

Course Outline

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<b>COURSE:</b>	<b>LAWS 4800 – Environment and Social Justice</b>
<b>PREREQUISITES:</b>	<b>Fourth-year honours standing</b>
<b>TERM:</b>	<b>Winter 2014</b>
<b>CLASS:</b>	<b>Day &amp; Time: Thursday, 8:35 - 11:25</b>
	<b>Room: Room 3174, Mackenzie Building</b>
<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	<b>Joel Harden</b>
<b>CONTACT:</b>	
	<b>Office: C442 Loeb Building</b>
	<b>Office Hours: Tuesday, 2pm-4pm</b>
	<b>Email: <a href="mailto:Joel.Harden@carleton.ca">Joel.Harden@carleton.ca</a></b>
	<b>Web: <a href="http://www.joelharden.org">www.joelharden.org</a></b>

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You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The **Paul Menton Centre** for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision.

If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*).

After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The relationship between our “environment” and “social justice” conjures up an array of meanings, all of which reveal a disputed intellectual terrain. This course surveys that terrain, and attempts to identify key ideas, themes, actors, and strategies.

Most agree our environment faces several urgent crises, not the least of which is the pressing issue of climate change. The pursuit of “social justice” has long been proposed to seek a more prosperous and sustainable future. And yet, despite these claims, decision-makers (in the political and economic realms) are reluctant to pursue measures that challenge the global fossil fuels industry. At times, modest green strategies are pursued when research suggests more urgency is required. In other places, like the Canadian context, outright denial meets those posing green questions.

And yet, these trends have not gone unopposed. In recent years, a grassroots “climate justice” movement has championed principles informed by those most impacted by environmental degradation: Indigenous (Aboriginal) Peoples, Southern nations, racialized groups, coastal areas, and women in these (and other) marginalized populations. This movement has challenged powerful adversaries, and impacted elite conversations. Some insist it has changed the nature of green activism itself, transcending divisions between “conservationist” environmentalism and others calling for more transformative change.

Still, various perspectives clash around our “environment” and “social justice”, leading many to question the value of this perceived relationship in the first place, and the means by which to address key problems. How effective, for example, are judicial arenas for green campaigns? What is the role of green activism and social movements, and what are their contradictions? Can (or should) green activism discuss colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, racism, and other structural barriers to social justice? And what role do established progressive groups (like unions, and large NGOs) offer in proposing green alternatives, torn as they are between existing power structures, and grassroots opposition to them?

Based on the active participation of seminar participants, we explore these and other questions in this course. Our collective experience, interest, and commitment will be crucial.

## EVALUATION

**(All components must be completed in order to get a passing grade)**

**Major Essay Proposal (5-6 pages) 20 % of Final Mark**  
Due: March 6, 2014

**Major Essay (15 - 20 pages) 50 % of Final Mark**  
Due: April 3, 2014

**Class Participation 30 % of Final Mark**

15% for group participation  
15% for attendance and individual participation

Your grade for class participation is based on your active engagement in our learning process. Some may think this means speaking frequently in class, while others who are shy might assume they can hold back and express themselves to me privately.

Both assumptions are false. Above all, we are interested in the quality of your contributions, not the quantity of them. Students who face challenges around shyness should speak to me immediately

about how they can facilitate effective class participation.

At a minimum, I expect you to discuss the merits of our course readings. I also expect you to engage in our learning process, and demonstrate a commitment to active listening and appreciative inquiry as others do the same (we will establish our expectations for these and other things during our first day of class).

## COURSE MATERIALS

*Speaking for Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada*, ed. By Julian Agyeman, et al. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009).

*Quiet No More: New Political Activism in Canada and Around the Globe*, by Joel D. Harden. (Toronto: Lorimer, 2013).

- **Please note:** these are available at Octopus Books (116 Third Avenue in the “Glebe”). Any additional readings are online at [www.joelharden.org](http://www.joelharden.org).

## CLASS SCHEDULE

1. January 9: Getting to Know “Us”
2. January 16: Perspectives on “Environment” and “Social Justice” (Part 1)
3. January 23: Perspectives on “Environment” and “Social Justice” (Part 2)
4. January 30: Environmental Justice – Global Implications
5. February 6: Environmental Justice and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada
6. February 13: Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism
7. February 20: **\* Winter Break \* (Reading Week)**
8. February 27: Environmental Justice and Ecofeminism
9. March 6: Legal Mobilization and Environmental Justice  
**\*your major essay proposal is due at the start of this class.**
10. March 13: Struggles for Recognition in the Context of Environmental Justice
11. March 20: Contesting Scientific and Technical Claims in Environmental Hearings (Part 1)
12. March 27: Contesting Claims in Environmental Hearings (Part 2)
13. April 3: Seeking Environmental Justice: Controversies and Debates  
**\* your major essay is due at the start of this class.**

**SYLLABUS****2. Perspectives on “Environment” and “Social Justice”**

Eliza Griswold, “How Silent Spring Ignited the Environmental Movement”. *The New York Times* September 21, 2012.

Bill McKibben, “Global Warming’s Terrifying New Math, *Rolling Stone*. July 19, 2012.

Ezra Levant, “Climate Change Hoax: Report by UN Body May Suggest Climate Crisis Overblown”. *The Toronto Sun*. September 16, 2013.

Robert Lovelace, “Notes from Prison: Protecting Algonquin Lands from Uranium Mining” in *Speaking for Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada*. UBC Press: Vancouver, 2009.

**3. Perspectives on “Environment” and “Social Justice”**

Vandana Shiva, “Development, Ecology, and Women”, in Carolyn Merchant, ed., *Ecology: Key Concepts in Critical Theory* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2008.

Sam Gindin, “Anti-Capitalism and the Terrain of Social Justice”, *Monthly Review* 53: 9. February, 2002.

Joel D. Harden, *Quiet No More: New Political Activism in Canada and Around the Globe*. Toronto: Lorimer, 2013. pp. 21-70.

**4. Environmental Justice – Global Implications**

Vandana Shiva, “Climate Justice Requires a New Paradigm”, *New Left Project*. November 28, 2011.

Yeb Sano, “It’s Time to Stop This Madness – Philippines Plea at UN Climate Talks”, Speech to the United Nations Climate Change Convention’s 19<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties, Warsaw, Poland. November 13, 2013.

Film Screening: *The Island President*. Directed by Jon Schenk. Los Angeles: Actual Films, 2012.

**5. Issues in Environmental Justice: Environmental Justice and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada**

Pam Palmater, “Feathers Versus Guns: The Throne Speech and Canada’s War with the Mi’kmaw Nation”, *Rabble.ca*. October 18, 2013.

Sarah Fleisher Trainor *et al.*, “Environmental Injustice in the Far North: Persistent Organic Pollutants and Arctic Climate Impacts” in *Speaking for Ourselves*.

Deborah McGregor, “Honouring Our Relations: An Anishnaabe Perspective on Environmental Justice”, *Speaking for Ourselves*.

Harden, *Quiet No More*, pp. 70-83.

**6. Issues in Environmental Justice: Environmental Racism**

Howard McCurdy, “Africville: Environmental Racism” in Laura Westra & Peter S. Wenz, eds., *Faces of*

*Environmental Racism: Confronting Issues of Global Justice*. Toronto: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001.

Robert Bullard, "Introduction", and "Environmental Justice for All" in Robert Bullard, ed., *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Colour*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1993.

Beenash Jafri, "Rethinking 'Green' Multicultural Strategies" in *Speaking for Ourselves*.

## **7. Issues in Environmental Justice: Ecofeminism**

Barbra Rahder, "Invisible Sisters and Environmental Justice in Canada" in *Speaking for Ourselves*.

Mary Mellor, "Towards a Feminist Green Socialism" in Carolyn Merchant, ed., *Ecology: Key Concepts in Critical Theory* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2008.

## **8. Legal Mobilization and Environmental Justice**

Dayna Nadine Scott, "Body Polluted: Questions of Scale, Gender, and Remedy", Occasional CLPE Research Paper No. 21. Toronto: Osgoode Hall Law School, 2010.

Ramani Nadarajah and Renee Griffin, "The Failure of Defamation Law to Safeguard Against SLAPPs in Ontario" *Review of European Community and International Environmental Law* 19: 1. 2010.

## **9. Struggles for Recognition in the Context of Environmental Justice**

Chief Bernard Ominayak with Kevin Thomas, "These are Lubicon Lands: A First Nation Forced to Step into the Regulatory Gap" in *Speaking for Ourselves*.

\* **Note:** major essay proposal is due.

## **10. Contesting Scientific and Technical Claims in Environmental Hearings: Part 1**

Mary Richardson et al., *Winning Back the Words: Confronting Experts in Public Hearings*, Introduction and Chapters 1-4.

## **11. Contesting Claims in Environmental Hearings: Part 2**

Mary Richardson et al., *Winning Back the Words*. Chapter 5 - end of book.

## **12. Seeking Environmental Justice: Controversies and Debates**

Sharmeen Khan, "Just Environmentalism? An Interview With Clayton Thomas Muller" *Upping the Anti* 7 (2009).

Henia Belalia, "Is Professional Activism Getting in the Way of Real Change?", *Alternet* (October 29, 2013).

Harden, *Quiet No More*, pp. 193-240.