



Romare Bearden, The Block, 1971

Introduction to Community & Environmental Sociology

CE Soc 140 – Spring 2016

MW 4:35-5:25

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What this course is about. This course is an introduction to Sociology that focuses on the study of how we live in community and how we relate to the natural world. It is organized around a set of questions about how power structures these relationships and about the possibilities for organizing them differently. We will explore how the processes we have come to call globalization are changing the way we live in communities and relate to our environment. This will lead us to tackle some of today's most pressing social and environmental conflicts and crises both in the U.S. and abroad. Some key questions that we will discuss are: "Is economic growth necessary for well-being?" "What does community mean in the current era of globalization?" and "Can projects organized at the community level survive and thrive in a global economy?" A key theme of the course will be the interconnectedness of events and processes unfolding in different parts of the world.

Course goals include gaining an understanding of a set of key concepts: "community," "place," "development," "growth," "environment," "sustainability," "globalization," and "neoliberalism;" learning how these concepts are involved in contemporary debates about what is fair, just, and desirable for the places where we live and the world as a whole; identifying important actors in processes affecting community and environment, including government, corporations, transnational institutions and social movements; and developing the ability to critically evaluate arguments about the impacts of global change on local places and processes. To accomplish these goals, the course is divided into two sections. In the first section, we will define our terms, explore the debates surrounding them, and develop a conceptual framework for moving forward. In the second, we will examine a series of contemporary issues where the projects of communities confront the realities of economic globalization, including: local economic integration, environmental justice, local food movements, food sovereignty and security, job creation, and migration.

Participation. The quality of our collective experience in this course depends on your participation. Participation means ATTENDING class, as well as keeping up with the readings and being able to discuss them thoughtfully in class. I will not post lecture notes on-line (although I will post power-point slides); the material covered in the lecture is not the same as what you will find in the readings. You will not be able to get a passing grade in this course if you do not attend lectures. **You are required to attend your discussion section.** If you miss more than 2 discussion section meetings, you will lose points (four points per session missed). Students will not lose points when they are absent to observe religious holidays, or have a doctor's excuse. While this is a large class, I encourage debate based on careful reading of materials and we will work to cultivate an environment of respect for one another's views.

Books/Readings:

1. Schor, Juliet, *True Wealth* (available at University Bookstore and other locations)
2. Course reserve readings. A print version is available at Student Print (333 East Campus Mall, room 3301) and electronic copies on our Learn@UW website.

Academic Honesty: The UW takes academic honesty very seriously. If you are found to be cheating on exams or papers, you will receive a grade of F and will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Plagiarism: All of the work that you submit for this class must be your own work, and you are required to quote and cite all references properly. Although this appears straightforward, it can sometimes be confusing. Whenever you are unsure about quoting and citing, please come to see me (or Tamara) to figure out the best strategy. But in general, if you are in doubt, cite! If you use a web-based source, you can always cite the URL. For information about plagiarism policy:

<http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#points>

More information on source citation: www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf.

Accommodations: I wish to include fully any students with special needs in this course. The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Faculty and students share responsibility for reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students should inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you, or in coordination with the McBurney Center, to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Nighttime Safety: UW-Madison has established several transportation and walking escort services to help you stay safe while getting around campus and nearby areas after dark. To make use of these services, see: <http://transportation.wisc.edu/transportation/safeservices.aspx>

Suggestions for doing well in this course:

1. Keep up with the readings, and do the assigned readings before they are discussed in class.
2. Take notes while you read. Afterwards, write a few sentences about the main point(s) of the piece. Jot down any questions you have about the readings, and bring these to class or section.
3. Attend class. In lecture and in section, be prepared to ask questions or offer comments about the readings, how they relate to lecture material, or current events.
4. Take notes. It is not enough to simply copy down the terms and diagrams presented on the board or screen. You need to write down important points from lecture and discussion as well. If you must miss class, get class notes from another student whom you trust to be a good note-taker.
5. Attend office hours. Both Tamara and I are glad to meet with you outside of class. If you cannot attend scheduled office hours, let us know and we will find another time.
6. Form a study group.

Assignments		
I. Response papers (4).		100 points
<p>There are FOUR one-page response papers. Each paper is worth 25 points for a total of 100 points. Response papers are due in-class on the day assigned. These papers are opportunities to develop your “sociological imagination” by applying class concepts to your own realm of experience. Papers will be graded based on: a) clarity and originality of ideas; b) use of concepts and themes from readings; b) logic and argument; c) writing style and technical aspects of presentation (such as grammar, citations, spelling). For general information on good writing see the UW Writing Center website (www.wisc.edu/writing) or visit the Writing Center in 6171 Helen C. White (also satellite locations).</p> <p>Response paper due dates: Feb 10, Mar 7, Mar 30, Apr 25</p> <p>Late Papers. If you have an emergency and are unable to complete your assignment on time, please let me know immediately and I will consider an extension. Otherwise you will lose points (5 per day) for lateness.</p>		
II. Exams	Midterm 1 (Feb 22, in class)	100 points
	Midterm 2 (Apr 4, in class)	100 points
	Midterm 3 (non-cumulative, during exam period)	100 points
<p>Make-up Exam Policy If you have a compelling emergency and if you make a request before the exam in writing, I will attempt to find a time for a make-up exam.</p>		
Total value of all assignments:		400 points
<p>Grading Scale 368-400 points = A; 348-367 = A/B; 328-347 = B; 308-327 = B/C; 288-307 = C; 240-287 = D; below 240 = F</p>		
<p>Grade Complaints: If you have questions about a grade, speak to Tamara or to me first. If the question is not resolved, speak with the Chair of Community & Environmental Sociology, Gary Green, who will attempt to resolve the issue and inform you of the appeals procedure if no resolution is reached.</p>		

Course Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS AND READING QUESTIONS
Jan 20	Introduction to Course	What is Community and Environmental Sociology? Course goals. Concepts and approaches.
	PART 1	DEFINING KEY TERMS AND DEBATES
Jan 25	Community/Place	<p>C. Wright Mills, "The Promise" Bill McKibben, ch. 1 Sachs, "One World"</p> <p><u>Ungraded assignment:</u> bring a definition of community to class</p> <p><i>What is the "sociological imagination?" How is the meaning of community changing? What is the difference between space and place? How are local and global connected? What is "cosmopolitan localism"?</i></p>
Jan 27	Community/Place	<p>OECD, "What is Social Capital?" Sanders and Putnam, "Still Bowling Alone?" Alexis de Tocqueville, "How the Americans Combat Individualism by...Self Interest Rightly Understood"</p> <p><i>What is social capital? How have values of individualism shaped U.S. culture? What kinds of activities do we still organize "communally?" Are those activities threatened or thriving?</i></p>
Feb 1	Development/Growth	<p>Schor, preface and Chapter 1.</p> <p><i>Why does Schor see growth as a problem? What is the difference between intensive and extensive growth? What kinds of solutions does she propose?</i></p>
Feb 3	Development/Growth	<p>Schor, Chapter 2</p> <p><i>What is the materiality paradox? Why was the idea of limits to growth controversial? What is an ecological footprint?</i></p>

Feb 8	Environment/ Sustainability	<p>Schor, Chapter 3 Gertner, "The Rise and Fall of GDP"</p> <p><i>What is GDP? Do our conventional economic measurements account for resource depletion and environmental harm? What valuable resources do they fail to measure? What alternatives are there?</i></p>
Feb 10	Environment/ Sustainability	<p>Schor, Chapter 4</p> <p><i>How is the trade-off between growth and environmental sustainability different for poor countries than for rich ones? Are there ways to reduce poverty and improve the standard of living without adopting a "western" pattern of growth?</i></p> <p><u>Response Paper #1</u>: Think of two activities you engage in that are valuable to you but that do not form part of "market economy"—that is, you do not receive payment for them or pay for them. Drawing on concepts from Schor's book, explain why these activities are valuable to you or others.</p>
Feb 15	Sustainability/Plenitude	<p>Schor, Chapter 5</p> <p><i>How are plenitude and sustainability related? What kinds of changes does Schor recommend? What other possibilities for change are there?</i></p>
Feb 17	Globalization/ Neoliberalism	<p>Stiglitz, "Globalism's Discontents" Dollars & Sense Collective, "The ABCs of the Global Economy" Smith, "A Brief Examination of Neoliberalism and Its Consequences"</p> <p><i>What is the Washington Consensus? What is the difference between <u>neoliberalism</u> and classical economic liberalism? How is neoliberalism expressed at the societal and individual levels?</i></p>
Feb 22		MID-TERM 1

	PART II	CASE STUDIES of CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
Feb 24	Food & Community: Eating Locally	<p>McKibben, ch. 2 Kloppenburger et al., "Coming into the Foodshed"</p> <p><i>What is a foodshed? According to McKibben and Kloppenburger et al., what are some benefits of sourcing food locally?</i></p>
Feb 29	Food & Community: Food Security, Food Sovereignty, Food Justice	<p>White, "D-Town Farm" Roman-Alcalá, "From Food Security to Food Sovereignty"</p> <p><i>What are the differences between food security, food sovereignty, and food justice? How are these goals pursued at D-Town Farm?</i></p>
Mar 2	Food & Community: Food Sovereignty in Global Perspective	<p>Bello, "Manufacturing a Food Crisis" Altieri, "Agroecology, Small Farms, and Food Sovereignty"</p> <p><i>What are the most important factors undermining food security around the world today? Are famines natural or social disasters? How can agroecology contribute to food sovereignty?</i></p>
Mar 7	Food Chains: Fast Food Workers	<p>Finnegan, "Inside the Fast Food Labor Protests" Jayaraman, "Why Tipping is Wrong"</p> <p><i>What changes are restaurant workers advocating? Would these changes only benefit restaurant workers?</i></p> <p><u>Response Paper #2</u>: Keep a food diary for one day. Attempt to trace the origins of each element of your diet. Reflect on what you find, relating your reflections to themes from readings.</p>
Mar 9	Food Chains: Farmworkers	<p>Gouge, "Human Rights in Play, Transnational Solidarity at Work" Part of film: <i>Food Chains</i></p> <p><i>What organizing model does the Center for Immokalee Workers use? Why do they target fast food and retail brands? How do their organizing practices cultivate "sociological imagination"?</i></p>

Mar 14	Communities & their Environments: The Challenge of Climate Change	<p>Klein, "The Right is Right: The Revolutionary Power of Climate Change"</p> <p><i>How does Klein argue that society as a whole will change as a result of addressing climate issues?</i></p>
Mar 16	Communities & their Environments: Responses to Global Climate Change	<p>Klein, "Love Will Save This Place"</p> <p>American Sociological Association, "Sociological Analyses of Global Climate Change"</p> <p><i>In what ways is climate change a sociological issue? Why does Klein argue that the climate crisis is a democracy crisis?</i></p>
	SPRING BREAK	Mar 19-27
Mar 28	Communities & their Environments: Environmental Justice & Place	<p>Center for Health, Environment & Justice, "Love Canal"</p> <p>Temma Kaplan, "Suburban Blight and Situation Comedy at Love Canal"</p> <p><i>What obstacles do communities face in organizing against contamination of their homes and workplaces? How did residents of Love Canal meet those challenges?</i></p>
Mar 30	Communities & their Environments: Environmental Justice & Race/Poverty	<p>U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "What is Environmental Justice?"</p> <p>Exchange Project, "Afton, North Carolina"</p> <p>Temma Kaplan, "When It Rains, I Get Mad and Scared"</p> <p><i>Why is exposure to environmental risks unequally distributed by race and class? How do environmental justice campaigns build on legacies of the civil rights movement?</i></p> <p><u>Response Paper #3:</u> Use this website to calculate your carbon footprint. Write a short essay analyzing your carbon usage. Which of your activities or lifestyle factors produce the most carbon emissions? What could you change to help reduce those emissions? What other kinds of actions (beyond personal lifestyle changes and consumer choices) can people take to reduce carbon emissions and slow climate change? Use class concepts to structure your essay.</p> <p>http://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator</p>

Apr 4		MIDTERM 2
Apr 6	Community & Economy: The Case of Walmart	Gereffi and Christian, "The Impacts of Wal-Mart" <i>How does Walmart differ, as a template for business, from the model provided by General Motors at mid-20th century? What key innovations have given Walmart its market power?</i>
Apr 11	Community & Economy: The Case of Walmart	Featherstone, "Down and Out in Discount America" Jacobs, "Could Walmart Pay a Living Wage?" <i>How is Walmart's growth linked to poverty in U.S. communities and abroad? How do state and local governments subsidize Walmart and other low-wage employers? Why do some communities oppose building a Walmart store?</i>
Apr 13	Work and Community: Changes in Work	Hacker, "The New Economic Insecurity" Kantor, "Working Anything but 9-5" <i>How does Hacker argue that the risks Americans face are changing? What is causing these changes?</i>
Apr 18	Work & Community: The "Gig Economy"	Giridharadas, "Inequality Measured by Services" New York Times, "Defining Employee in the Gig Economy" Singer, "In the Sharing Economy, Workers Find Both Freedom and Uncertainty" <i>How does the growth of the "gig economy" change our expectations about work and jobs?</i>
Apr 20	Work & Community: What is a Good Job?	Kalleberg, "Job Quality in the U.S." Leonhardt, "The Great Wage Slowdown of the 21 st Century" <i>What forces are responsible for declining wages and job quality?</i>

Apr 25	Work & Community: Rebuilding Local Economies	<p>Van Jones, "The Green New Deal" Paul Sonn and Stephanie Luce, "New Directions for the Living Wage Movement"</p> <p><i>What does Van Jones mean by a Green New Deal? What kinds of investments would it entail and what benefits does he argue it would provide? What is a living wage (and how is it different from minimum wage)?</i></p> <p><u>Response Paper #4:</u> Interview someone about their job and write a short paper reporting on your interview. What skills does it require? What are their working conditions like? What do they like and dislike about their job? What would they like to change about it? Relate what you learned to trends discussed in class.</p>
Apr 27	Work & Community: Migration	<p>Koser, "Why Migration Matters" Rosenberg, "Why Mexico's Small Corn Farmers Go Hungry" Massey, "Immigration and the Great Recession"</p> <p><i>How are global migration patterns changing? How did the North American Free Trade Agreement affect migration patterns? How did the great recession change this picture?</i></p>
May 2	Work & Community: Migration	<p>Harrison and Lloyd, "Illegality at Work"</p> <p><i>How are immigrant workers being incorporated into the Wisconsin dairy sector? How does illegality change the work experience?</i></p>
May 4	Wrap-up and Review	<p><i>We will return to three questions raised at the beginning of the semester: Is economic growth necessary for well-being? What does community mean in the current era of globalization? Can projects organized at the community level survive and thrive in a global economy?</i></p>
May 11		FINAL 7:25-9:25 pm, location TBA