate and society, and to develop those ideas in writing form.*

Final grade:

≥ 93 points = A

90-92 points = A-

87-89 points = B+

83-86 points = B

80-82 points = B-

77-79 points = C+

73-76 points = C

70-72 points = C-

67-69 points = D+

63-66 points = D

≤ 63 points = F

Some more notes:

There is a bCourses site for this course. You are responsible for ensuring that you can access it, and for checking it regularly. I will post zoom links to all online classes the morning before class. If you miss a class, you are responsible for learning whether any changes have been announced during your absence. And you are responsible for finding out from other students what you have missed.

Any instances of plagiarism will result in severe penalties, up to and including a failing grade in the course and additional penalties.

You are expected to familiarize yourself with UC Berkeley's policies on [plagiarism and academic integrity](#), and the [potential consequences of plagiarism](#).

UC Berkeley's [policy](#) states:

Plagiarism is defined as use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source, for example:

- Wholesale copying of passages from works of others into your homework, essay, term paper, or dissertation without acknowledgment.
- Use of the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing of another person's characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device without acknowledgment.

And UC Berkeley warns of the [following consequences](#):

If a student is found responsible for academic misconduct through the Center for Student Conduct's process there will be a resolution plan, which will include University sanctions. Sanctions range from a non-reportable warning through dismissal from the University. In most cases, resolution plans will also include educational sanctions such as reflective writing assignment, activities, and workshops.

The good news is that avoiding this kind of problem is simple! Produce the creative, original work that you are more than capable of. This resource is also helpful on what constitutes plagiarism:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/how-to-avoid-plagiarism.html>

CLASS SCHEDULE: Readings, audio-visual content, and assignments

For your own time management and efficiency of brain flow, you're encouraged to do the full week's reading in advance of the Tuesday class, or at least as much as possible.

WEEK 1: Welcome to the Climate Emergency

January 18:

- *No reading required.*
- Take online quiz on needs and hopes for course.

January 20:

- Roberts, David. 2020. "[The scariest thing about global warming \(and Covid-19\).](#)" *Vox*. July 7. 2020.
- Mary Heglar. 2019. "[Climate Change Isn't the First Existential Threat.](#)" *Medium*.
- McKibben, Bill. "[Global Warming's Terrifying New Math.](#)" *Rolling Stone*.
- Meyer, Robinson. 2021. "[It's Grim. The latest UN report is clear: Climate change is here, it's a crisis, and it's caused by fossil fuels.](#)"
- Meyer, Robinson. 2019. "[This Land Is the Only Land There Is.](#)" *The Atlantic*.
- Cohen, Daniel Aldana and Dan Kammen. 2020. "[Climate crisis will deepen the pandemic. A green stimulus plan can tackle both.](#)" *The Guardian*.
- Harvey, Fiona. 2020. "[Emissions will hit record high by 2023 if green recovery fails, says IEA.](#)" *The Guardian*.
- Táíwò, Olúfẹ́mi O. 2020. "[Climate Apartheid Is the Coming Police Violence Crisis.](#)" *Dissent*.

Audio-visual:

- [Greta Thunberg full speech at UN Climate Change COP25 - Climate Emergency Event.](#)
- [Raj Patel On Chicken Nuggets And Capitalism.](#) *Now This*.
- [Daniel Aldana Cohen, Penn 1.5 C lecture series.](#)

Climate Science Background: This course doesn't go in-depth on climate science, although key summaries are found in the readings, especially the fundamentals of climate science as presented in *Human Planet*. The most reliable climate science explainers can be found at www.carbonbrief.org; for instance, see their [in-depth Q&A on the last major international climate science report](#) (the IPCC's 2021 AR6 report summarizing recent climate science).

PART 1: HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

WEEK 2: The long history of climate change, part 1

January 25:

- Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin. 2018. *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. Yale University Press. Introduction, Chapters 1. (Digital scan available on bCourses)

January 27:

- Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin. 2018. *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. Yale University Press. Chapter 3.
- Steffen, Will, Paul J. Crutzen and John R. McNeill. 2007. The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature? *Ambio*. (36)8, 614-621
- Panko, B. [“The Supposedly Pristine, Untouched Amazon Rainforest Was Actually Shaped By Humans.”](#) *Smithsonian Magazine*. March 13, 2017.

Recommended reading:

- Levis, C. et al. 2017. [“Persistent effects of pre-Columbian plant domestication on Amazonian forest composition.”](#) *Science*. 03 Mar 2017. (355)6328, 925-931.
- Graeber, David and David Wengrow. 2021. *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Audio-visual:

- [The End of the World? Award-winning scientists Profs Simon Lewis & Mark Maslin.](#) *Going Underground on RT* (YouTube)

WEEK 3: The long history of climate change, part 2February 1:

- Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin. 2018. *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. Yale University Press. Chapters 4-5

February 3:

- Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin. 2018. *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. Yale University Press. Chapter 6
- Mike Davis. 2020. "[California's Apocalyptic 'Second Nature'](#)." *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung* blog; *Monthly Review*.

Audio-visual:

- [This California Tribe Is Fighting Wildfires With Fire](#). *AJ+* (YouTube)
- [Brandon Smith: Begin the Decade of the Green New Deal](#). Organizing for Justice / Sunrise (YouTube)
- [Optional: Meet the formerly incarcerated fire crew protecting California from wildfires](#). *Los Angeles Times*.
- Optional: Jason Moore. "[Nature, Capitalism, Crisis](#)." *Against the Grain*. Podcast.

Recommended reading:

- Abu-Lughod, J. L. 1993. "The world system in the thirteenth century: dead-end or precursor?" In Michael Adas ed. *Islamic & European expansion: The Forging of a Global Order*. Temple University Press.
- Moore, Jason. '[Amsterdam is Standing on Norway' Part I: The Alchemy of Capital, Empire and Nature in the Diaspora of Silver, 1545–1648](#).' *Journal of Agrarian Change*, (10)1, 33-68.

WEEK 4: The long history of climate change, part 3:

February 8:

- Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin. 2018. *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. Yale University Press. Chapters 7-8.

February 10:

- Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin. 2018. *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. Yale University Press. Chapters 9-10, skim Chapter 11.
- Daniel Aldana Cohen. 2018. "[Apocalyptic Climate Reporting Completely Misses the Point](#)." *The Nation*. November 2.

Audio-visual:

- Kate Aronoff and Daniel Aldana Cohen. 2020. [Hot & Bothered: Putting Racial Justice First, with Patrick Houston](#). (Podcast)
- Perrin Ireland. 2019. "[There's Actually Some Good News in That Scary IPCC Report](#)." *NRDC*.

Recommended reading:

- Hausfather, Zeke. 2021. [Explainer: How 'Shared Socioeconomic Pathways' explore future climate change](#). *CarbonBrief*.
- Steffen, Will, Johan Rockström, Katherine Richardson, Timothy M. Lenton, Carl Folke, Diana Liverman, Colin P. Summerhayes, et al. 2018. "[Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene](#)." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*.
- Malm, Andreas, and Alf Hornborg. 2014. "The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative." *The Anthropocene Review* 1(1):62–69.

WEEK 5: Race, Class and Social Struggle in the United States, in Global Context:

February 15:

- WEB DuBois. 1936. *Black Reconstruction in America*. “To The Reader,” Chapters 1 and 2; 26 (excerpt); pages 29-66, 861-862
- Newkirk II, Vann. R. 2019. “[The Great Land Robbery: The Shameful Story of How 1 Million Black Families Have Been Ripped from Their Farms](#).” *The Atlantic*. September.

February 17:

- Pulido, Laura. 2016. Flint, Environmental Racism, and Racial Capitalism. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 27:3, 1-16.
- Muller, Christopher. 2021. Exclusion and exploitation: The incarceration of Black Americans from slavery to the present. *Science*, 374: 6565, 282-286.
- Skim: [The Truth About Land Grabs](#). *Oxfam*.
- Skim: GRAIN. 2008. SEIZED! The 2008 Land Grab for Food and Financial Security. Barcelona: GRAIN. <https://grain.org/e/93>

Audio-visual:

- [Reconstruction. Experiments in Land Owning](#). *Slate* podcast.

Recommended reading:

- Mauldin, Erin Stewart. 2017. “Freedom, Economic Autonomy, and Ecological Change in the Cotton South, 1865-1880,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* (7)3, 401-424.
- Taylor, Dorcetta. 2009. *The Environment and the People in American Cities, 1600s-1900s: Disorder, Inequality, and Social Change*. Durham: Duke University Press. Introduction.
- Chung, Youjin B., and Marie Gagné. 2021. “Understanding Land Deals in Limbo in Africa: A Focus on Actors, Processes, and Relationships.” *African Studies Review*, 64(3), 595-604.

WEEK 6: Indigenous Histories of Resistance, Part 1:

February 22:

- Estes, Nick. 2019. *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*. New York: Verso. Prologue, chapters 1-2.
- Solnit, Rebecca. 2016. "[Standing Rock protests: this is only the beginning.](#)" *The Guardian*.

February 24:

- Estes, Nick. 2019. *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*. New York: Verso. Chapter 3.
- Cohen, Daniel Aldana. 2019. "[Stop Eco-Apartheid: The Left's Challenge in Bolsonaro's Brazil.](#)" *Dissent*.

Audio-visual:

- [Tara Houska, "The Standing Rock resistance and our fight for Indigenous rights."](#) TED.
- Sam Cowie. 2019. [How crime drives deforestation in Brazil's Amazon.](#) *Financial Times*.
- OPTIONAL Nick Estes [interviewed](#) at length on *The Dig*. ([Transcript.](#))

Recommended reading:

- Norgaard, Kari Marie. 2019. *Salmon and Acorns Feed Our People: Colonialism, Nature and Social Action*. Rutgers University Press.

February 24: Take-home midterm distributedWEEK 7 : Indigenous Histories of Resistance, Part 2:March 1:

- Estes, Nick. 2019. *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*. Verso. Chapters 4-5.

- Indigenous Environmental Network and Oil Change International. 2021. “Indigenous Resistance Against Carbon.”
<https://www.ienearth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Indigenous-Resistance-Against-Carbon-2021.pdf> Pp. 1-20.

March 3:

- Estes, Nick. 2019. *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*. Verso. Chapters 6-7.
- Alter, Charlotte. 2020. “[Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Facebook Videos of Her Trip to Standing Rock Reveal Her Political Awakening.](#)” *Time*.
- Martin, Nick. 2020. “[How the EPA Is Screwing Oklahoma’s Tribes.](#)” *The New Republic*.

Audio-visual:

- [Our History Is the Future: Lakota Historian Nick Estes on Thanksgiving & Indigenous Resistance.](#) *Democracy Now*.
- Optional: [Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz on Indigenous History.](#) *The Dig*.

Recommended reading:

- Jesse, Nathan. 2020. [Resisting the Oblivion of Eco-Colonialism: A Conversation with Tribal Leaders from Louisiana’s Gulf Coast.](#) *Anthropocene Curriculum*.
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2018. [What White Supremacists Know.](#) *Boston Review*.

March 9: Take-home midterm due by 12 pm.

PART 2: Contemporary climate politics: The contradictions of green racial capitalism

WEEK 8: Climate science, climate negotiations, and the problem of global inequalities:

March 8:

- Jamieson, Dale. 2014. *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle against Climate Change Failed—and What It Means for Our Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2.
- Plumer, Brad. 2015. "[The world just agreed to a major climate deal in Paris. Now comes the hard part.](#)" *Vox*. December 12.
- Wolf, Martin. 2021. "[Dancing on the edge of climate disaster.](#)" *Financial Times*.
- Optional background: Simon Evans et al. 2021. "[COP26: Key outcomes agreed at the UN climate talks in Glasgow.](#)" *CarbonBrief*.
- Optional background: Hausfather, Zeke and Piers Forster. 2021. "[Analysis: Do COP26 promises keep global warming below 2C?](#)" *CarbonBrief*.

March 10:

- J. Timmons Roberts and Bradley C. Parks. Ecologically Uneven Exchange, Ecological Debt, and Climate Justice. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*. 50(3): 385-409.
- Stoddard, Isak et al. 2021. "Three Decades of Climate Mitigation: Why Haven't We Bent the Global Emissions Curve?" *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*. 46(1): 653-689.
- Interview: Olufemi Taiwo. [What Do Rich Countries Owe the Rest of the World?](#)
- "[Chapter 6: Global carbon inequality.](#)" 2022 *World Inequality Report*. [Read online for interactive data features.] Skim text, look at key diagrams and visuals.

Recommended reading:

- Friends of the Earth et al. 2021. "[United States of America: Fair Shares Nationally Determined Contribution.](#)" Read pp 1-9, skim rest.
- David Victor. 2011. *Global Warming Gridlock*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 7, 8, 9.

- Roberts, J. Timmons and Bradley Parks. 2007. *Climate of Injustice: Global Inequality, North-South Inequality, and Global Climate Policy*. Introduction, Chapters 5 and 6, skim Chapter 7.

Audio-visual:

- *Watch 1 of 3*
- [Global Climate Justice against Neo-Colonialism: New Concepts and Priorities for Just Cooperation](#), Socio-Spatial Climate Collaborative, or (SC)2
- [U.S. Engagement with Chinese Climate Politics](#), Socio-Spatial Climate Collaborative, or (SC)2
- [A Pan-American Green New Deal? Green Investment, Extraction Battles, and Reforestation](#), Socio-Spatial Climate Collaborative, or (SC)2

WEEK 9: Climate change psychology: The fossil fuel-Republican Party complex, climate denial in Norway, the social psychology of climate denial and climate anxiety

March 17:

- *Read 2 of 3*
- Supran, Geoffrey and Naomi Oreskes. “[Assessing ExxonMobil's climate change communications \(1977–2014\)](#).” 2017. *Environmental Research Letters*.
- Brulle, Robert J. 2018. “The climate lobby: a sectoral analysis of lobbying spending on climate change in the USA, 2000 to 2016.” *Climatic Change*. 149:289–303
- Kahan, Dan M. et al. 2012. “The Polarizing Impact of Science Literacy and Numeracy on Perceived Climate Change Risks.” *Nature Climate Change*. 2(10):732–35. [File on bCourses includes excerpt from another article that summarizes cultural cognition theory.]

March 19:

- *Read 2 of 3:*

- Brulle, Robert J. & Kari Marie Norgaard. 2019. "Avoiding cultural trauma: climate change and social inertia." *Environmental Politics*. (28)5, 886-908.
- Hickman, Caroline, Elizabeth Marks, Panu Pihkala, Susan Clayton, R Eric Lewandowski, Elouise E Mayall, Britt Wray, Catriona Mellor, and Lise van Susteren. "Climate Anxiety in Children and Young People and Their Beliefs about Government Responses to Climate Change: A Global Survey." *The Lancet Planetary Health* 5, no. 12 (December 2021): e863–73.
- **Special reading focused on Norway.** Norgaard, Kari Marie. 2011. "Climate Denial: Emotion, Psychology, Culture, and Political Economy." In John S. Dryzek, Richard B. Norgaard, and David Schlosberg eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- *Skim:*
- Play around with the website <https://realtimeinequality.org/> to observe dramatic background changes in inequality in the U.S.

Audio-visual:

- Renée Lertzman. 2019. [How to turn climate anxiety into action](#). TED Talk.

Recommended reading:

- Oreskes, Naomi and Erik M. Conway. 2010. *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*. New York: Bloomsbury Press. Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 6, Conclusion, Epilogue.
- Elliott, Rebecca. 2019. "The Sociology of Climate Change as a Sociology of Loss." *European Journal of Sociology*. (59)3, 301-337.
- McWright, A.M. and Riley E. Dunlap. 2011. "Cool dudes: The denial of climate change among conservative white males in the United States." *Global Environmental Change*. (21)1163-1172.

- Cohen, Daniel Aldana. 2020. "New York City as 'Fortress of Solitude' After Hurricane Sandy: A Relational Sociology of Extreme Weather's Impact on Climate Politics." *Environmental Politics*. Online first. DOI: 10.1080/09644016.2020.1816380.

WEEK 10: Fossil politics

March 29:

- McKibben, Bill. 2016. "[Global Warming's Terrifying New Chemistry](#)." *The Nation*.
- Jerolmack, Colin and Nina Berman. 2016. "Fracking Communities." In *Public Culture* 28(2(79)): 193-214.
- News reports on New York fracking ban.

March 31:

- Riofrancos, Thea. 2017. "Digging Free of Poverty." *Jacobin*. August 15.
- Riofrancos, Thea. 2020. "Conclusion: The Dilemmas of the Pink Tide." In *Resource Radicals: From Petro-Nationalism to Post-Extractivism in Ecuador*. Duke: Duke UP, 164-184.
- Optional: Cohen, Daniel Aldana and Thea Riofrancos. 2020. Latin America's Green New Deal. *NACLA Report on the Americas*. (52)2: 117-121.

Audio-visual:

[Hot & Bothered: Has the Fracking Bubble Finally Burst? with Bethany McLean](#). *Dissent*.

Recommended reading:

- Jerolmack, Colin and Edward T. Walker. 2018. "Please in My Backyard: Quiet Mobilization in Support of Fracking in an Appalachian Community." *American Journal of Sociology*. (124)2, 479-516.
- Hardin, G. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science*, 162, 1243-1248.

- Mildenberger, Matto. 2019. "[The Tragedy of the Tragedy of the Commons.](#)" *Scientific American*. April 23.

WEEK 11: The Energy Transition

April 5:

- Riofrancos, Thea. 2022. "[Shifting Mining From the Global South Misses the Point of Climate Justice.](#)" *Foreign Policy*. February 7.
- Riofrancos, Thea. 2021. "[The rush to 'go electric' comes with a hidden cost: destructive lithium mining.](#)" *The Guardian*. June 14.
- Riofrancos, Thea. 2019. "[What Green Costs.](#)" *Logic*. (19 pp, but about half is photos.)
- Optional: Riofrancos, Thea and David Adler. 2022. "[Gabriel Boric and Latin America's new pink tide.](#)" *The New Statesman*. March 11.

April 7:

- Saundry, Peter D. 2019. "Review of the United States energy system in transition." *Energy, Sustainability and Society*. (9)4, 1-32.
- Lennon, Myles. 2017. "Decolonizing Energy: Black Lives Matter and Technoscientific Expertise Amid Solar Transitions," *Energy Research and Social Science* 30: 18 - 27.

Audio-visual:

- [The Invisible Power Struggle with Leah Stokes.](#) *Why Is This Happening?* Podcast.

Recommended reading:

- Baker, Shalanda Helen. 2020. "Fighting for a Just Transition." *NACLA Report on the Americas*. (52)2: 144-151.
- Gavin Bridge, Stefan Bouzarovski, Michael Bradshaw, Nick Eyre. 2013. "Geographies of energy transition: Space, place and the low-carbon economy." *Energy Policy*. (53) 331-340.
- McCarthy, J. 2015. "A socioecological fix to capitalist crisis and climate change? The possibilities and limits of renewable energy." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 47(12), 2485–2502.
- Baker, Shalanda Helen. 2019. "[Anti-Resilience: A Roadmap for Transformational Justice within the Energy System](#)." *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review (CR-CL)*, Vol. 54, pp. 1-48 (2019), Northeastern University School of Law Research Paper No. 346-2019.

WEEK 12: Climate change and the city: decarbonization, environmental justice, racism, and inequalities

April 12:

- Read 2 of 4
- Pulido, L., & De Lara, J. 2018. "Reimagining 'justice' in environmental justice: Radical ecologies, decolonial thought, and the Black Radical Tradition." *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, 1(1-2), 76–98.
- Kojola, Erik & David N. Pellow. 2021. "New directions in environmental justice studies: examining the state and violence." *Environmental Politics*, 30:1-2, 100-118.
- Cha, J. Mijin, Madeline Wander, and Manuel Pastor. 2020. "Environmental Justice, Just Transition, and a Low-Carbon Future for California." *The Environmental Law Reporter*.
- Ranganathan, Malini and Eve Bratman. "From Urban Resilience to Abolitionist Climate Justice in Washington, DC." *Antipode*. (53)1: 115-137.

April 14:

- Read 2 of 3
- Cohen, Daniel Aldana. “The Other Low-Carbon Protagonists: Poor People’s Movements and Climate Politics in São Paulo.” In *The City Is the Factory*, edited by Miriam Greenberg and Penny Lewis, 140–57. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017.
- Millington, Nate, and Suraya Scheba. 2020. “Day Zero and The Infrastructures of Climate Change: Water Governance, Inequality, and Infrastructural Politics in Cape Town’s Water Crisis.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.
- Doshi, Sapana. “Greening Displacements, Displacing Green: Environmental Subjectivity, Slum Clearance, and the Embodied Political Ecologies of Dispossession in Mumbai.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 2019.

Audio-visual:

- [Hot & Bothered: Putting Racial Justice First, with Patrick Houston.](#)
- OPTIONAL: [Hot & Bothered: Why Defunding the Police is Key to a Just Transition, with J. Mijin Cha](#)
- OPTIONAL: [Follow the Carbon.](#) (Lecture, Daniel Aldana Cohen)

Recommended:

- Ranganathan, M. 2016. Thinking with Flint: Racial Liberalism and the Roots of an American Water Tragedy. *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*. 27(3), pp. 17–33.
- Brenner, Neil. 2013. “[Theses on Urbanization.](#)” *Public Culture* 25 (1): 85–114.
- Cohen, Daniel Aldana. “Confronting the Urban Climate Emergency: Critical Urban Studies in the Age of a Green New Deal.” *City* 24, no. 1–2 (2020): 52–64.

WEEK 13: The Green New Deal and Decolonizing Climate Research

April 19:

- Aronoff, Kate, Alyssa Battistoni, Daniel Aldana Cohen, Thea Riofrancos. 2019. Introduction, read two additional chapters of your choice. *A Planet to Win: Why We Need a Green New Deal*. New York: Verso.

April 21: Guest lecture by Dennis Best. ‘Localizing Climate Research in a “Sustainable Energy and Localized Future” Or Towards a Global Community of Decolonized Climate Research and Participation?’

- Hubler, Shawn. 2021. [Are Global Warming Summits Still Cool?](#) *New York Times*. November 4.
- Turi, Guyo Chepe. 2021. [Firepower won’t restore trust among Kenya’s warring Laikipia communities](#). Institute for Security Studies. November 3.
- (Skim) Forest Declaration Assessment Briefing Paper. 2022. [Sink or swim: How indigenous and community lands can make or break nationally determined contributions. The critical importance of Indigenous peoples and local communities \(IPLCs\) has long been left out of the climate change solutions conversation.](#) Forest Declaration Platform.
- (Skim) Maria Pontes Ferreira and Fidji Gendron. 2011. [Community-based participatory research with traditional and indigenous communities of the Americas: Historical context and future directions](#). *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*. (3)3: 153-168
- Optional: Brad Plumer. 2018. [They Defied Trump on Climate Change: Now it’s their Moment of Truth](#). *New York Times*. September 11.
- (Explore) [A Guide for Sustainable Energy and Localized Futures](#)

Audio-visual:

- [Hot & Bothered: Building Power, with Naomi Klein, Jane McAlevey, and Julian Brave NoiseCat](#) (or video available [here](#)).

Recommended reading:

- Baker, Shalanda Helen. 2019. “[Anti-Resilience: A Roadmap for Transformational Justice within the Energy System](#).” Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review (CR-CL), Vol. 54, pp. 1-48 (2019), Northeastern University School of Law Research Paper No. 346-2019.

April 19 Final distributed.

WEEK 14: The Green New Deal and Beyond: Land, Food, Decarceration, Political Education.

April 26, with guest speaker [Elise Joshi](#)

- Prins, Seth and Brett Story. 2019. “[A Green New Deal for Decarceration](#).” *Jacobin*. August 28.
- Estes, Nick. 2019. “[A Red Deal](#).” *Jacobin*.
- [Wallace-Wells, David. After Alarmism](#). 2021. *New York*. January 19.
- Optional: Meek, David and Rebecca Tarlau. 2020. “[Educating for Ecosocialism](#).” *NACLA Report on the Americas* (52)2, 206-213.

Audio-visual:

- 5 [Elise Joshi](#) tik toks:
- Policy & Hope: <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZTdXcBqyX/>
- Combating doomism: <https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdXcF6tA/>
- A time where I created doomism on accident: <https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdXvK5JN/>
- Combating misinformation: <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZTdXcL6MJ/>
- More broad policy and solutions: <https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdXchudR/>

April 28:

- Bond, Kingsmill et al. 2022. “[From Deep Crisis, Profound Change](#).” *RMI*.
- Lim, Audrea. 2020. “[We Shall Not Be Moved: Collective ownership gives power back to poor farmers](#).” *Harpers*.

- Patel, Raj and Jim Goodman. 2019. "[A Green New Deal for Agriculture](#)." *Jacobin*. April 4.

Final due: May 8, 10 pm. No extensions.